

Black Plain 1511

Chapter 1511 Toward The Battle

Three weeks later...

After having his plans foiled in the third enemy outpost where he could not easily invade and kill his targets, Mortimer continued to investigate the present situation of the imperial family during these days.

He and his group were no longer getting information easily through the empire's organizations due to the seclusion that many sects and families had initiated to avoid getting involved in the current mess.

At the same time, each organization that had not abstained from the conflict communicated only with those superior to itself in this state. That is, the powers on the Minos side only communicated with the imperial family. In contrast, those on the Mortimer side only exchanged information with the Saints Killing Sect.

Under these circumstances, getting information without checking each place became a tough task, and Mortimer and his group had to 'visit' their opponents little by little to find out the current situation of the imperial family.

In doing so, Mortimer found that all the posts, apart from the Edwardstone family headquarters in Payton, were either without specialists or protected by defenses that were difficult to break through.

Amidst this, he found that the imperial palace was without traditional defenses. It was 'just' surrounded by over 60 high-level Spiritual Saints, plus Minos and two of his wives.

That greatly surprised him and his allies, as the core of the imperial family seemed to be exposing themselves as bait for them. Yet, at the same time, many more high-level Spiritual Saints than they had expected had emerged to protect the imperial lineage.

In particular, the Gray Clouds Sect had sent over 20 individuals between levels 77 and 79!

That was an impressive number, something that previously only the sovereign family of this state had managed to achieve.

But Minos had ally transformed the ranks of his organization in a few short years.

That frightened Mortimer and those who had decided to stand with him on this journey!

Fortunately, they had discovered all this while it was still early.

Thus, currently, Mortimer's group was preparing to act against Payton as they wanted to end their current affairs as quickly as possible.

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In an advanced camp of the Saints Killing Sect...

Several Spiritual Saints were gathered near this camp, planning a decisive move in their plans.

"Are we going to attack the capital like that?" A level 78 Spiritual Saint from the Mountains Sect asked, feeling that it would be bad for his organization's image to attack the capital openly.

"But we have no alternative." Someone from the Saints Killing Sect defended their sovereign's plans.

"The strongest enemy forces are in Payton, waiting for us without any protections.

So either we take this opportunity and finish everything in one move, or we will have to drag this situation out for years."

"Still, I believe that a strategy similar to Abe Vogel's on the Black Plain has a better chance of success than us doing this." Someone there suggested, remembering that Minos had suffered enough to eliminate the Vogel family heir.

"Nonsense." The master of the Mountains Sect finally said something. "Abe only lasted so long against Minos because he had the protection of a Spiritual Sage when that wretch was only a Spiritual Emperor.

But now the bastard Stuart is already an 8th-stage cultivator!"

"But we have Senior Burgess on our side." Someone at level 79, who was not okay with the idea of attacking Payton openly, said this, remembering this important fact.

"It doesn't matter." The supreme elder of the Saints Killing Sect commented aloud. "We are not the same as Abe. He failed because he didn't have the strength to defeat Minos in one attack. Thus, he gave years for that wretch to grow up and eventually defeat him.

We can't give Minos time. He is simply too talented!

So we can only try to end the bastard's life in one big attack while he is still only a level 70 cultivator.

If he advances to level 71, or worse, level 72, before we settle everything, maybe we all will be destroyed!"

Gulp!

The leaders there swallowed their saliva in apprehension, remembering that at level 70, Minos could steal energies from people up to 6 levels above his own and artificially raise his strength by up to 2 levels.

Suppose he reached level 72 and maintained this ability. In that case, he could probably steal levels from even level 78 Spiritual Saints and temporarily become a level 74 cultivator.

If that happened, he could become so strong that Mortimer himself would be incapable of doing something against him!

With this in mind, those people began to think it was better to take some risks now and finish Minos once and for all than to act passively and take the risk of him continuing to grow.

Mortimer, who was also there, then added. "Let's not forget that Minos is of his own free will in the empire.

He could hide in the northern region or use the four northern territories to threaten us. But he is putting himself in this position because he thinks he is strong and wants to lure us in to test his strength."

Mortimer did not believe that Minos was a match for him. But he could more or less see his opponent's belief in these actions.

And honestly, he would prefer it that way.

Fighting Minos if he were a coward hiding in the northern region and using all possibilities to avoid a confrontation with Mortimer would be the worst for this Spiritual Sage.

But fighting in Payton would limit Mortimer and give Minos fewer possibilities.

That was the best place and time for him to act!

Hence, even if Minos was planning something dangerous for him, Mortimer liked the idea of acting soon and ending once and for all the uncertainty about the local situation.

He had ambitious plans that demanded a solid state that had not experienced years of war.

As such, he could only use his best arguments to convince those still uncertain that this was the best for everyone.

After a few moments of silence and much consideration in that area, Mortimer's allies agreed to go ahead with a major attack on the imperial capital!

"All right, move your families and prepare for war!" That level 80 individual said aloud, smiling, while his third eye twitched due to the excitement caused by his anxiety.

He then flew upwards until he was so high that he could see Payton as if it were the size of a pin tip.

'I will soon use your powers to destroy these people, Gavin!' He clenched his fists, making the space in his surroundings tremble.

Meanwhile, dozens of kilometers from Mortimer's standing, another Spiritual Sage at level 80 silently watched him.

'This young man really causes trouble... Now he dares to stand in the way of people at my level.' Someone Minos already knew, thought to himself, there to watch him but without moving since he was merely an observer.

Chapter 1512 Surprise

Two weeks later...

After several days of no attacks on the imperial family forces or their closest allies, Payton was finally at its most tense moment.

At dawn on this day, suddenly, Mortimer Burgess arrived through a wormhole, along with more than 20 high-level Spiritual Saints at his side.

When they appeared over the central area of the imperial capital, inhabitants from all over the city began to panic, fleeing towards the sides of this metropolis.

Those who could fly or had winged beasts simply took off into the skies, fleeing for fear of being involved in a potential conflict.

But these represented the minority of the fleeing people, as most inhabitants could not escape through the skies.

So when Mortimer and his main supporters arrived in this city, the main avenues leading to the local exits were filled with people.

At the same time, the forces in the imperial palace immediately realized that this was the moment they had been waiting for and prepared themselves.

The strongest held their position, planned by Minos while circulating their energies and having their weapons in hand.

The weakest, people who had not been evacuated before, individuals between levels 60 and 70, retreated underground, where the imperial palace had solid defenses, even in the absence of the arrays sent to the other posts.

Meanwhile, individuals between levels 70 and 76 were positioned together, prepared to fight as a group and somehow help the more than 60 high-level individuals who would fight there for the imperial house.

Amid this tense place, with the spiritual energy in the surroundings fluctuating violently due to the many powerful presences, Minos floated in front of Isabella and the empress.

Beside him were the imperial family's supreme elder, two Gray Clouds Sect elders at the same level as the regent, and two sect masters who had attended the imperial call.

Gloria and Ruth stood next to Madeline and Isabella, as well as some important descendants of the Edwardstone family, protected by the many high-level Spiritual Saints in the surrounding area.

When he stood at the same height as the people in Mortimer's group, he stopped about 200 meters away from them and looked at them silently for a moment.

Then Minos asked. "What are you doing here, Mortimer? Why are you standing next to the Mountains Sect master and patriarchs of local families?"

Minos looked at each of those men who were not from the Saints Killing Sect, causing those individuals to feel goosebumps running through their bodies.

Mortimer saw those level 79 individuals standing silently next to Minos and sighed. "Looks like you've already taken this city, huh? Next time I plan something, I'll do it like you. First, I'll make a relevant woman open her legs and then easily conquer her family.

It's much more efficient than fighting, hehe."

The people in the surrounding area felt offended that Isabella was attacked like that, while Minos looked at that opponent with anger in his eyes.

Then he said. "Looks like you're not worried about hiding your rebellion, eh? Speaking of Her Highness like that would guarantee you death as a traitor to the state in other situations!

But apparently, you're here to fight, so it doesn't matter anymore..."

Mortimer smiled but didn't bother to speak to Minos.

Instead, he looked at the experts beside this fellow and spoke. "Old fellows, today I am here to give you an option. Put down your weapons and join me on this journey ahead of us.

I will become the rightful ruler of the Flaming Empire and bring glory to our organizations!

All this will come at the cost of those people's lives..." He pointed in the direction where the core of the imperial family was, near Ruth and Gloria. "And that damned bastard." Mortimer referred to Minos.

He continued. "We don't need any unnecessary killing. Just take oaths and leave this place. I'll deal with all the filth alongside my group.

At the end of the day, we will have a new empire without having its foremost leaders killed, making life easier for our natural enemies.

The four territories to the north!"

"Mortimer, are you going to rebel so openly? Have you no shame?" The regent shouted. "His Majesty will destroy you when he finds out about this!"

"His Majesty?" Mortimer laughed. "Harold is finished! His life is in the hands of those women of the Flowers Kingdom!"

And even if he were here, do you think I would have any fear of him? He's only a level 80 Spiritual Sage!

I can overcome him with my divine lineage!"

The men beside Minos clenched their fists in anger, seeing that this man was a complete traitor, not just an idiot blinded by power.

Minos then said. "There is no use in dialoguing with them. They are here to fight and will do it one way or another.

These people have hope that they will survive and be victorious...

Let's show them how wrong they are!"

At that moment, Minos no longer waited to dialogue with those individuals and activated his 8th technique, causing his grandiose Soul Avatar to emerge from his body.

Space and Time Avatar!

When he did so, everyone in the surroundings felt the mighty power of Emperor Stuart as two level 76 Spiritual Saints from the Gray Clouds Sect flew toward the avatar's space of influence.

Minos would not be able to steal the cultivation levels of those people next to Mortimer, so some of the men who would do him this service immediately flew towards him to fulfill their purpose.

While this was happening very quickly, everyone in the surrounding area, who had never personally seen or felt Minos' current forces, opened their mouths in surprise.

That was particularly true for Mortimer, who, in that instant, contorted his face as he noticed something sinister about Minos.

Even before the others in the area showed their Soul Avatars, Minos was already at level 71, as his abilities rose to the maximum.

But only Spiritual Sages could realize the significance of this besides Minos!

"How can that be?" The man at a distance from there, observing what was about to happen, exclaimed as he noticed an area of spatial stabilization in front of him.

Mortimer noticed that too, and as Minos laughed in his direction, he tried to open a crack in space to confirm his feelings.

He moved and attacked the space with one of his open palms.

However, nothing happened except for the energy in the surroundings moving because of his powerful movement.

"Damn it!

That wretch can trap me on the battlefield!" He exclaimed in shock as he put the ability of the special domain of the Minos Soul Avatar to the test.

Minos had control over space and time in his domain. Because of this, he could suppress spatial manipulations within the range of this technique!

"Haha, Mortimer, you better be prepared to fight.

Today, you won't run away even if you want to!" Minos shouted, startling everyone on the battlefield, as he had already moved to deliver the first attack shortly after sending the two level 76 individuals away.

He was already at level 72 because of the carelessness of those people impressed by Mortimer's shocked reaction!

In this situation, they could no longer do anything to reverse the terror about to happen!

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Chapter 1513 The Advantage Of Minos

Upon realizing Minos' abilities, the people on Mortimer's side paled.

The fact that a Spiritual Sage was so much stronger than Spiritual Saints was not their amount of energy. That characteristic was even relevant, but what was more critical was spatial manipulation.

Through this ability, a Spiritual Sage surrounded by weaker enemies but capable of injuring them could either flee or slowly attack these people until they reached their goals.

But if a Spiritual Sage lost such an ability, they could be outnumbered!

They would have no way to escape other than to use their speed to fly away.

But people could get in their way, and even though they were faster than all their opponents, they could be prevented from escaping and end up in the terrible situation of suffering from their opponents' blows.

In this scenario, Mortimer could lose a lot, and worse, he would be unable to save his allies from danger.

Those high-level Spiritual Saints on Mortimer's side believed that their new leader would save them when they were in danger, similar to what had happened to Abe in the past.

Unfortunately for them, Minos had that surprise in store, and now they would be on their own in this place!

While they were shivering, some even regretting it, Minos' allies renewed their certainty about being on Minos' side.

So they were the first to show their Soul Avatars beyond Minos, followed by the many Spiritual Saints near the imperial palace.

Ruth and Gloria also activated their soul projections, placing themselves in a defensive position to protect Isabella and that woman's mother.

Minos wasted no time, and after his provocative words, he made all his techniques show themselves to those high-level Spiritual Saints and Mortimer.

Being at level 72, he had so much power in his control that he was almost at the same energy level as Mortimer!

Because of this, the moment the Devouring Art rings appeared in his domain, those Mortimer's companions immediately began to suffer.

This man would not suffer from this since his level was high enough that his energies would not get out of control because of Minos.

But still, he felt it as the gravity about him began to press on his position, making it difficult for him to move.

Minos also targeted him with the Infinite Dream and the Dark Sea putting those men against each other while degrading Mortimer's mental structures.

"It can't be!"

"No!"

"How is that possible?" The level 79 cultivators on Mortimer's side barely managed to activate their avatars when part of them was already under Minos' control.

But Mortimer managed to show his avatar in that place, causing a reddish projection of his soul to emerge from his body, one with three eyes, each a darker color than the rest of his body.

By activating his 8th technique, this cultivator felt less pressured by Minos. However, even so, he was still in a situation where he knew he had to be careful.

'You bastard!

You were hiding all this?' He clenched his fists in hatred, noting that the difference between Minos and him was not great.

He had an advantage, but that was on the order of less than a 1.5% difference!

At the same time, Minos had a terrible mind control ability that put even enemies at his disposal.

And with no way to escape from there, surrounded by dozens of high-level Spiritual Saints, Mortimer finally understood why Minos risked so much by staying in this place as bait.

However, he wouldn't think much of it and would soon start activating his own techniques to counter not only Minos but the many enemies already attacking him.

Mortimer had arrived at this place with 23 high-level Spiritual Saints, but of those numbers, 9 of them had turned against his group because of the Dark Sea.

Because of this, about 70 Spirit Saints between levels 77 and 79 were attacking him and his group.

Ten of them were dealing alongside the nine enemies who forcefully changed sides to face the remaining individuals.

At the same time, the rest were already on the outskirts of the Minos avatar's area of influence, launching attacks against Mortimer.

They knew that this would be a battle that Minos could not win alone and were following his plans even after noticing how powerful Emperor Stuart already was.

Thus, Mortimer found himself surrounded by dozens of powerful attacks while being pressured by someone almost as strong as himself.

He tried to move to escape the area of influence of Minos' avatar. Still, the emperor's speed was superior to his!

Mortimer had only a Golden-grade technique, but this was a cultivation technique, not a movement technique, neither defensive nor offensive.

Because of this, only his cultivation speed and control over spiritual energy could be affected by the quality of this technique, placing him in terms of speed below even Minos!

Therefore, he promptly failed to escape his opponent's grasp.

But not only that. When Minos moved, he used the Indestructible Body to strengthen the parts of his Soul Avatar and then kicked hard against the stomach of Mortimer's projection.

That made him feel pain and temporarily put him in a state of vulnerability to the many attacks coming his way.

These attacks were not enough to put his life in danger, but together they could hurt him and lower his resistance to Minos.

He then tried to dodge those attacks after receiving Minos' kick but failed to do so satisfactorily with many of those blows.

"Ouch!"

This Spiritual Sage expressed pain for the first time since reaching the 9th stage, slowly beginning to regret having chosen a frontal attack.

Abe had failed, but this Vogel fellow had lasted years against Minos and had almost seriously wounded the Black Plain forces.

But he had tried to do differently to avoid the same failure and ended up in this terrible situation.

Spatial Sword!

Minos danced with a spiritual sword, launching several mighty blades toward Mortimer's avatar.

These blades disappeared, traveling through space, changing directions so the target wouldn't understand where the attack was coming from.

Minos' avatar could stabilize space in his domain, but this did not apply to techniques launched by his avatar.

Hence, such an ability worked in his domain!

The Spiritual Sage watching all this from afar, felt a chill run through his body as he noticed what was happening, realizing that Minos could already face him and put him in danger!

He was much stronger than Mortimer, but it would not be easy to withstand such pressure!

'Unbelievable!

Minos has already achieved such power... It looks like I'll have to report this to my superiors sooner than planned!

While that Spiritual Sage of the Eastern Empire was changing his plans, the first Spiritual Saints in Mortimer's group needed the help of his leader.

"Sect master!

Save me! Please, save me!" The supreme elder of the Saints Killing Sect shouted in desperation as two members of his own sect attacked him mercilessly.

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Chapter 1514 The End Of Two Sect Masters

When the supreme elder of the Saints Killing Sect was being brutally attacked, Mortimer looked in the direction of his allies and saw that not only that man was suffering.

Of the 14 individuals fighting the 19 opponents, almost all of them were already badly wounded in less than 3 minutes of battle, to the point that, with one look, this sect master realized that they could die if he did nothing.

Mortimer knew that his situation was terrible, but he was not stupid to think selfishly at this point. If he simply abandoned these people now, he would lose all his allies and no longer have a place in the Flaming Empire.

Even if he threatened the people of this place with his powers, he wouldn't be able to rule or become a respected ruler.

The people of this entire state would choose to side with Minos and not with him!

He then lost whatever mental restraints he still had on using his last card up his sleeve in this place and immediately activated Gavin's lineage with everything he had.

"Wretched Stuart, I admit that you are very powerful and that I made a mistake.

But I want to see if you can handle all this destructive power!"

Destruction Eyes!

The third eye of Mortimer's Soul Avatar opened and began to glow, striking in the direction of Minos as it destroyed everything in front of it.

Upon seeing this, unlike the many high-level Spiritual Saints in the surrounding area, who were naturally worried, Minos remained calm.

He moved his two hands in an identical manner, showing his palms upwards, while his fingers moved as if he were groping for something.

In that instant, Devouring Art stopped acting on the 14 individuals being brutally attacked. At the same time, the gravity on Mortimer returned to normal with the end of the Chaotic Gravity action on him.

"That's not the black hole..." Minos said aloud as several black spheres, the size of hands, appeared at different points in his domain. "Those are the black holes!"

At Minos' words, the several black holes that appeared in the surroundings of his avatar moved as they increased in size.

When they were the size of carriages, they stopped growing, with all of them already in front of Minos to cushion the enemy attack.

"You think you're going to hurt me with Gavin's powers? Don't be stupid, Mortimer. I know every ability of those eyes that even you don't know how to use right!" Minos said aloud, as the destruction generated by his opponents' attack 'died' to the darkness of those lightless regions of space.

"No way!"

Gulp!

The supreme elder of the Saints Killing Sect saw and lost hope, seeing how Mortimer suffered just to endure Minos' 'normal' fusion.

'If that absorbs any of us, even the sect master will be in danger!' He thought.

But it was already too late for that man. Just as he was observing how unsuccessful the attack of his leader would be, one of his fellow sect members, under the illusion of the Dark Sea, attacked his head.

Poof!

A great black-bladed sword passed through the neck of that level 77 elder, severing his head and finishing off his soul.

In that instant, Minos' first enemy finally lost his life!

"No!" Mortimer shouted as he saw that from afar, but he could do nothing about it due to his current situation.

After Minos swallowed Mortimer's destructive attacks with his black holes, he immediately condensed those regions of space and made five large black holes put pressure on his opponent.

One of them was trying to swallow Mortimer's left arm, another his right arm, another his right leg, and the last one his left.

None of the four succeeded in devouring Mortimer's Soul Avatar because of the powerful abilities of the Destruction Eyes.

But he couldn't do anything either!

As a result, Mortimer could only watch as Minos' men slowly killed his subordinates.

At the same time, the dozens of Minos' allies were still attacking in his direction, managing to hit parts of his body.

"Attack with everything you have!"

"Maybe we can kill him later today!"

"Attack the bastard, you brats!"

Shouts from different people, especially members of the Gray Clouds Sect, were constantly appearing over there as they all attacked that level 80 man.

"Unbelievable!" The empress muttered as she saw the situation developing.

"I can't believe it... But if my eyes are not seeing wrong, are we winning?" Isabella asked Ruth and Gloria, who were using their techniques to counter the remaining attacks coming in that direction.

"Yes, that man made a grave mistake of staying within Minos' domain and still 'allowing' our husband to absorb the levels of those two Spiritual Saints..." Ruth commented.

"Now all those Spiritual Saints will die..." Gloria looked in the direction of where the masters of two of the eight major sects in the Flaming Empire were about to die.

At that moment, Minos moved the fifth black hole toward those members of Mortimer's group while his allies were already moving away from there.

"Time to die!" Minos said as he closed one of his hands and made that region of space suck up the bodies of 22 individuals at once.

As for the body of the supreme elder of the Saints Killing Sect, it was very far away at the moment, already slumped over one of the imperial palace gardens. So Minos couldn't lure it into that black hole.

Anyway, with Minos' order, those men broke into a cold sweat, repenting for the last time in their lives before being sucked into that region of space, becoming nutrients for it.

Thus, 22 experts between levels 77 and 79 died in the blink of an eye!

"No!

Minos!

"I'm still going to kill you!" Blood dripped from Mortimer's eyes, not because of his sadness but because of how much he used those eyes that didn't even belong to him.

Minos felt his opponent had become a little stronger. Still, even though he couldn't devour him with those four black holes created with the evolution of his technique, he still didn't lose his calm.

At that moment, the fifth black hole raised its level and flew up to where Mortimer was standing.

"The others may not be enough to overcome all the abilities of these eyes, but this one is!" Minos said in a cruel tone, hurling the thing in Mortimer's direction.

"No! This can't happen! I can't die! I will become a great emperor!" That man lost control of his emotions and screamed as he tried to escape.

In Mortimer's desperation, suddenly, one of the black holes holding him down began to crack, appearing to be at its limit.

Minos looked at this and understood that his time was short, and he put all his strength into pressing the fifth black hole against Mortimer to defeat this person once and for all.

In this way, one arm and one leg of Mortimer began to be sucked up by the thing while the other three black holes cracked considerably.

"Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!"

At the decisive moment, the four smaller black holes trying to suck the body of that level 80 expert exploded!

But that explosion was not powerful as there was no matter inside those four regions of space other than the waves of destruction absorbed earlier.

So they just glowed brightly and disappeared, finally giving Mortimer his freedom.

At the same time, Minos was thrown backward by the spiritual waves in that area, losing power over his Soul Avatar and opening a gap for his enemy!

"Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!"

Mortimer opened a wormhole and ran away when he was between life and death, ending the cries of pain in that area!

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Chapter 1515 The Consequences For Mortimer

As Mortimer disappeared from the skies over Payton, Minos instantly fell toward the imperial palace, his level quickly dropping from level 72 to 71 and then to 70 in a matter of seconds.

The surrounding area still had many attacks, coloring the local skies. Still, at that instant, no one was paying attention to them.

Everyone had seen how Mortimer had escaped at the last moment. But, at the same time, Minos could not bear to continue fighting.

So while they thought how unfortunate it was that that enemy had managed to escape in time, they also had the good feeling of realizing they were not so helpless.

With Minos by their side, they could even risk the life of a level 80 Spiritual Sage!

With that, while most of those attacks in the area were heading toward the last remaining black hole, the people there began celebrating today's victory.

"Hahaha, we did it! We really did it!"

"I didn't think it would be so easy..."

"Don't tell me about it... I thought I would die a few times in this fight, but surprisingly I didn't even come close to that!"

The battle had been hard. Every person involved, except for Minos, could have died at the slightest distraction. But compared to the rough idea of facing someone with spatial manipulation skills, everything had happened on a level below what these local experts had expected.

Amidst this, the supreme elder of House Edwardstone was shocked by the powers displayed by Minos, which had far exceeded what he had expected.

To him, Minos was more or less at his level. But the truth was that the confrontations Emperor Stuart had to show the world his strength were battles that he did not plan to exterminate his opponents.

However, Minos was fighting to kill this time and therefore had shown 100% of his current abilities!

Upon learning about this, the regent felt happy that he had not lost to Mortimer but also a little melancholy. With such power, Minos would have even greater influence. Even if Harold returned, this state could no longer be on equal footing with the Black Plain!

"Sigh..."

Ah, times really are changing." He lamented in a low voice as he watched the Empress stop Minos' fall and place him on the ground next to Ruth and Gloria.

"Minos, are you okay?" Isabella was there too, impressed but also worried for him.

Minos was not injured, just exhausted from having used all his power against Mortimer moments ago when he forcefully tried to absorb that Spiritual Sage's body with the fifth black hole.

Unfortunately, Mortimer had used all his abilities to escape death just as Minos' provisional level was crumbling. Consequently, everything ended before Emperor Stuart finished his opponent.

Considering the few seconds he would need to succeed, Minos couldn't help but feel terrible.

'Damn it!

That was close!

He looked at Isabella and the other women in his surroundings and sighed. "I'm fine... It's just a shame we couldn't finish that damn thing."

"Yeah... He got away at the last moment." Gloria commented, also regretting their only failure in this fight.

"What do we do now?" Ruth asked. "With him having escaped, we're back to zero... I'm afraid we'll have to go through all that again."

The people in the surroundings were a little apprehensive about this and were silent at these words.

But then, Minos disagreed with his wife. "It's not that simple.

Mortimer escaped, and that is bad, true. However, he did not escape unharmed!"

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Hundreds of kilometers away from Payton, on one of the flying islands with a camp of the Saints Killing Sect...

A hole in space appeared over this place, making all the camp members look up with doubt, not understanding what was happening.

According to the plans of their supreme leader, he was going to attack Payton and then take the imperial capital.

In other words, Mortimer had no plans to return to this place any time soon, and naturally, everyone in there frowned and feared trouble at the sight of that wormhole opening.

Regardless of who was behind it, this would not be good!

As they could already sense, these men and women allied or subordinate to Mortimer soon saw an unexpected scene unfold in front of them.

Mortimer's body fell out of that wormhole in a matter of fractions of a second, revealing a considerably destroyed body.

Mortimer's face was pale, with blood marks all over various parts of his chest armor. But what was striking about this weakened man in free fall was the state of his aura and body.

Mortimer had almost wholly lost his two legs, but also his hands, and almost completely lost his left arm.

At the same time, these were no ordinary injuries. On the contrary, each of them was irreparable, as the black hole from Minos destroyed those physical parts of him and ruined the part of this man's soul responsible for these limbs.

Consequently, even if Mortimer recovered one day, he would never be able to regenerate his arms and legs!

Anything would be useless to him. Even possessing someone's body with whole arms and legs would not allow him to manipulate those parts of his body again.

However, that was not the worst of it!

The worst had been the damage to Mortimer's cultivation base, which, only by a miracle, had not been crippled. However, in his situation, anyone who saw him would realize that all the progress this man might have made at the 9th stage could be forgotten.

From now on, it would be useless for him to cultivate or use cultivation resources. His level would remain at level 80 for the rest of his days!

Gulp!

'How can this be?' The first of the high-level Spiritual Saints to come near Mortimer's fallen body wondered, not understanding how the powerful level 80 Spiritual Sage in front of him had ended up like this.

'Hadn't he just gone to attack the imperial palace? Why did that happen?' Another person wondered as she landed next to that fellow.

'Where are the others? Why is the sect master alone?' One of the elders of the Saints Killing Sect began to break into a cold sweat, foreseeing the worst.

Amid this, as much as he was extremely injured, Mortimer was aware that his condition was terrible and that he would never fully recover from this experience.

In this situation, he once again regretted his haste and underestimated Minos!

'Disgrace!

How could this happen to me? Just when I had everything I needed... If only I had been more careful!

I should have slowly killed the local leaders without showing myself...

If that had happened...' He began to imagine the endless possibilities he would have had if he had gone his separate ways.

But it was useless to think about ifs now that the milk had been spilled and all was lost.

He knew this, but during his initial moment of doom, he would think about it for the next few days as he accumulated all his hatred for Minos for the future.

Chapter 1516 Mistake Of Strategy

Later that day...

Minos had already explained Mortimer's situation to his allies, making it clear that this person was terribly injured no matter if the enemy had escaped.

Minos' connection to each of his black holes went far beyond controlling these regions of space. He could also sense what was devoured by them.

Through this ability, Emperor Stuart could tell that part of Mortimer's soul and body had been swallowed by that black hole so that the enemy would have nothing to do to recover.

He explained everything he should to the leaders of the imperial family and the vassals who had participated in the confrontation at Payton.

With this, great relief hung over the imperial family and this city.

Even the inhabitants, ignorant of the details of the outcome of this confrontation, felt that things would be smoother from now on.

Mortimer had fled, but everyone who had not fled in time to miss the fight had realized that Minos was already as strong as a newly advanced Spiritual Sage.

Thus, the tension over this city decreased significantly in the hours following the end of the battle.

Hence, news spread throughout Payton and the state as the victors celebrated the day's outcome!

...

At the headquarters of the Mountains Sect...

"... The sect master and two high-ranking elders are dead. Minos Stuart won the battle against Mortimer Burgess, and no one knows the whereabouts of this man..." An old man reported this to the elder in charge of this sect in the absence of its leader.

When they heard this, the elders turned pale, feeling what the losers would feel after a war.

They had chosen the wrong side, and now they would have to bear the consequences!

"It can't be... How did this happen?"

"How did Minos win? He's only a level 70 Spiritual Saint! How could someone like that defeat a Spiritual Sage?" The wife of the former sect master asked as she refused to believe that her husband had died.

The elder who brought this news, standing next to the person responsible for observing soul lamps, said. "Miss, I am sorry. But Minos was hiding his powers. He can nullify the Spatial Manipulation ability of Spiritual Sages..."

"It can't be..."

"What do we do now? We side with Mortimer... Minos and the imperial family will destroy us!"

...

"We must surrender!"

In another high-level sect of the Flaming Empire, the supreme elder of this organization shouted this right after the council of high-level elders found out about the news coming from Payton.

Like the Mountains Sect, they had sided with Mortimer, and even their master had gone into battle alongside the leader of the Saints Killing Sect.

As such, they were also having a similar discussion as happening in the Mountain Sect, with no hope of continuing with the position they had at present.

"If we surrender, we will be punished, but we will have a chance to survive." The supreme elder continued. "We sided with Mortimer, but that was only for a few weeks! We didn't even hurt the imperial family in our actions!"

The dead Spiritual Saints were all individuals eliminated by Mortimer. We're not to blame for that!"

"Right, maybe they'll have mercy on us to avoid losing an entire sect!"

"But with Minos on their side, even if half the empire died, the state would not be in danger... He now controls the four territories to the north." Someone more concerned said, feeling that only escape would give them a chance of survival. "We must leave with our families!"

"And where would we go? The empire is our home! And outside of here, we're just normal people, low-level specialists at best!" Someone more attached to their position and status exclaimed.

"Mairin might have room for us." That woman suggested, thinking of the state between the Western Empire, Eastern Empire, Flaming Empire, and another kingdom in the western region.

That was the weakest of the states with Spiritual Demigods in their ranks in the entire Central Continent. So for these Spiritual Saints, this kingdom would be the least dangerous home for them in case of escape.

"Mairin?" The people there wondered, feeling themselves at a crossroads of fate.

Their chances would not be promising in that place either. So they would have to consider a lot between escaping and trying to reconcile with Minos and the Edwardstone family.

...

On the other hand, in another area of the Flaming Empire, the headquarters of an organization that had refrained from participating in the recent power dispute received the news coming from Payton with surprise.

Nobody expected that the situation of the imperial family would improve after the beginning of Mortimer's actions. On the contrary, the most expected was precisely the end or great weakening of the house of Isabella.

Because of this, many relevant powers in this state refrained from choosing one side.

But even if there were a small chance that Minos and his allies would not be exterminated in the first confrontation, no one would expect a victory for his group.

Thus, everyone was shocked when the information that he had exterminated 23 high-level Spiritual Saints and made Mortimer flee spread throughout the empire.

That was the case with this sect near the Albano border.

"Minos has reached that level?"

"It seems that we actually made a mistake in staying isolated... What will happen now?"

"They can't punish us just because we tried to protect ourselves from a Spiritual Sage!"

"Yes, but we abstained from our responsibility as vassals of the Edwardstone family..."

"In any case, we didn't act against anyone, so we have at least some chance!"

...

The day after the confrontation in Payton...

After the battle was over and local experts had gathered, Minos spent the remainder of his time until dawn today with his women, resting.

He had given orders to the high-level Spiritual Saints in the capital to continue around for the hour but made it clear to them that Mortimer was unlikely to return in the short term.

Hence, while low-level cultivators from the imperial family began tending to the few buildings destroyed because of the remaining attacks from the battle, he slept peacefully in the imperial palace.

After a night's rest and a rich breakfast, Minos was 100% again, ready to move on if Mortimer emerged for revenge.

But that would not happen, and leaving Isabella's residence by early afternoon, he went on his way to carry out the appointments he would have today.

Minos was not sure what results he would have when he began his battle with Mortimer. But he was sure it would impress this state and give neutral families a reason to change their minds.

Moreover, surely the allies and imperial family who had seen him in action the day before would want to talk to him after his rest.

Therefore, as he left that residence where no one had bothered him since the afternoon of the previous day, Minos was quickly stopped by one of the men of the imperial guard.

"Sect Master Stuart, the regent wishes to meet with the senior." A young-looking individual, level 75, said this to Minos, smiling, much more respectful than before. "If the senior has time now, I can escort you to him."

"Hmm, let's settle this." Minos muttered, quickly letting that man take the lead to take him to the old supreme elder.

...

Chapter 1517 The Repentant 1

While Minos was following that imperial guard, the master of the Holy Sect, who was on the outskirts of the imperial palace, saw him and approached him.

"Sect master Stuart, yesterday you greatly contributed to the entire empire. I thank you again for that and hope our organizations can work together in the future." This man said, happy that he had made the right choice.

"Certainly, sect master Schultz. Your organization and my state share much in common and can help each other." Minos said, thinking about how advantageous it would be to have alliances with this leader who ruled the area between the Flaming Empire and part of the Vogel and Rosser border.

That man then asked. "What does the sect master Stuart intend to do from now on? Are you going to pursue Mortimer?"

"No, I intend to settle some matters locally and stick around for the next few weeks. After that, if there are no problems, I will return to the Black Plain to prepare for my trip to the Flowers Kingdom.

I won't be going after Mortimer in the short term..."

"Oh? So you intend to go and rescue His Majesty..." Kevin Schultz muttered, not expecting that Minos would actually follow through on his words.

After all, after such an exposition of strength, wouldn't it be expected that he would rather let Isabella take over the local throne? He could still keep his promise to rescue Harold in the future when he was already married to the princess, or rather a queen.

But from Minos' words, it seemed that this emperor was not coveting this state.

"I told the supreme elder Edwardstone a few months ago that I would fulfill my promise in 2 years. I intend to complete what I told him." Minos said while the imperial guard guiding him sighed in relief.

That guard did not feel as frightened of Minos as he did of Mortimer. After all, Emperor Stuart had a legitimate relationship with the princess and stood by them in this difficult time.

Kavin also felt relieved, thinking it would be better for this state to gain a new leader through marriage and with Harold's presence than otherwise.

"I understand... Well, then, I wish you good luck. I know that the next few days of the sect master will be busy, so I bid you farewell." Kevin said after a few seconds. "When you want, send your men to my sect headquarters, and we'll make some arrangements."

"Certainly."

So Minos arrived in front of where the supreme elder Edwardstone was waiting for him.

He soon passed through the front door of that old fellow's house, without delay finding him drinking and smoking in a leather armchair, still wearing the armor he had worn the day before.

"Supreme elder..." Minos said in a low voice as he stood next to this fellow, who had a lost look on his face at the moment.

"Congratulations on the level you have reached, sect master Stuart. I'm sure your grandfather is proud of what you have accomplished..." That man said without changing the expression on his face.

Minos remained silent, watching this man who had a cigar in one hand and a glass of drink in the other.

"Now the Black Plain Empire will be able to achieve everything it desires. Finish dominating the northern region and, in a few years, absorb the rest of those four territories..."

"Then it will be us?" He asked Minos as he looked at a painting in his living room depicting a bloody war.

Minos closed his eyes and sighed, "What are you talking about?"

"My goodness, the way you talk, you even sound like you'd rather I had let Mortimer kill you all and take over the state."

"No, I wouldn't want that."

"But you hid a power of that level... At the same time, even if His Majesty returns, what difference will it make? You can already beat Mortimer, so in a few years, no one will be able to stop you." He said in a depressed manner as if he was giving away the game.

"Supreme elder, someone is always above you in the cultivation world. But that's not why weaker states cease to exist, or weaker leaders kill themselves just for the sake of it.

The Flaming Empire is weak compared to the empires of the Divine Continent... So you will lament this too? Have the hundreds of thousands of people on that continent who personally can destroy this entire state ever worried you?" Minos asked.

"That's different!

You've seduced the princess, you're getting involved in the affairs of the imperial family, and now, in addition to having more power than us, you'll have more influence.

How could I not be concerned?" That elder looked Minos in the eye and asked firmly.

"Then there's nothing to do. There's no point in us talking anymore." Minos turned and walked toward the exit. "If you can't stand the pressure, give up the position of regent.

In any case, don't call me here anymore if you will talk such nonsense. I don't have time to waste."

"Tsk!

Minos, until you rebel, you will still be a vassal of the imperial family.

Don't forget that!" The old supreme elder stood up from where he was standing and shouted.

But Minos would not even turn to look at him. He knew there was no point in dealing with a decadent old man who was not so confident in himself anymore because someone with a bigger 'dick' had appeared in the area.

The imperial guard who had led him there heard everything and sweated in nervousness.

Gulp!

"Sect master Stuart, don't take the regent's words seriously. He is the oldest person in the family and, at the end of his life, sees our house in such a weak state, with no way to protect itself..." He said this in a low voice just for Minos to hear.

That was indeed not a lie. The supreme elder of the Edwardstone family was even older than Harold, currently over 6.4 thousand years old!

He had only a few decades to advance a stage or die of old age. As such, at this time, when he did not know what fate his family would meet, this man was very depressed about the possible decay that would come after his death.

Minos heard that warning and sighed. "Just because he is dying doesn't give him the right to irritate others.

From now on, I will only deal with Isabella. If that old man calls me, don't waste your time going after me."

Thus, Minos left that imperial guard behind, heading toward one of his subordinates from the Gray Clouds Sect, who was already waiting to take him to meet with the empire's leaders.

Minos could already sense many powerful auras in that palace that were not there the day before. So he already knew who these individuals were and why they were there.

"Sect master, the patriarchs and sect masters are here to see you." A level 77 man from the Coleman family said this to him.

Minos nodded and asked. "Is anyone from the major organizations missing?"

"Of the eight major sects and the 50 most powerful families, disregarding the Saints Killing Sect and their families, only one sect and their respective families did not send representatives."

"Is that so? It looks like someone decided to run away and take their entire organization away..." Minos muttered before asking. "Which sect chose that fate?"

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Chapter 1518 The Repentant 2

"The Spiritual Palace Sect, Your Majesty. The absent families are mostly powers that are members of this organization... But there are some noble families not connected to that sect that are not present as well." That member of the Gray Clouds Sect informed Minos.

Upon hearing that, Emperor Stuart made a serious expression, not liking that at all. The powers that had been missing were all organizations their leaders had chosen to believe Mortimer would be the big winner of the conflict.

So he couldn't just stand by and do nothing against them!

These people needed to be punished as souls who had chosen to rebel!

Not everyone deserves death, but someone would undoubtedly need to die to pay for the many crimes they had committed.

Otherwise, how could the state remain peaceful and without chaos if any rebel could escape the consequences of such a troublesome act?

Minos then ordered. "Send some high-level elders to investigate the whereabouts of these people."

"All right." That elder said, finishing leading Minos' way to where the representatives from all over the empire were, then immediately leaving to resolve those orders.

Minos then entered that hall, where several groups of people were gathered at various points, talking among themselves, many with worried expressions.

As he entered, Minos made them all stop talking and look at him with looks of respect, fear, envy, and various other feelings one would have toward their superior.

Minos saw this and noticed that his people had wisely divided those into three groups.

Those who had sided with him and the imperial family, the neutrals, and those who had joined Mortimer.

Each group was surrounded by members of the Gray Clouds Sect, where some individuals from that sect held flags, indicating the positions of those groups.

Minos then waved to his allies and then to those who had not chosen a side. Finally, he looked meaningfully at the enemies who were now regretting the choices they had made.

"I see there are many rebels here... Among you, the Mountains Sect, whose master attacked the capital." He said calmly, making the members of that organization feel chills in their souls.

"Sect master Stuart, our leader, was mad and did abominable things." The strongest elder of that organization, level 78, said this while lamenting. "But we are ready to accept any punishments, even if we did not agree with Nathaniel's follies."

Minos ignored that man and looked at the rest of the traitors of the empire. "What about the rest of you? You didn't even think twice before changing sides..."

I don't know if I would want people like that in my state. What good is it to have subordinates who, in difficult moments, are absent or rebel?

For me, I'd instead eliminate people like that."

Not only did those who sided with Mortimer tremble at these words, but those who chose to remain neutral in the confrontation also feared the worst.

Minos continued. "On the Black Plain, I have faced several opponents stronger than my territory could handle. But even in a poor and weak area, I could always find men willing to die for the greater good, to ensure the prosperity not of me but of their families.

But you, with such great powers and influence, would rather fear an opponent with a mere one-level advantage than fight...

Tsk!

Even a poor Spiritual Warrior on the Black Plain has more courage than some of you!"

"Sect Master Stuart, we could die..." Someone from a family that had previously been neutral said that.

"Yes, you can." Minos changed the verb tense, indicating what might happen to some of them as punishment. "I don't know how the imperial family will punish you, but I assure you this is your luck.

If I were the emperor of this state, I would give you the option to sacrifice yourselves to secure the future of your sects and families... But as I said, you are lucky. I am not your leader."

Gulp!

Sounds of saliva being swallowed resounded through that area, with those people feeling how close to losing their lives they had come.

It was a blessing for them not to be Minos' vassals since they knew he would do what he said.

Hell, he had already done something like that to Brown and Cromwell... So it wouldn't be too unusual for Minos to repeat his deeds with them.

But the Edwardstone family could never afford to sacrifice so many specialists.

That would be too dangerous and bring an unprecedented crisis to the state!

Hence, these powerful local experts were somewhat relieved, as their punishments would certainly not involve anything so drastic.

"However, even though I am not the one who will give you the punishments, don't think that I will simply accept your repentance. Those of you who have stayed neutral in the war can forget about getting good deals with my organizations and state.

I recommend that you no longer get involved in matters related to me nor stand in my way. Otherwise...

Uh, better we don't talk about that now." He smiled awkwardly. "As for those who acted with Mortimer, I will not let you go free easily. In addition to the punishments you will surely receive from the imperial family, I will charge you separately for your defiance."

"What does that mean?" An elder from a family that had chosen Mortimer asked in doubt.

"You people made me waste my time in this state instead of being in my empire, minding my own business.

At the same time, some of you have dared to attack members of the Gray Clouds Sect since the confrontations began.

The first ones will have to pay for my time here, and the latter will be exemplarily punished.

I will exterminate the entire family of those who has hurt my men." He said firmly, making half a dozen people there regret that they had chosen to surrender.

Minos did not care if these people were surrendering to him. Just because a criminal surrendered wouldn't mean they would get rid of the ultimate punishment for their crimes!

A man scheduled to die by the guillotine would not be spared because he surrendered and regretted his crimes!

That was nonsense!

Compassion for the enemy was the same as self-hatred!

Minos felt no restraint in killing an unarmed man after such one surrendered. If someone was marked for death, they had to die, whether or not they were armed, willing, or unwilling to surrender.

As such, he would not accept the surrender of those marked for death and would still destroy the entire lineage of those who had wounded his men in the short war against Mortimer.

In Minos' view, a strong state was the one that could avenge its men!

"That's unfair, sect master!" One such culprit shouted, despairing of his situation. "We only did what we did because of Mortimer! What could we do? He could kill us if we didn't obey him!"

"If memory serves me right, I warned you before all this what would happen to those who chose to stand against me, didn't I?" Minos looked into that man's eyes calmly. "Well, now don't stay in my front saying this nonsense!"

Take what you've done like a man!

Die with some dignity!"

With those words, Minos' eyes flashed brightly, and he brought immense pressure down on the body of that level 77 Spiritual Saint, quickly making such a man kneel down.

In the blink of an eye, that individual's head exploded, causing everyone in the area to take steps backward amidst the silence that would last for a full minute after that.

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Chapter 1519 Merciless Minos

After the people in the surrounding area were silent for a while, seeing the body of one of the local experts with his head destroyed, Minos said. "Positions have consequences.

No one here was forced into anything. I gave you the option not to stand against me and told you what would happen to those who acted against my forces.

So don't tell me about forgiveness, that your leaders were wrong, or that I am unfair.

I am not doing anything new here. Then take on the weight you judged was not weighing when you made your decisions earlier."

Those who had done something against the Gray Clouds Sect heard that and were frozen in terror, thinking of doing nothing now so they would have a chance to escape later.

Those who had only sided with Mortimer but not acted against Minos were worried but still hoped to keep their lives and receive only financial and political punishment.

But even Minos' allies were a little frightened by his violence, as some felt that others in his position would take different attitudes.

However, this was on the condition that there would not be a significant difference between the powers of the respective parties!

That was not the case with Minos, who had a great future ahead of him.

Minos knew this and would not treat these people as his equals or as if they were irreplaceable to him.

In a few decades, he would surpass everyone there in a way that the Flaming Empire itself would not mean much to him. So why give people who failed him a chance?

Not only that, these people not only went against his advice, some of them directly attacked him after everything he told them.

Why forgive someone unable to follow the rules and, even more, unable to accept their own punishment?

They wanted him to have mercy without them deserving it.

In Minos' view, there was no room for such people around him, and he had to eliminate them to lessen the chances of others making the same mistake against him.

Thus, Minos' meeting with local leaders this time began in a rather tense manner, showing that he was not only decisive when matters involved the northern region. The Flaming Empire was no big deal to him either!

He was even willing to put himself to eliminating high-level Spiritual Saints without first asking the imperial family's permission!

"Sect master Stuart, thank you for saving the empire in these difficult times..."

After a while, Minos slowly started walking around the outskirts of that place, talking to his allies first to only then going to the representatives of the forces that remained neutral or against him.

"The sect master Stuart is mighty, but can you maintain the empire's integrity by punishing left and right? What would happen if the empire lost too much of its strength?"

"I already consider that the Gray Clouds Sect will no longer be among us, and the Saints Killing Sect will either flee or be exterminated... So if we still lose more experts, can we maintain the integrity of the state?" A woman asked Minos, causing many people to look at her with strange expressions, finding it hard to believe such courage.

Minos smiled at that ally of the imperial family and said. "Miss Macy, I know well what I do in each of my acts. Look at my state. We only get stronger over time. I even have Spiritual Saints native to the northern region..."

"Do you think I won't be able to help the Flaming Empire just because of a few losses?"

"No, I believe that the sect master can strengthen himself, but will the Flaming Empire depend on you from now on?"

"The Flaming Empire has always been dependent on someone, Miss Macy. Or, by chance, is the help of the Flowers Kingdom nothing to you?"

That woman frowned at those words.

The Flowers Kingdom was the state with Spiritual Demigods that kept the Flaming Empire out of trouble with the other high-level states.

Places like Albano and Rosser didn't need it because of their geographical position. As for the northern region, this area was protected by the Church.

In the past, Vogel and Blackrock had their own relations with other states with Spiritual Demigods in their ranks.

With Vogel becoming part of the Black Plain, the protection of the Church had replaced the old agreements of that territory with the former state that they owed a number of responsibilities.

Only Blackrock needed to pay the Evergreen Empire not to be threatened by experts above the 9th stage.

So all low-level powers depended to some degree on higher forces, and Minos couldn't take that person's comment without speaking up.

He continued. "In any case, I don't intend to replace anyone. I will only help my allies, and whether you will need me depends more on you than on me..."

But depending on someone is better than having no one, right?

That's how it would be if Mortimer had won."

That woman clenched her fists, not knowing what to say to this person who thought he was better than them.

She had made the mistake of seeing him as someone only a little stronger than her but still as someone like them who would not go far in the future.

That's why it was harder for her to accept any kind of assistance from the Black Plain than from a state like the Flowers Kingdom.

Somehow, depending on the Black Plain seemed wrong, while depending on the Flowers Kingdom seemed familiar and acceptable.

Anyway, Minos paid no more attention to that person who wanted to find problems with what he planned and continued his conversations with the other specialists there.

Surprisingly, those who remained neutral in the situation against Mortimer would be the most favorable to Minos, not his allies.

"Sect master Stuart, it is not for nothing that the Black Plain has become such a rich and majestic state. With someone brilliant like you in leadership, only success could be at the head of that area!" A level 78 old fellow said, smiling as if Minos was his best friend.

"Thank you for your words, sect master Watts." He thanked.

Minos knew that people could be false and that man probably didn't view him so favorably. But it was better to deal with someone able to bend and adapt quickly to the new times than with someone challenging to talk to, like the woman from earlier.

That man then said. "My sect's territory borders one of the sect master's areas. So I believe we can do a lot of business in the future..."

But not only that, I have something that might be of interest to the sect master, haha."

"Oh? What do you have in mind?"

"I heard that sect master Stuart has dominated the Endless Snow Mountain Range area... I have something related to that place in my sect, haha.

If you want, we can do business about it."

Minos opened his eyes upon hearing that, surprised to hear about it in this place.

...

Chapter 1520 Always Willing To Negotiate

"What is it?" Minos asked, interested.

That sect master then said, pleased to see the interest in the eyes of that man before him. "My sect is related to the Immemorial Graves Sect. Because of that, we have some ancient books, scrolls, techniques, and one of those prehistoric creatures in our area."

"Oh? You are descendants of those people who escaped?" Minos felt surprised by this information, not expecting so casually to find such people so close to him.

"Not exactly." That man answered sincerely. "In the remote past, my ancestors did some kind of business with a merchant family and got those books and techniques.

But I don't know whether those merchants were people related to Immemorial Graves Sect or not.

As for the bones, we only understood what they were after we got those books. But they have always been in the territory that belongs to us today."

Minos understood the situation and didn't think it was bad. "So that's it... Anyway, descendants or not, those bones and books in your domain interest me."

"I figured they would interest..." That man said, pleased to have something of value to Minos.

Those things were exciting, beautiful even, and had extreme power. But their usefulness was zero to that man's organization since they didn't know how to use the energy from those bones and wouldn't dare trade with higher-level powers.

That was not only because the books they had talked about the danger of letting those bones fall into the wrong hands but because trading with people much stronger than themselves was dangerous.

What guarantee was there that they would get anything? What would prevent someone interested in those bones or the books from simply taking them and killing this man's entire sect?

The Spiritual World was dangerous, so experienced men like this sect master and his predecessors would not take unnecessary risks for something they didn't even understand the value of.

But upon finding out what Minos had recently done and using the information he already had about Emperor Stuart having dominated the Immemorial Graves Sect, this sect master wanted to use that to his advantage.

Minos was not so strong that this man feared the same as if he were to try to negotiate with a high-level empire. At the same time, Emperor Stuart had a good history of someone fair in negotiations.

Minos had already said he would not offensively punish those who remained neutral in the previous conflict, so the chances of this man getting a good deal out of this were not low.

That's why he was willing to reveal such information!

"What does the sect master want to give me those things?" Minos got straight to the point, while some people in the vicinity paid attention to what they discussed.

Most of these people had no idea what these skeletons or the Immemorial Graves Sect were. But upon noticing Minos' attraction, those interested in approaching him started paying attention to what they were talking about.

That man then said. "We can talk about it... But for now, I only hope that sect master Stuart can take my sect off his 'blacklist.'

The rest we can talk about once the sect master visits the sect and understands what I have to offer."

Minos did not find this man's attempt to get along with this inappropriate.

Naturally, anyone with good belongings had an extra chance of being forgiven for a crime!

Minos could try to take these things by force from this person, but that would not only be bad for his image but also cause him to lose people, maybe even an entire organization, for something that could be negotiated.

Emperor Stuart was someone who was almost always willing to do business, so he would not be against at least trying something like that with that man.

If this sect master were greedy and asked for too much, things would get complicated. But Minos would agree to pay even high amounts to have the items discussed without fighting.

"Hmm, very well. When I return to the Black Plain, I will pass at your sect to learn about these items." He said after thinking for a few moments, more or less knowing what skeletons might be in that sect's area due to Henricus Longus' memories.

With that settled, that sect master bid Minos a relieved farewell, staying in that place to talk to the supreme elder Edwardstone and the princess later.

After Minos talked with everyone there, those two would briefly talk with those individuals, then isolate themselves and decide on the appropriate punishments and compensations.

Then Minos would finish speaking with each of the individuals who had made their organizations neutral in this conflict until he continued his conversations with those who had sided with Mortimer.

He would have the elders of the Gray Clouds Sect apprehend the individuals who had acted against sect members for them to be subsequently punished. As for the others, they would not get any deal to alleviate their punishments, and later that day, they would have to hand over large sums of resources to Minos' men.

The imperial family would still punish them, so like the other individuals in that place, they would stay there, even though they might regret their wrong choices.

...

Hours later...

Minos was at the moment relaxing in a room of the imperial palace of the Edwardstone family next to Ruth and Gloria.

He had finished attending to all the visitors who wanted to talk to him, ask forgiveness for their actions or choices, and even give him gifts.

Many expected Minos to become the new emperor of this state, so he was treated as the imperial successor, not just the savior of the empire.

Amidst this, his men were already collecting the compensation payments he had demanded from his enemies.

The amounts and the items were not insignificant. With such amounts, to get an idea, one could finance the development from scratch of a high-level sect of this state!

With the fine that Minos had demanded, he could buy land in the Flaming Empire as large as the area of Brown, build all the necessary infrastructure for a headquarters, and even hire all the required experts.

At the same time, with the items his men were already receiving, Minos could not only pay for the men needed in an organization of this size, but he could also arm them!

His earnings would be truly majestic in this state, something that would significantly benefit his empire, which was beginning to develop the areas of the ancient Wave, End, and Snow kingdoms, as well as Stone Island.

The Spiritual Saints of the Gray Clouds Sect needed many resources when they were not in the Spatial Kingdom, and the Spiritual Emperors also needed opportunities.

Minos had secured a few years of these opportunities for his force, even while ignoring the wealth-creation potential of his state.

With that, he had taken a few hours to relax and prepare to do the pursuit he had in mind.

His men were already investigating those trying to escape, and he was just waiting to go out and start a hunt!

But this would not take long!

...