

Black Plain 1681

Chapter 1681 Confrontation

Hours after leaving Dry City, Maximillian was already in the Evergreen Empire with Darren and his three hostages.

This man knew these lands well and had easily found his way there. However, after a few million years, some things had changed, and this had slowed him down a bit.

Anyway, after some investigative work, this man found his way to the capital of the empire, where he was watching from afar at the moment.

There were methods of one hiding his tracks. Still, unfortunately, Maximillian did not have what was necessary with him to hide his aura. Because of this, he decided to observe that place from afar before showing himself.

From where he was, he could see the whole city and the people there, but one in that place would have difficulty finding him without purposely looking for him.

So while their group was floating 50 kilometers away from the surface, he was watching in the direction of the most majestic temple of the Spiritual Church.

'Hmmm, this place has really weakened since my time. When I left, 3 level 99 Demigods were in this city.' He thought as he remembered the information he had collected in Dry City and associated it with the reality he knew.

'Why has the empire weakened so much? Is it just a bad generation, or is there something else behind it?' He wondered, curious to see the situation in the Divine Continent and find out if things were strange there too.

But he left that doubt to resolve at another time and soon focused his attention on the current Supreme Pontiff, someone at the absolute peak of level 99, just like him.

'This man is not far from the end of his life, and at the level he is at, he will soon go into seclusion to try to advance. Perhaps I should simply wait for him to begin his seclusion to kill him easily? Or should I approach him and make him my subordinate?'

Seeing an opponent's abilities just by watching him was extremely difficult, even more so when one had such a high cultivation level. So even though Maximillian was extremely powerful, he couldn't estimate the Supreme Pontiff's strength for sure.

He was confident in himself of defeating any human enemy because of the Trident of God in his hands. Still, he preferred to avoid wearing down the Church, his organization.

'What to do?' He looked at the imperial palace and saw only level 97 men among the strongest there. 'None of them dress like the emperor... That means that either the emperor is cultivating or he has recently died.

Hmm, that must not be the case, or the whole continent would know about such a thing. The city would also be in chaos, and more imperial family experts would be in the palace.'

His eyes sharpened, sensing that such a person was already in the Spatial Kingdom, cultivating to advance.

'That's a problem... But he is out of my reach. I hope he doesn't have Divine medicine on hand. If he does, I hope he dies trying to advance!' He clenched his fists, thinking of what to do.

But he couldn't do that for much longer. While watching this city, the Supreme Pontiff suddenly moved, appearing in the blink of an eye in front of this group of five people.

Maximillian had made a mistake. He did not know about the innate ability of the current Supreme Pontiff of the Spiritual Church!

This level 99 man who had just appeared in front of Maximillian had an ability capable of creating a domain up to 100 kilometers away from him, where he was omniscient!

In this way, Minos' ally had been taken by surprise!

"Visitor, what are you doing in my city? Why were you watching me?" Duncan Evergreen asked while he had a serious expression on his face.

Janus saw the face of the Supreme Pontiff of the Spiritual Church and felt doubly worse, seeing this enemy of his father, who would surely kill him if he had the chance.

Meanwhile, Darren looked with interest at that man, seeing that Duncan seemed to be preparing to fight.

'That will be a magnificent battle.' He imagined a fight between the three of them.

Maximillian momentarily looked silently into Duncan's eyes and smiled bitterly, feeling his mistake. "You have a strange ability, Supreme Pontiff. I didn't expect to be caught watching you, haha.

What do I do with you now? I was still planning how to proceed with my plans."

"Your plans?" That man frowned his eyebrows even more while feeling tense.

He clearly felt that this opponent was not even a little weaker than him. At the same time, this strange person had a weapon that even he felt chills run down his spine as he watched it.

Meanwhile, several elders from the Spiritual Church and the Evergreen family noticed the Supreme Pontiff's movement and moved to that location.

In the blink of an eye, 30 cultivators between levels 97 and 98 were in the surrounding area circulating their energies, preparing for a fight against these two newly arrived colossi.

"Maximillian, what are we going to do? We will have trouble with this many experts in the surrounding area." Darren said in a low voice, beginning to feel nervous.

Fighting against just Duncan would be magnificent, but with so many specialists, their chances would not be good!

Maximillian looked at the surroundings and saw the expressions of fear and concern on those faces.

He sighed and said. "My friends, calm down. I am not an enemy but an ally. My name is Maximillian Flamen, and no, I am not an impostor, but the real one, Maximus' rival."

"Impossible! Maximillian died a long time ago!" The Supreme Pontiff exclaimed, refusing to believe such nonsense.

The people in the area didn't believe it immediately either, and this man who should be dead decided to reveal the truth.

"If you know who I am, you know my innate ability. Well, I combined my ability with a time array and spent all these years sleeping inside the Seraphim Ancient Sarcophagus.

Luckily, young Minos freed me days ago.

He can confirm who I am."

Gulp!

"Minos Stuart?" A Church elder, level 98, asked in incomprehension.

But Duncan realized that this was no lie and that such a thing explained very well how Minos had gotten the support of a level 99 Spiritual Demigod.

As for Darren, no one cared much about a beast at that level around Maximillian. He was the least of these people's worries, and this living 'mummy' could easily explain his origin.

"That... How? Why?" The Supreme Pontiff finally asked, deciding to believe that this man was an ancient member of the Church.

"About that..."

Chapter 1682 Revelation

"I was hurt back there. I tried to obtain hard-to-get things hastily and foolishly. This gave me serious injuries that could only be recovered with many years of rest.

At the time, I had the time array with me and decided not to return to lose to Maximus. I decided to take my chances and stay in the Seraphim Ancient Sarcophagus for a while. I just didn't expect that no one from my faction would return to free me.

I clearly left warnings and various methods of locating myself." Maximillian spoke mournfully, though he was not sad about how it all turned out.

In the end, he had won, and Maximus was dead!

People in the surrounding area heard that story and believed Maximillian.

His case was extraordinary, and probably no one there could repeat what he had done. But Maximillian Flamen knew many things about the Church and had unmistakable techniques and ways of fighting.

Once he showed them such things, any doubt would be removed!

These people knew that, eventually, he would have to show his skills because he had kidnapped people from the Travisani family. So they decided to believe him for the moment to confirm his identity in the future through methods less aggressive to themselves.

But a level 98 elder asked. "Why did you kidnap these men? Are you aware of the current configuration of the Central Continent?"

"Yes, young Minos and his people have helped me with the most ordinary matters about the current reality of the continent. But I will need more detailed information from you...

In any case, these men were in the Black Plain Empire to torment young Minos for freeing me. Then as I promised to protect him from the Demigods, I stopped them from acting in Dry City.

Now I still continue with them because I don't know how best to use them, haha."

Since he had been surprised by Duncan, Maximillian decided to improvise and follow the plan of turning this man into his ally before taking the Church for himself.

In his view, it would be more work to do things this way, but he felt it would be better this way because he would not have to engage in mortal battle with so many experts from the Church and the empire.

He was not afraid of these people. On the contrary, the worry about losing powerful men who would be on his side once he started his wars of conquest kept him from fighting there.

To avoid unnecessary rancor and loss of experts, he decided not to fight!

This caused the animosities in the surrounding area to diminish, making room even for some of the weaker Demigods in the city to approach that place and observe the situation more closely.

The Supreme Pontiff then said. "You should release Vico's heir. I don't like to say this, but that man is stronger than I am.

Even with this weapon in your hands, you will have difficulty facing him. So since he will discover your association with us, you had a better release this young man to avoid unnecessary friction."

"Oh? Is this person that strong?" Maximillian was curious. "Would he be stronger than Maximus in my time?"

The people in the surrounding area were silent, trying to compare the stories they had heard with what they knew about Vico.

Duncan said. "I can't tell, but they are probably very close regarding combat ability.

Vico is a very intelligent man, and he has luck on his side. Because of his many qualities, he is one of the few level 99 Demigods today who has the death of 2 same-level experts on his record."

There were few cultivators at that level, and they rarely met. Precisely because of this, it was infrequent for them to fight and even rarer for one to succeed in killing another.

So any level 99 Demigod who had same-level expert deaths in their record would naturally be considered more powerful and risky to act against.

He was the only one with such an impressive record in the entire Central Continent!

Maximillian kept this information in his mind, noting that although the continent was currently weaker, there were still those who could hinder his plans.

"I will keep that in mind. I still have to get better up to speed on life in contemporary times, so I'll keep them with me for a while longer. In any case, I doubt that releasing them will save us from trouble.

I had to kill a man from the Eastern Empire to protect the location of the island where the Seraphim Ancient Sarcophagus is."

"What?"

"That..."

"That's terrible!"

People in the surrounding area commented among themselves as the heir to the Eastern Empire clenched his fists, lamenting the loss of his state.

'So the elder Daniel died...' He closed his eyes in anger at being so weak and being in this passive situation at the hands of this enemy.

Duncan didn't like this information either, becoming a bit altered due to the sudden worry that came over him.

"What do you intend to do to protect the Church from this? That will certainly bring trouble for all of us." The Supreme Pontiff said.

Maximillian spread his arms and laughed, looking at the people in the surrounding area. "We have three level 99 cultivators here. Why fear Vico Travisani? If he wants war, let's show him his place!"

"My friend Darren and I are not afraid to fight him!"

Darren swallowed its saliva, not liking having its name used like that.

It liked battles and even more liked the possibility of devouring the bodies of powerful experts. But after hearing how monstrous Vico was, it would rather not get involved in a fight against this human.

In all its thousands of years, it had heard very few times about beings capable of killing other level 99 experts!

'Shit! I'm traveling next to a damned lunatic!'

"Anyway, I would like a place to rest after my recent trip," Maximillian said to Duncan, changing the tone of the conversation.

That man felt he couldn't solve anything at that moment, so he didn't insist on continuing this dialogue.

With a movement of his hands, he made one of his subordinates appear there to guide Maximillian.

"Guide the ancestor Maximillian Flamen through the temple. Arrange a suitable place for a figure of his caliber."

As the elders in the surrounding area dispersed, worried and with much to talk about, Maximillian and his group followed that subordinate of the Supreme Pontiff.

In their descent into the capital of the Evergreen Empire, the leader of the Blood Triangle Pirates approached them, intent on presenting his plans to this man.

"Ancestor, this here is named Norman Lynch. I am part of a group previously searching for your map to free you!"

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Chapter 1683 Maximillian's Plan

Previously, Emperor Evergreen was intent on not finding and rescuing Maximillian since no one would believe this man was still alive. The opposite of this, the goal of the one behind the Blood Triangle Pirates was to obtain the body of this Demigod and use it to his advantage.

Within the Spiritual Church, specifically in the Emperor Evergreen faction, there was a member with an innate ability that allowed her to use corpses to create warriors almost as strong as the owners of those corpses.

Maximillian was a monster who had reached near peak cultivation and had an ability everyone thought would preserve his body. So his body was valuable and, if found, could become a great weapon for the emperor of this state.

Norman knew this, but upon finding out that this man was alive, he cleverly put those plans aside and pretended that his group's goal was to free him from that sarcophagus.

Maximillian listened to the words of that level 90 Demigod and watched him with interest. "And why didn't you guys free me?"

Norman made a bad expression and said. "That's the fault of that damned Minos Stuart! He had the map in hand and hid it from us, ancestor! If not for that, we would have freed you many years ago!"

"Is that so?"

"Yes! I even went to the Black Plain to teach Minos a lesson some time ago and make him accept the mission to discover the map and deliver it to us. Still, the worm refused and severely wounded some of my men!" He said, feeling that Maximillian would take his side.

But upon hearing those words, Maximillian laughed ridiculously, for the first time in his long life hearing that a Spiritual Saint had defeated a Spiritual Demigod.

Norman was complaining while Minos survived and did things his way... Emperor Stuart had clearly beaten the fool who was now trying to talk now!

So Maximillian said. "Little Norman, I am interested in meeting your group but don't ever repeat that joke again. Did you try to pressure Minos? Do you have the nerve to say that? You should be ashamed of yourself!"

I will also forgive your insolence in acting against the person who freed me, but you never think of raising your hands against him again. Minos has my protection, and if you act against him, I will end your miserable life."

Darren looked at that level 90 Demigod and felt empathy for him, for Minos had tricked it even though it was at level 99...

But the subordinate of the Supreme Pontiff heard that and liked it, for it showed that even though Maximillian was a troublesome individual, he was also able to follow through on promises and knew how not to get involved in unnecessary matters.

He ended the Blood Triangle Pirates' grudge against Minos in a single remark!

Norman was embarrassed, but in front of this man who was even stronger than his boss, the Evergreen Emperor, he bowed his head and said. "Thanks for the tip, ancestor."

Maximillian then looked at Duncan's subordinate and said. "I have no further need of your services. Return to your master. I will stay with little Norman's group."

"As you wish." That level 93 man left immediately, leaving Maximillian's group for Norman to guide through this place.

"Little Norman, take me to your group's headquarters. I will stay there temporarily."

Norman nodded and quickly directed this specialist to the headquarters of the Blood Triangle Pirates, where there were also members of the Emperor's faction in addition to those pirates part of that force.

In this place, he would soon meet the woman who was supposed to control his corpse with her abilities, who was not happy to discover that he was still alive.

But she would not show her feelings and would follow along with other high-ranking members of the emperor's faction at the meeting starting after Maximillian arrives in this city.

Norman commanded that meeting, revealing to Maximillian the interests of the Evergreen Emperor.

"Ancestor, this group was formed by His Imperial Majesty to free you from the Seraphim Ancient Sarcophagus. We didn't know if you were alive, but if you were, we wanted to follow the plans that you had before you went to that place.

To continue the development of the Church over the Central Continent and unify those lands under the rule of a powerful Supreme Pontiff, as the ancestor would be in that position!"

After Norman's beautiful words, Maximillian looked at the people in the surrounding area, curious to know whether or not all of this was true. At any rate, even if it weren't, with him there now, these people would have no choice but to go along with this new position.

"How would we do that? The Church already has a powerful Supreme Pontiff these days..." He said, waiting to hear the plan of these people.

One of the high-level Cardinals of the Church there said. "That is true, but Supreme Pontiff Duncan Evergreen will soon reach the end of his life.

Then he will have to go into seclusion to try to advance in rank, and his position will become vacant. That will be the moment when the ancestor can take the leadership of the Church for yourself!

Currently, there is a dispute going on about this position. Still, with the ancestor's arrival, no one will contest your appointment. Even those competing will have to agree to your leadership!"

Maximillian liked what he heard and asked. "But the Supreme Pontiff can advance and become a God..."

"That's unlikely." Another high-level Demigod said. "The Supreme Pontiff was unlucky that the Church's field of Divine medicines did not have a single one of them near maturity when he reached his peak level 8,000 years ago.

One of those medicines will even mature in the next 100 years. Still, it is unlikely that he will be successful in advancing a stage with it since he is very near the end of his life."

"Oh? So a Divine-grade medicine from our Spatial Kingdom will mature soon?" This man's eyes sparkled as Darren swallowed its saliva, thinking that this would be its chance to become a God!

'That's perfect!' Maximillian lost it. "To absorb a medicine of that caliber, a cultivator has to prepare for years. Then I'll use the time to establish my dominance over the Church, and when he's about to begin absorption, I'll kill him and absorb the medicinal power instead!'

Divine Medicines were so fantastic that they could be absorbed by anyone in the vicinity of the one who ingested it.

The one who ingested it would have a better chance of advancing with it, but if they were killed, another person who tried to receive that extreme amount of energy and laws had a chance of advancing to level 100!

Through this, Maximillian intended to resolve this situation and become another Spiritual Church God!

Chapter 1684 Predicting The Future

While Maximillian was at the headquarters of the Blood Triangle Pirates, Minos' allies in the eastern and central parts of the continent were reacting to the recent news.

Blackrock, Albano, and Rosser were more confident than ever in the future of the Black Plain Empire, more certain about the wormhole ports that would connect their states very soon.

Amid this, the Flaming Empire was not in a very different situation, with the local powers slowly realizing that even with so much pressure on them, Minos still had cards up his sleeve to play.

At this crucial moment, something important to him had finally been decided after years of delay!

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In Payton, Isabella was standing in front of her father, going through an official ceremony at this very moment.

After years of her experience of almost becoming the empress of this empire, the Church had finished the process to fully return the position to Emperor Edwardstone.

From this day forward, she would only be an heiress and no longer have many responsibilities keeping her away from Minos!

Also, Harold had already agreed to give his daughter to Minos, and the two were expected to marry once she was free of her responsibilities to the Flaming Empire.

Because of this, this young redhead could soon arrange her marriage with Minos and make her position as Emperor Stuart's fourth wife official.

"Very well, Isabella, as of today, you will become second in line of succession to the Flaming Empire," Harold said as his empress stood not far from him in that imperial throne room.

She had a big smile while her two hands rested on her belly, which was much larger than normal.

Isabella looked at her second mother and smiled, even happier than the empress for this pregnancy that had come about a few months ago and had made everything easier for her.

The whole empire was already aware that Harold would have his first child in a few years!

When Minos had shown how much support his empire had, Harold finally decided to release his daughter to go and live on the Black Plain.

"I hope you have a happy life on the Black Plain, but come visit your family occasionally. Your brother will certainly need your assistance in the future." This red-haired man said as he finished that ceremony.

"I will come whenever possible, Father." She said, thrilled as she would gain a brother but much more eager to go to the Black Plain to join Minos and the Stuart family.

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While the Edwardstone family was celebrating Isabella's departure ceremony, the group of descendants of the Goddess of Life's relatives had seen enough of Dry City to make up their minds.

They had only stayed a short time in this city, but as Spiritual Sages, this short time was enough for them to conclude that this place was promising.

Not only were the services already close to reaching a level relevant to Spiritual Sages, but the training grounds in this city were also excellent, providing training areas suitable for even 9th-stage cultivators.

At the same time, this state had regular production of high-grade crystals and good relations with various powers on the continent, which is important for future local development.

Yet, given its northernmost position, far away from the most powerful empires, this place was in a privileged position for those who wanted to stay away from conflicts.

In particular, these people were already aware of the meeting of Vico, Henry, and Willow, so hiding in the Black Plain Empire didn't seem so bad anymore.

The option beyond that was to fight Minos and flee to the Divine Continent. Still, neither part of that alternative seemed easy.

Traveling to the Divine Continent would have many dangers and disadvantages, but fighting Minos seemed more complicated than they thought.

From the rumors they had heard locally, Minos had even faced a Demigod and managed to escape, having injured mid- and high-level Spiritual Sages that day.

If such a rumor were true, they would even have trouble facing him!

Thinking about all these points and how joining Minos could give them better benefits than ordinary citizens had, those nobles returned to the imperial palace to give their answer to him.

"Are we really going to join this Minos?" The level 81 woman, the current matriarch of that family, asked her companions, who had voted in favor of them joining the Stuart Emperor.

"That is the best way for us to go..." The level 83 woman commented.

The level 80 nobleman said. "Minos will undoubtedly become a Spiritual Sage, sister. At that time, he will be even stronger than he is now and will have advantages in negotiations with us.

So isn't it better to settle with him now that he is not so strong and get a better deal for us? I see no problem in lending my forces to this state. This place doesn't look bad, and we need a home."

That woman couldn't go against those words and stayed silent, even though she didn't like having to make a deal with someone who manipulated them.

The level 85 man said nothing to them, feeling they had better not continue alone through this world now that things would become chaotic further south on the continent.

"Soon, the Black Plain Empire may become an area of calm for those fleeing the war. This will favor local trade and bring people even stronger than us here.

Whoever arrives first will be able to take better advantage of the opportunities that will arise and be part of the force that will have the best chance to grow in the coming decades." He analyzed the situation, showing his leader the advantages of going with this plan.

This man had studied how the Black Plain had grown so much and seen that the recent past had great chances of repeating itself in the coming decades.

If that were the case, it would become much more difficult for Spiritual Sages to join Minos in the future, just as had happened to Spiritual Kings previously.

In the past, Spiritual Kings had great ease in joining the local army, but currently, someone like that had to pass through several barriers to enter these forces.

No one with that kind of cultivation strength could join Minos by invitation!

Feeling that this would be repeated in the future, this man encouraged those nobles to go ahead with these plans!

"Very well, let's see how Minos will welcome us into his organization." Still in doubt, that woman sighed before they finally entered the imperial throne hall.

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Chapter 1685 New Members Of The Black Plain Army

When they arrived in front of Minos, those four stopped in front of the other members of their group so that the emperor could easily notice that there were 17 people there.

Minos knew they wished to meet him a few minutes ago, so he got right to the point upon seeing them there. "Well? Have you decided to join my forces?"

The level 85 man made a common gesture for people subordinating themselves to others and said it aloud. "Yes, Your Majesty. We are here to pledge eternal loyalty to you if the conditions are not abusive."

Minos liked what he heard, while his imperial guards in the surrounding area smiled, feeling that their strength would significantly improve with all these high-level Spiritual Sages and Spiritual Saints.

Most in the group of these distant relatives of the Goddess of Life were Spiritual Sages, but some of them were Spiritual Saints.

This was not their entire group. Somewhere, the weakest, the children and elders of this family were hiding.

But since their enemies only wanted the heads of the nobles in the group, the weaker ones had been left in a safe place while they fled with the stronger ones.

That's why there were only 17 people there, even though these people had their younger or older relatives still alive.

Minos said. "As long as you are good and loyal to me, you will have a home to call your own and people to fight by your side, protect you and even take revenge.

In exchange for your loyalty and service, I will give you opportunities for cultivation and protection.

I will arm you with the best artifacts whenever possible, and I promise to take as many of you as I can to the 10th stage!"

"If that is the case, we agree to subordinate ourselves to Your Majesty Minos Stuart." That man said, feeling that those words were enough for them to go through with it.

They would sign Soul Contracts eventually. But for now, Minos' promises were good enough for them to follow through with this agreement.

They all bent their knees to Minos and took their oaths.

After half an hour, Minos had already heard the names of each of these men and women, getting 11 Spiritual Sages between levels 80 and 85 and 6 Spiritual Saints between levels 78 and 79.

Because of this, he smiled in a satisfied manner as he spoke, "We will expedite the papers for you to sign. Only after that can I begin to offer you the best opportunities on my wings.

However, you can now be considered my subordinates, so tell me more about your situation. I am eager to get to know more about you and find out how to help you."

The level 80 young man stepped forward and said. "Your Majesty, our family has been declining for the past 100,000 years. Because of this, we had to change our surname once again during this period, and the surname of the Goddess of Life today only exists in our memories.

Before this, we had already suffered other problems that caused us to lose important members and permanently weakened our family. But eventually, we managed to get rid of those problems.

However, today we are still pursued by the same enemies that made us change our name last time.

This is the royal house of the Veora Kingdom, the Veora family!"

The level 83 woman continued what this fellow had been saying. "About 100,000 years ago, one of our ancestors found something valuable to that family and hid it for future enjoyment.

Unfortunately, that drew the will of that family to us, and even without that item, we were hunted and chased by them for all that time.

That ancestor died before he could pass on where he had hidden it to us, so none of us know where he hid it.

In this situation, many of us died without having anything to talk about, and many others were forced to disperse around the world, losing contact with the core of our family.

After all this period, our family has become weaker, and even though our ancestors have wrought our demise, there are still those from the Veora family who still seek us out."

"Oh? You have such a history?" Minos took an interest in that. "But if your mortal enemies are members of the Veora family, why were you still around those lands? If I were in your place, I would have fled the Central Continent long ago."

That woman nodded, agreeing with Minos. "The rest of our family did that. They currently live in a small tribe elsewhere, in an area where humans can live in peace.

But the strongest among us decided to take an alternative path. Many of our relatives have died over the past 100,000 years, and we can't just stand still!"

The level 81 woman said. "We were in the lands of our enemies, for despite the danger of being there, that is where the item hidden by our ancestor is.

Since they hurt us so badly for something we don't even have, we are committed to finding such a thing and using it against the cursed Veora family!"

"What is this item about?" Minos asked.

The level 85 man looked at him in silence for a moment and answered in place of those nobles. "That should be one of the idols of the Veora family. According to the legends, this family has three sacred items that can collect something called Faith Power and use that to facilitate the cultivation of Demigods.

We know that this family only has 2 of these idols currently, so the third one must be the one that the ancestor hid."

Minos knew how the Faith Power worked, so upon hearing this, he was pleased to hear that one of his subordinates knew about the possible location of one of these.

Although magnificent, this kind of power was difficult to convert into real power. There were a few methods used to do this, but they were all secret, and few in the Spiritual World had relevant information about them.

Even Henricus Longus hadn't left much knowledge about this to Minos since it was still under development in his period.

The Faith Power had only been discovered with the appearance of the Gods, but Henricus Longus had been the first human to achieve this feat.

As such, Minos lacked an item that could be used to collect this kind of power!

Even though it was possible to use faith without such a thing, having such an item was much better. So he decided to help them in this quest!

"Very well, I will help you with this, as long as I can use this item in the future..."

Chapter 1686 Temporary Retreat

Hearing that, those distant relatives of the Goddess of Life's family saw no problem since they themselves could not use such a thing.

Faith Power was only created through the worship of known figures. But they were totally unknown to 99.9% of the Spiritual World, while Minos had billions of people who depended on him.

In this case, it made perfect sense to let Emperor Stuart use such a thing if he would help them collect it and get in the way of the Veora family.

"That's not a problem for us." The group leader looked at her companions and agreed after seeing them nod in the affirmative.

Minos smiled and said. "Very well, now that I know about your history and dangers related to your people, we can plan things together. However, for the moment, we are weak and have more urgent problems to solve.

Therefore, I ask you to hold on to your revenge for a while longer. We will pursue this matter in the future when both my empire and you are stronger."

Those people did not expect to achieve their goal in a short time, nor that Minos would get stronger quickly, so they already expected that they would have to spend some time in this empire without getting involved with their desire for revenge.

This would also be good for hiding their tracks, so none of them complained about Minos' words.

With that settled, their group would soon disperse into Dry City to get to know the place better and wait for the low-level grade-4 spiritual judges Minos would request from the Flowers Kingdom.

Only people of that level could confirm a Soul Contract between him and these people, and no one else close to Minos had professionals like that other than those women.

So it would take a few days before they could learn about the Black Plain Empire's most important secrets and matters.

But there were many things they could be involved in right away!

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While the descendants of the Goddess of Life's family were beginning to integrate into Minos' forces, the Veora Kingdom royal family envoys were camped near the Black Plain Empire's core.

Earlier, a group of high-level Spiritual Saints had been dispatched by one of the princes of that state to Dry City with orders to offer aid to this state.

The interest of that member of the royalty was to hinder the advance of the Spiritual Church in the northern region and make it difficult for this enemy group to collect faith power in that area.

However, while this group was traveling, its members ran into a problem. The news of Minos' return alongside two level 99 Spiritual Demigods!

This was no small thing, and a state like theirs that didn't even have level 97 Demigods couldn't casually take a chance on someone connected to such strong people!

As such, this group had stopped their journey towards Dry City days ago and was waiting for a return from their sovereign to know how to proceed.

Meanwhile, they were camping in the Cromwell region, waiting peacefully.

But this wait would not last long!

On this day, a message finally reached them!

"Come on, people, let's return to the kingdom." Their leader said right after reading the prince's words.

"What? Are we really giving up?"

"We have no choice. A level 99 Demigods are involved with this state, and from recent news, the western region may face a calamity soon.

His Majesty himself is calling back all the family members, so His Highness has decided to back off from his plans for the Black Plain Empire for the time being." That man said, feeling that this would be better.

The situation on the continent was getting strange with Henry and Vico's movements and the arrival of Maximillian and Darren. As such, in times of uncertainty, the best thing to do would be to shut down and not get involved with the unknown!

Those men in this group felt a bit frustrated but soon understood that this retreat was for their family's own good.

With this, they would soon gather their things and return to the west!

...

Meanwhile, in the Snow region...

In this area commanded by the Snow family, where in recent times various external powers had been interfering in the local situation, the Supreme Pontiff's disciple was in an outpost of the Church in this area.

Forrest, level 92, had come to this state weeks ago to provide his assistance after he met with Minos.

While Emperor Stuart and Gloria were missing from the Black Plain Empire, Forrest had spent his time at this outpost near the east coast of the Black Plain Empire, where many experts passed through every week.

This was not a good place for a Spiritual Demigod like him to stay for long, as it was very poor in many ways. But with his mission to approach Minos peacefully and the passage of many experts through there, this was the best place for him to wait.

Experts from all over the Central Continent were passing through this place to go to Elves Island, so he could at least take advantage of the situation to make contacts.

But in his wait here, he had heard about Minos' unexpected ally and more about this person's connection to the Spiritual Church!

...

"What? Maximillian Flamen is still alive? How is that possible?" He asked one of his subordinates, who had just brought this information to him.

"It seems that his innate ability was better than we thought..." That woman dressed in silver robes said this to the handsome man before her. "In any case, the Supreme Pontiff is calling you back, Cardinal Howell. The core of the Church will be meeting in the next few days to talk about the future."

Forrest clenched his fists as he heard this, uncertain about what would happen from now on with this gigantic variable that had just emerged.

It had been a long time since the Church had had two level 99 cultivators in its ranks at the same time, so thinking about this present situation, this disciple of Duncan couldn't help but worry.

"What about Minos?" He asked.

"The Supreme Pontiff didn't quote Minos, but from what I've heard from other factions, everyone will back off their pressure towards his and Matriarch Gloria Frost's group.

As talented as they are, their potential is no match for Maximillian's power. So as long as there is uncertainty about him, I judge that none of the major factions will pursue their pressures against the faction of these two."

"Sigh... This is terrible. All our plans are already being disrupted!" He said but decided to follow that recommendation.

Following that conversation, he would soon depart back to the Evergreen Empire.

Chapter 1687 Consequence: Peace!

Due to the uncertainties concerning Maximillian and his companion, Darren, each of the most powerful factions of the Spiritual Church would retreat from their moves against Minos and Gloria's group over the next few days.

Even the most vigorous faction against Minos and Gloria, Prince Calvert's group, would move their attention away from the Black Plain Empire, dropping their plans regarding them and calling their men back to the Evergreen Empire.

Other powers of the Central Continent were also stopping paying attention to Minos' empire to turn their attention to Maximillian and his emergence in the capital of the Evergreen Empire.

With 2 level 99 Demigods emerging on the continent and their strange actions, no one had time to pay attention to a young Spiritual Saint anymore.

As such, Minos would soon find himself in a perfect situation where even if Maximillian had not sworn to protect his state, he would still benefit from releasing him from his slumber!

The very presence of this man on the Central Continent would be enough to drive almost all the problems of the current Black Plain away!

Peace and opportunities for growth would finally return to this state without the pressures that had been hindering them in recent years!

...

As the continent's attention moved from the Black Plain Empire to the Evergreen Empire, Isabella arrived in Dry City after departing from Payton.

Upon arriving there, she immediately met Minos and solved each other's longing in their own special way...

After the warm meeting of the two, they met with the rest of the family to deal with this woman's situation, who, from now on, would join this family permanently.

"So you are finally free of your responsibilities?" Gloria asked Isabella, already resigned to the situation she was in.

She didn't like more women joining their family, but Isabella had already been with Minos for several years, and she, Abby, and Ruth already expected that sooner or later, she would marry him.

Considering the power of Minos currently and the situation of the Black Plain Empire and the Flaming Empire, it was already expected that this would happen in a short time.

Isabella replied with a smile on her face. "Yes, from now on, I no longer have to keep returning to the empire. I will only make periodic visits, but I don't plan to return to Payton before the birth of my little brother."

"Hmm, that's good. We will finally be able to live without any more problems and without having to hide the truth." Ruth said.

While Isabella was in Dry City in the past, they always had to be careful when going to and from the Spatial Kingdom, as well as having to justify their absences constantly.

This was something that could be done, but it irritated those who every time had to follow various protocols so as not to create suspicion.

With her upcoming marriage to Minos, the rest of the family could stop lying to her soon!

"Uh? What are you talking about?" Isabella wondered at that.

"You'll understand this soon enough," Abby said. "We won't go into details for now, but there are things you will discover when your loyalty is only to Minos and no one else."

Minos smiled at her and said. "Don't think too much about it. Certain secrets can only be known by those not very committed... Anyway, we are getting married in the next few months, so you will understand that soon enough."

Isabella was more curious after those words, but since she would find out when her marriage was confirmed to Minos, she didn't insist on them talking about it at the moment.

So she changed the subject. "But I'm impressed with the ally you got... How did you do it?"

Minos smiled and said. "I was lucky. By all means, make no mistake. It benefits me in the short term, but there are future dangers that will also be associated with it."

So it's too early for us to say whether this was as good as everyone thinks at the moment."

"What does that mean?" She grew more serious.

"I believe that the entire continent will face grand challenges very soon. Our state is safe in the short term, but we can't say anything for the future.

The current headwinds may lead us toward a calamity far worse than our situation before Maximillian returns." Minos said, knowing that only time would tell if his desperate act of following the map of the Seraphim Ancient Sarcophagus had been correct.

But he had no regrets. What was done could not be undone, and at least for now, he could become stronger to face future challenges.

That was already the best scenario he could have for this moment!

As for future problems, it was better to face them further ahead than now!

"I see... I hope everything ends well." She said, still on the outside of Minos and his family's greatest fears.

"Anyway, I have something to do now. Are you going to accompany me, or will you stick around?" Minos stood up from the couch in his living room, intending to do something he had been putting aside since arriving in Dry City.

"What is it?" Isabella asked as Minos' three other women watched him curiously.

"While I was traveling recently, I got the corpse of a level 85 beast. I intend to bury it in the Brown region, near the main spiritual root of that area.

That corpse will help raise the quality of that area for Spiritual Emperors to develop locally without having to come to the core empire." He said, improving his expression and showing a nice smile.

Hearing that, Isabella became interested in following him, while Abby and Gloria decided to stay in Dry City, minding their own business.

"I'll go with you," Ruth said after those two decided to stay in Dry City.

With that decided, Minos, Isabella, and Ruth would soon depart the empire's capital towards the Brown area, this area that had developed considerably in recent years.

Not only was the Brown area one of the closest to the empire's core, but it had also been the first to be forced under Minos' rule when he created the assembly of this area in his expansionist move years ago.

Because of that act, Minos invested much more than usual in that area and generated good development of the territory still commanded by the Brown family.

Yet, even with the improvements it had undergone over the years, the Brown area was still not rich in spiritual energy, and the area's Spiritual Emperors had all advanced in level to the core of the empire.

But that was close to changing with this move by Minos!

Chapter 1688 Brown Family Situation

After some time since leaving Dry City, Minos, and his women arrived in the City of the Setting Sun, the main city of the Brown area.

In this place where the local assembly was, but which was also where the spiritual root of this area was closest, Minos and his women appeared about this place, drawing the attention of the local observers.

The first to notice something was the members of the Black Plain Army stationed in that city to maintain local security. But soon, the Spiritual Emperors of the local forces noticed the sovereign's arrival and moved to welcome him.

"Your Majesty, welcome back to the City of the Setting Sun!" A group of Brown family guards said loudly while making gestures appropriate for the situation.

"Hmm, this place looks like it has been well taken care of over the years... Your family hasn't done a bad job of managing this area for me." Minos commented as he looked at the surroundings and saw streets and buildings of similar quality to those in Dry City.

Of course, there were differences, but they were mainly in the strength of the population and consequent 'luster' that such a place had less than the empire's capital. But even so, this city differed greatly from the one he had left decades ago when he was only 15 years old.

In some ways, the central city in the Brown area now looked more like the Dry City of 20 years ago than the place Minos had left behind when he had just begun his cultivation journey.

Ruth and Isabella paid attention to these details and nodded their heads, seeing that Minos' development had also already affected places outside the area affected by the Dry City spiritual root.

Many corpses of enemies had been buried around the Black Plain Empire over the past decades. Because of this, the entire empire could be considered of better quality than the old northern region, with more areas with a good density of spiritual energy and laws.

But compared to the core of the empire, the other areas, except for Vogel, still paled in comparison to the region where Dry City was located.

"We have much to improve, Your Majesty." The main guard of that group said this, smiling as he showed the way to Minos. "Your Majesty wishes to see Their Excellencies Raynard and Diana?"

Minos nodded, feeling that it did him good to let those who administered that area for him know what he would do there.

Raynard was the son of King Brown, the first major enemy Minos had faced on his journey. As for Diana, this was his older sister, who had left the sect she belonged to in the Flaming Empire to return to her family.

Currently, she was at level 66, while her brother was at level 63, both having advanced quite a bit despite their less impressive talents and resources than those of Minos and his people.

Both still remembered how Minos had ended their father's life and ended the long history of the Brown Kingdom. But nowadays, both of them no longer harbored any resentment, for Minos belonged to a level they could not even dream of.

It was also because of him that they had come so far in cultivation and still had room for growth. So even though they still remembered that he had once been an enemy, they had both come to terms with it and no longer wished for revenge.

Time had passed, and life had moved on. Diana had married a new subordinate of her family after the creation of the local assembly, and Raynard had even gained his first child.

King Brown's widow had not married another person, but after years since his death, she had gained a new light with the birth of her first grandchild.

Due to the recent history of the Brown family, when Minos, Ruth, and Isabella came to them, none showed resentment in their eyes and expressions.

"Your Majesties, Your Highness..." They prostrated to Minos, Ruth, and Isabella, eager to know what this rare occasion was all about.

Minos rarely visited their domains since becoming a Spiritual Saint.

Usually, the ones who did this sort of thing were his most trusted imperial guards, high-ranking soldiers, and, most recently, Sarah.

So seeing him there after more than seven years without seeing this impressive fellow, everyone there was curious about the reason for this visit.

Minos smiled and got straight to the point. "Members of the Brown family, I am here to give you a gift today.

As the first area I developed after my state's expansion, I will bury a corpse of a Spiritual Sage near the local spiritual root today.

With this corpse, the spiritual energy density of this area should rise a bit in a few years and facilitate the cultivation of Spiritual Emperors.

After these years, I hope that Spiritual Kings will be able to advance their stage even without leaving this area of Brown and be able to reach level 69 without any problems living here."

With these beautiful words from Minos, each of the members of this family showed smiles on their faces, feeling that such a thing would help them greatly.

"Your Majesty is truly magnanimous!" Diana thanked him in front of everyone, feeling this would help her immensely, something perfect for her family.

"Thank you for choosing us, Your Majesty!"

After some thanks and swearing from those people, Minos said. "If anyone here would like to observe, please accompany me. I will bury that body to the south of the city."

They left the local government center right after that, while some nobles from that area of Brown, members of the assembly, followed them at a distance.

The Brown area was like many others around the empire. The only Saints were men directly subordinate to Minos, members of his army, government, the faction of the Church, or the Gray Clouds Sect.

No nobles native to the northern region from outside the central part of the empire had reached the 8th stage.

As such, only low and mid-level Spiritual Emperors followed Minos' movements in this city, accompanying him and his women digging and burying the body of a gigantic beast.

Some would shiver just to see the corpse of such a strong creature, noting the combat proficiency that Minos had reached.

Such was the case with Misty, the former wife of a victim of Minos, who had gone from hating him to worshipping and even submitting to him, even though having married the leader of the Snow region.

Misty was currently at level 64, but still, she couldn't help but shudder at feeling the power of that corpse.

Gulp!

'Minos fought such a strong creature?' She wondered as she felt a little excited, missing the last time she had been intimate with the emperor...

Chapter 1689 Peace For The Empire

After all these years, Minos' touch had still been the one that had stirred Misty the most, even though she had become Ambrose Snow's wife and had even already conceived the birth of two heirs to that man.

Unfortunately for her, the years living in Snow's area had taken her away from Minos, and the few times she had been with him sexually were many years old.

Seeing him as she passed through that area to do business, she couldn't help but feel part of herself longing for that man, getting wet even as she felt fear of that creature's corpse.

But even with such feelings, her excitement was so much more, as she was confident that that beast had been killed by that man who had already dominated her in bed more than a dozen times.

She continued to watch him from afar and squeezed her thighs with her hands but without the courage to approach.

Misty had been an enemy of Minos in the past, not a friend who could casually approach him whenever she wanted. As such, without him calling her, she would not go to him, even though she wanted him so badly.

As she thought about him, about how she would touch herself later thinking about her sovereign, Minos had noticed the presence of everyone in the vicinity but had not bothered.

After a few minutes of work alongside Ruth and Isabella, they finished burying the corpse of that beast.

"All right, don't mess with this area. In a few years, you will notice the results of this action.

Notify me of the development of this." He said as he looked at Diana and Raymond, preparing to leave.

...

A few days later...

After Minos and those two women returned to Dry City, it wasn't long before Sista's group sought him out to talk about their queen's decision.

After days in this city, they finally had an answer to their previous conversations.

Queen Sista already knew about Maximillian's situation and that this man would side with the Spiritual Church. At the same time, she had Minos' answers and his potential in mind.

With all this, she had concluded that there was only one way forward now!

"Your Majesty Minos Stuart, my mother has decided to continue our partnership for now." The Third Prince of Sista informed Minos with a smiling expression on his face. "We will reassess this in 10 years, so until then, we can exchange information and move forward with what had been previously talked about."

"Oh?" Minos smiled, noting that his daughter was right.

Queen Sista had decided not to stand against him nor to be with him permanently without knowing more about the future.

Minos saw no problem with that and said. "That's good. I hope we can work well together in the next decade."

"Hmmm."

"For the rest, I am sure we will renew our vows in another ten years."

The prince said nothing more, and after some of his bodyguards informed him of some details of what would happen from now on, they departed.

From now on, they would stay in Sista indefinitely, waiting for the chaotic times approaching in their western region!

With their departure, Minos had all recent matters settled, and now it remained for the Flowers Kingdom group to come to his state to confirm his agreements with the Spiritual Sages, who were relatives of the Goddess of Life, for him to continue developing amidst his temporary peace.

As he stood alone in his throne room, Minos had a serious look on his face as he sat in the most important position in the area.

'That is the peace that comes before a great storm... After that period, I am sure that the threat that Henricus Longus expected will hit us!'

"I hope to be ready when that time comes!"

...

Another week passed...

While the Black Plain Empire was experiencing its best time in many years, with peace, little pressure on the local forces, and plenty of room to grow, a group from the Flowers Kingdom reached that state.

This group was led by one of Minos' rivals from years ago, his second opponent in that kingdom, whom he had defeated to free his grandfather.

Bridget McBride!

Currently, the third in the line of succession of the Flowers Kingdom was at level 80, having advanced a stage after the years that had passed since Minos' departure.

Upon hearing about Minos' request, she departed from her state alongside the spiritual judge who would confirm the agreement of Minos and the Spiritual Sages descended from the relatives of the Goddess of Life.

She had not weakened after her terrifying defeat of him. On the contrary, she had overcome that and used such a thing to make herself even stronger, having achieved two breakthroughs in these few years.

Upon arriving in the capital of the Black Plain Empire, she didn't bother to get to know the place and was soon standing in front of Minos, seeing this former opponent.

"Minos, you have become more handsome, haha. Too bad I couldn't acquire your genes." She said while massaging her big belly.

Minos was standing next to Abby at the moment, and they both looked with narrowed eyes at that belly.

"You're pregnant, huh?" He said in a low voice. "Poor fellow..."

"Tsk! He was fortunate to pass on his genes to me, Minos. Our daughter will be a great warrior." She said, not bothered by the looks on these people's faces. "Unfortunately, he died after our ceremony..."

"It's a shame..." Minos commented before changing the subject. "Anyway, thank you for bringing a grade-4 spiritual judge with you. That will help me a lot."

"Hmm, about that, my mother has some questions for you." Bridget became more serious. "Your sudden alliance with Maximillian Flamen has shocked us quite a bit. Can you explain to us what your relationship is with him? Do you know of his interests?"

"I can't speak for him. But I imagine that his plans are dangerous for those opposed to him. So I advise you not to stand against senior Maximillian."

But none of this has anything to do with me. Our relationship comes down to the protection my state will have from him and how I freed him."

"Freed him?"

"Hmm, well, I guess there's no point in hiding it. Soon everyone will find that out, so I'll tell you, as long as you don't go off talking about it." He said, then seeing Bridget indicate that she would keep this information to those high up in her family.

"I released him from the Seraphim Ancient Sarcophagus. He is Maximillian Flamen, Pope Maximus' rival."

...

Chapter 1690 The Expansion Of Gloria's Faction

After hearing Minos explain how he met Maximillian and got the support of this level 99 Demigod, Bridget was shocked to the core.

But she didn't doubt Minos, as she couldn't find another explanation for this man getting the support of someone so strong and why such a person seemed to get along so well with the Church.

Her state had information about what was happening in the Evergreen Empire, so by connecting Minos' information with things she already knew, this princess understood his words as true.

"I don't know what to say... This seems so unreal." She muttered as she looked into Minos' brown eyes.

Minos smiled and said. "You can't imagine my shock when I released him... Anyway, this is the reality, and now Maximillian is among us again.

I cannot speak of his plans, for I do not know myself. All I can say is what I have heard through his story, but you must already know more than I do."

She nodded at him, figuring that if Maximillian followed his old plans, the continent would face hard times soon.

'No wonder the forces in the western region are moving! They knew what was happening before everyone else and are moving to protect themselves from Maximillian Flamen's expansionist interests!'

She looked at the ground as she thought, trying to understand the position of the Flowers Kingdom under these circumstances.

'We are not enemies of the Evergreen Empire, nor of the Church. We have good relations with those powers. But we are not part of their territory.' She wondered, fearing that Maximillian was going to target her family somehow. 'This is bad. I must warn my mother as soon as possible!'

"Very well, I'll leave Lady Ulva with you now. I hope you confirm those Soul Contracts as soon as possible." Bridget said as she nodded to the spiritual judge she had brought with her.

Right after saying those words, she left the imperial throne hall, going to send Minos' answers to Hannah McBride.

Minos and his people were not bothered by Bridget's agitated manner. Soon the emperor ordered his men to call back to the capital all the Spiritual Sages from the group of descendants of the Goddess of Life's family.

Minos had already signed the agreements with the Spiritual Saints of that group using high-level grade-3 spiritual judges, so the Spiritual Sages were the ones left for this.

...

While Bridget was sending her information to the Flowers Kingdom and Minos was moving forward with strengthening his forces, Gloria was at the Dry City Temple.

At this regional headquarters of the Spiritual Church, she was with her subordinates and faction allies receiving a group that had just arrived in Dry City from the Evergreen Empire.

After her subordinates used their connection with the women of the Flowers Kingdom, they managed to start conversations with medium and small factions of the Church.

Because of this, for the past few days, groups from the Evergreen Empire, Blackrock, and the Flaming Empire had been arriving in Dry City to negotiate with her.

Not all Church factions were in the Evergreen Empire. Some of them existed in smaller places like Blackrock.

Even though Blackrock and the Flaming Empire were areas already influenced by Minos, not all of the Church groups in those states were allied with Gloria and her husband's faction.

Because of this reality, there was still room for them to expand in these places!

Gloria had recently met people from two factions in these states and reached merger agreements with them.

According to these agreements, she would receive the members of these factions into her group and give relevant positions to the leaders of these factions, as well as guarantee resources and possibilities of ascension to them.

These were smaller factions than hers, so she had easily gotten these agreements.

But today, she was facing a group from the Evergreen Empire. This group was a bit stronger than her own, with low-level Spiritual Sages in charge of that faction.

As such, today's negotiation would not be as easy as the ones she had been through recently.

"Natives of the Evergreen Empire, welcome to my city. I hope the journey here has been comfortable." Gloria said to the people sitting on the other side of a long oval table, smiling.

The people in the group opposite Gloria smiled back at her while their leader, a blond, young-looking, level 83 man, said. "The trip was very pleasant, Matriarch Gloria Frost. The Black Plain Empire is well-organized and has beautiful scenery."

"Hmm, it gets easy to travel here with the current configuration of the continent, haha." A woman from that group said. "His Majesty has over half the continent under his influence, so there is virtually no opposition to those with interests favorable to him in those areas."

If all the domains of Minos and his allied states were counted, he had over 7 billion people on his side and just over 55% of the land in the Central Continent.

The Evergreen Empire bordered the Flaming Empire, so for these Church members who had left their state's capital, they had pretty much only traveled through the domains of Minos.

Thus, their journey to this city had been smooth and quick!

Gloria smiled at them and got right to the point of the conversation. "Hmm, I am pleased to hear that. Anyway, I would like to know more about your faction's interests. What do you aim to achieve? And more importantly, where would my faction come into your plans?"

Those people grew more serious at those words, and soon one of them answered Gloria's questions.

"Our interest is to become a high-level faction within the Church. Today we have average influence and have 30 Church posts on our side, as well as over a thousand members.

However, one day we want to reach hundreds of posts and numbers of members up to 10 times greater than today's."

"Through this, one day we will reach enough to be influential even in important decisions like choosing a new Supreme Pontiff." One of the two women in that group said.

They had no intention of one of them becoming the leader of the Church or of their faction choosing that leader. They were too far off the level to think about that and didn't have the support that Gloria had to think she could achieve such a thing.

Their goal was simpler, although some of them thought that if one day everything worked out, their descendants would have the chance to have that dream.

...