

Gods Daily 138

Chapter 138: The Gigantic Energy Stone Vein

As the level of the Life Sorcerers increased, more and more useful abilities would gradually be unlocked.

The required Emperor Points for each advancement grew more demanding, but at the same time, the number of warriors they could cultivate each day also rose significantly.

So long as the enemies of the empire had not been completely eradicated, Aurek had no fear that he would ever lack for points. War itself was his inexhaustible fountain of resources.

At present, the Doomsday Warriors and Elemental Assassins each increased by four hundred per day. The Mountain Shieldbearers contributed another two hundred, and the newly birthed Life Sorcerers added one hundred more. In total, Aurek now commanded the ability to produce eleven hundred attribute warriors every single day!

This astonishing speed filled him with deep satisfaction. The empire's might was no longer a fragile structure—its foundations were being rebuilt brick by brick with soldiers of steel, sorcery, and faith.

[The Emperor's Scepter holds sufficient energy. Would you like to cultivate Life Sorcerers?]

The glowing interface once again prompted Aurek for his command.

He confirmed.

The Emperor's Scepter in his hand pulsed with a soft emerald radiance. From its tip, one hundred spheres of light flew outward, descending into the chamber of the Mandate Palace. Each orb burst apart like a seed sprouting in fertile soil, taking on the form of a lithe, graceful silhouette.

Before Aurek's eyes, one hundred figures materialized.

They were utterly unlike any of the other summoned warriors.

Every one of them was clad in close-fitting armor of teal leather that outlined their long, slender forms. Their hair was tied neatly back, practical and clean. Their presence exuded vitality—eyes shining with clarity, gazes brimming with devotion and a kind of sacred enthusiasm.

They were life incarnate.

"Before our Lord, we bow!"

A hundred voices rang together, harmonizing like the sound of pure mountain springs cascading across stone. Their bodies sank to one knee, forming a tableau of reverence.

Aurek's gaze swept across them, assessing each one carefully, before finally settling on a particular sorceress at the very front.

Her aura was calmer, more dignified than the rest. There was a poise in her stance, a serenity in her eyes, that marked her as different—born to lead.

"You shall be called Eva," Aurek declared, his voice resonant in the palace hall. "From this day forward, you shall command all Life Sorcerers under my banner."

"Your divine will shall be obeyed!"

Eva bowed deeply, her tone reverent.

A glowing book appeared, floating above her open palm—the Tome of Life, radiating gentle green light, vines etched upon its cover pulsing with vitality.

"My Lord," Eva spoke, her voice clear and composed, "to fulfill our sacred purpose, we must first come into contact with a wide variety of herbs and plants. We must sense and record their life essence into the Tome of Life. Only by amassing sufficient knowledge of these sources can we begin performing Vital Genesis and condense potion essences for your use."

Aurek considered her words for a moment before giving a short nod.

"I shall arrange it swiftly."

Unlike the other warrior units—bred solely for battle—the Life Sorcerers required specialized workplaces, a steady supply of rare ingredients, and an environment conducive to research. They were scholars and healers as much as they were soldiers, and they needed resources in order to wield their full potential.

Leaving the Mandate Palace, Aurek returned toward the imperial sleeping chambers.

"Your Majesty!"

Angie, the ever-loyal attendant, was already waiting outside the hall. Seeing Aurek approach, she immediately stepped forward and bowed.

"Your Majesty, the old prince has returned!"

Aurek's stride faltered slightly.

"...Let him in."

His tone was flat, revealing no trace of joy or anger.

"Also," he continued, "have the Kazint Palace and its neighboring halls cleared and prepared. All rare herbs stored within the imperial treasury—every last root and leaf—are to be transported there immediately."

Having given his orders, Aurek walked into the palace chambers without looking back.

Angie, sharp enough to sense the chill in his tone, did not dare question further. She bowed low and hurried away to carry out his command.

Inside the sleeping chamber, Aurek stood alone before a massive map of the empire, unfurled across the wall. His hands rested behind his back as he gazed upon the marked borders and provinces.

Memories—unpleasant, bitter recollections belonging to the Veynar bloodline—rose within him like a tide.

Within the Valoria Palace now, precious few of his kin remained. The great Veynar house, once resplendent with power, had dwindled until Aurek himself was nearly the last pillar still standing.

But that did not mean the Veynar family had vanished. No, its members still lived—scattered, fragmented, hiding from the storm that had nearly drowned the empire.

A few moments later, the chamber doors opened.

An elderly man entered. His hair was streaked with white, and though his back bent with age, he still bore a faint trace of former nobility. A golden circlet rested upon his brow, and his robes were embroidered with aristocratic grandeur.

This was Toby Veynar, the old prince of the Crossbridge Empire—Aurek's royal uncle.

"Aurek..."

The word slipped almost naturally from Toby's lips, his instinct to call the boy by name overwhelming him. But when his eyes lifted, meeting the figure standing before the imperial map—a figure emanating boundless authority and silent pressure—the words died in his throat.

He swallowed, and quickly bowed his head.

"...Your Majesty."

Aurek did not turn. He gave no immediate response.

The silence thickened, heavy as iron, until it felt suffocating.

At last, Aurek's cold, distant voice echoed through the chamber.

"Uncle. You should not have returned."

Toby stiffened. The words cut sharp, precise, brimming with unspoken meaning.

His expression grew strained, lips twisting into a bitter smile.

"Yes... yes, I should not have. And yet... no matter where I go, this place will always be my home."

"Home?"

Aurek's mouth curled faintly upward, though it was no smile—only mockery.

"When the empire was at its most perilous, when storms howled and the throne teetered, when the dynasty cried out for its bloodline to stand firm—you abandoned it. You left me alone to hold up the collapsing heavens."

"And now, uncle, you return to tell me you 'cannot let go'?"

The accusation struck like a blade.

Toby lowered his head, shame flooding his features.

Yes. They had all left.

Because they had seen the decline, the rot that had spread through the empire. They convinced themselves it was doomed, that there was no point in going down with a sinking ship. They departed under excuses and justifications, each one cloaking cowardice in reason.

And Aurek—still young—had been left chained to the throne, forced to bear the weight of ruin alone.

Loneliness, helplessness, humiliation... These emotions Toby himself had once felt when he still lived in the palace. And yet they had abandoned Aurek to them, pretending ignorance.

"Aurek..."

The old man's voice trembled, thick with regret.

"I was weak. A useless coward. I watched them thrust you upon that throne, and I... I did nothing. I could not help you. I hated myself for it. I have never forgiven my own weakness. I did not know how I could ever face you again..."

Aurek's voice remained like ice.

"Then why return now? To see whether this empire has broken me? To see whether I have crumbled, crushed beneath the weight of the throne as you expected?"

Crushed?

The wrinkles on Toby's face deepened further, sorrow etching into every line.

He had heard the rumors, of course. The storms shaking Eryndor City, the mysterious army of unfathomable might that appeared as if descending from divine realms, Aurek's ruthless maneuvers against titanic powers, his thunderous strikes that obliterated even the deeply entrenched Holy Sword Alliance.

This youth, once forced into kingship, had not only endured but had grown into a mountain—unyielding, immovable, towering ever higher. He bore the empire upon his shoulders with steel and will.

"Your Majesty," Toby whispered hoarsely, "I know you will never forgive me, nor should you. A man who fled when the storm came, a deserter who shamed the Veynar name, does not deserve forgiveness. I never expected it. To beg it would be to insult your crown."

His voice steadied slightly, though grief still clung to every word.

"I did not return for absolution. I came to deliver news. News that may, in some small way, repay one ten-thousandth of my debt."

He lifted his head, his eyes clouded but earnest.

"In the empire's southwestern frontier, among the ancient ridges of the Venus Mountains, my remaining prospectors discovered something. A vein. A colossal deposit of Energy Stones. Preliminary surveys estimate the reserves could reach into the tens of billions."

He drew a ragged breath.

"This may... perhaps, aid in the empire's rebirth."

Aurek remained unmoving, his back straight as a spear.

But his eyes, sharp as a falcon's, turned toward the southwestern corner of the vast map upon the wall.

Energy Stones.

They were the lifeblood of the empire—the core energy source that powered its armies, enabled warriors to ascend, and awakened the mechanisms of ancient relics.

A vein holding tens of billions...

Such a resource could fuel a protracted war, or drive the empire's military industry into an age of transformation.

He was already planning an expansion of three million troops. With this mine under his full control, not merely three million—even if he doubled the number of Imperial Knights, their staggering consumption could be supplied.

The path to empire reborn had just revealed its keystone.