

## Gods Daily 147

Chapter 147: The Will from Eryndor City

Grand Duke Sentino rose from his seat.

He walked to the vast stained-glass window and gazed upon the city that stretched below him, his domain and pride.

"All I seek is this land of the southwest. If I cannot fully grasp it in my palm, then even should I proclaim a kingdom, it would lack the legitimacy of true sovereignty. Since everyone is waiting for the toll of the Firstfall Festival, then we... might as well wait too."

He turned back, sharp light flashing in his eyes.

"Besides, this is the perfect opportunity to see what sort of 'new toys' that Emperor Aurek has acquired, and how much power they truly hold. Perhaps, through that, we may catch glimpses of the hidden hand that supports him."

"As for the true strike," his voice hardened, carrying the steel of ruthless decision, "that will come after the Firstfall Festival, when I, Sentino, formally declare my kingdom. Only then will we launch our blow!"

"By then, it will not just be we who move. Aurek's six or seven thousand elite troops may be powerful, but when scattered across the chaos of the empire, how long can they endure? Once they are consumed, what strength will his crumbling empire have left to rely on?"

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Time slipped away like sand through the hourglass.

The approach of the Firstfall Festival did not make the empire more unstable. Instead, it resembled the eerie calm before a storm. A strange quiet spread across the land.

The fires of resistance in Truva Province, once bright, had nearly been extinguished under the merciless trampling of imperial iron hooves.

Wilson and Diston, once proud nobles and masters of towers, now fled like foxes hunted, abandoning centuries of accumulated wealth and glory. They were cast into the shadows, uncertain if they would ever return.

Their once-mighty legacies, the families and powers they had so proudly upheld, had been ripped up root and stem, reduced to dust upon the pages of history by the unstoppable imperial army.

Truva, the empire's newly forged sword, had been unsheathed at last, and its sharp edge now pointed straight at the vast southwest heartlands.

At the same time, four newly subdued provinces had already completed the recruitment and organization of three million fresh troops.

These recruits, once farmers and villagers, were gathered in Caterpillar, Landor, Dahlby, and Dorine. Under the harsh drills of the Imperial Knights—seasoned veterans renowned for loyalty and ferocity—they were being hammered into soldiers of war.

An ocean of resources—grain, armor, weapons, and even strange supplies imbued with supernatural energy—flowed ceaselessly along reopened roads and waystations, pouring toward the front lines.

Every citizen of the empire, even the lowest peasant, could sense the shift in the air. There was something different now, a sign that order and power were coalescing once again.

In the stillness of midnight, decrees would emerge from the depths of Valoria Palace.

And in the following dawn, squads of silent, powerful warriors would march out of the city gates, heading toward unknown battlefields.

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Revor Province, inside the Governor's Mansion.

"We found it! My lord, we found it!"

An official burst into the council chamber, nearly stumbling in his haste, his voice breathless with excitement. He bowed hurriedly before Governor Henry and relayed the long-awaited words.

After more than ten sleepless days of searching, the elusive Energy Stone vein that had driven countless eyes mad with greed had finally been located.

Henry's face was overtaken by sudden joy, but he quickly forced it down, regaining the calm bearing of a provincial ruler.

The official continued, his tone quivering with adrenaline. "It was House Roel in the eastern Revor lands who stumbled across the vein. They sought to conceal the discovery, to seal the news and exploit it in secret, to swallow such heaven-sent wealth for themselves."

"A petty House Roel dares dream of devouring the treasure of dragons?" scoffed Roz, commander of the city garrison. His eyes gleamed coldly. "My lord, give me leave to mobilize one hundred thousand troops at once. We will drive out House Roel and secure the mine with thunder."

A more cautious official frowned, his worry plain. "Commander, if we march with such force, will it not rouse the attention of the Morningstar Order? Their spies see much, and their ears are sharp."

"Conceal it? How?" Henry's laugh was scornful, dripping with mockery at such naiveté. "Do you think those ancient powers in the mountains have sat blind for ten days? That they have not been watching every move of our Governor's Mansion?"

"As we receive this news, I am certain their messages are already sent."

He was sure that once the vein's position was confirmed, those factions would unleash their forces instantly.

Henry paced across the thick carpet, his boots muffled by the weave. After a long pause, he nodded.

"Roz, do as you said. Take one hundred thousand men and strike swiftly to seize the mine. Drive House Roel from the place with lightning."

"Remember to take with you those 'guests' sent by Grand Duke Sentino. With their presence, most scavengers will not dare act rashly."

The Duke had already dispatched several formidable figures to Revor City days ago. They lingered like silent predators, waiting for prey to appear. Now the time had come. Against the mountain powers, Revor's own strength was pitiful. Only by draping himself in Sentino's mantle and invoking the dread shadow of Skypeak Tower could Henry hope to contend with them.

Roz bowed and strode out, the clang of his armor echoing as he went.

Just as Henry predicted, word of the mine's location spread like a stone cast into a still pond. The ripples raced outward, reaching every corner of the Venus Mountains.

In the Hall of Dawn of the Morningstar Order, Ross turned his gaze upon Elder Sochiby, whose scarred cheek bore the mark of old battle.

"The location has been confirmed. Sentino's people will inevitably meddle, and with them, the shadow of Skypeak Tower may descend. Sochiby, you will go yourself. Take strong men with you. Remember, your foremost task is to secure our share. Avoid pointless conflict if you can."

Sochiby bowed silently. To win without bleeding away the Order's foundation was always preferable.

The weight of centuries of accumulation was what gave the Morningstar Order its current might. That could not be wasted lightly.

Of course, if anyone barred the Order's way, the response would be ruthless.

"Violet Rose Institute, Monden Shrine, Muwen Mountain Fortress—they too must have caught the scent by now," Ross added, his voice calm but cutting. "If necessary, reach out to them. On the matter of suppressing Sentino's arrogance and securing profit, we who live and breathe in the Venus Mountains share the same interest. This truth, they will all understand."

Sochiby bowed again, accepting the instruction. He turned and departed.

Within hours, he had gathered three senior officers of Master Rank, more than a hundred Hero Rank disciples, and several hundred ordinary adherents. Together they formed a torrent of power and set out for the newly discovered mine.

Nor did the Order keep the secret close. They let the location slip—deliberately or otherwise—into other ears.

In no time, not only the great Violet Rose Institute and the others, but also countless smaller sects and lone hunters, were moving like sharks drawn by blood. They surged toward the mountains, hungering for a piece of the prize.

All Revor Province boiled with turmoil. Dark currents twisted beneath the surface. Every power gathered like clouds before a storm.

Henry's face grew dark as he watched the chaos rise. He had counted on Grand Duke Sentino to crush the rivals and carve him a share. But now, with so many new players, the game threatened to spiral out of control. His expected profit dwindled before his eyes.

"Let us hope," he muttered under his breath, his voice carrying a note of unease he did not himself notice, "that the name of Grand Duke Sentino can still cow these lawless beasts."

If the native snakes of the Venus Mountains united even temporarily, then not even Sentino's might would be enough to escape unscathed.

"My lord!"

Another official rushed in, face pale, eyes uneasy.

Henry's irritation fell away, replaced with the stern authority of a governor. "What is it?"

The man lowered his voice, bowing close. "Your Excellency... men have arrived from Aurek himself. Envoys from Eryndor City are here!"