Governor 961

Chapter 961

Gu Hang’s words caused the presence using the old woman’s body to communicate with him to fall silent for a long time.

Yet he didn’t feel there was anything wrong with what he had said.

From the content uttered by this "God of Thousand Faces," and from the situation Gu Hang encountered when attempting to devour the remnant soul of Comoros, Gu Hang was basically able to ascertain that this "God of Thousand Faces" was indeed the god of the Spirit Race.

The Spirit Race, once the dominant species of the entire universe, certainly had its own racial god at the height of its power. According to human research on history, revelations from the Spirit Race’s "allies," and interrogations of some Dark Spirit Race prisoners on the Comoros battlefield, some clues had been gathered.

The "Pantheon" might be an imaginary number, but the gods they worshiped were indeed numerous, covering almost every aspect of the Spirit Race’s faith and life.

But in reality, there was only one Pantheon. Those various aspects were actually just one of the "thousand faces" of a single deity.

The God of Thousand Faces, with countless forms, crafted innumerable images. There was the desolate visage with a crescent sickle reaping souls, the magnificent headpiece weaving a star chart with thousands of threads, the chaotic silhouette twisting with shrieks in seas of blood and ecstasy... These different faces addressed the various directions of Spirit Race’s faith.

The modern Spirit Race, even, might not necessarily know this.

However, the condition of the God of Thousand Faces was evidently not good.

As Gu Hang said, "They," or rather "He," were undoubtedly failures.

He is a racial god, but the race he protects is nearly on the brink of extinction.

This does not refer to humanity’s attack on Comoros.

Even without that affair, the state of the Spirit Race in this universe is merely hanging by a thread. All their energies can only be put into survival, with no talk of future or development.

Perhaps they still hold some powerful, ancient technologies; perhaps their individual strength remains quite high, maintaining a highly advanced civilization.

However, they already have no hope whatsoever.

The entire race has reached this point, so what good is there for a "racial god," the God of Thousand Faces?

The Slaanesh spawned from the corpse of the Spirit Race Empire had long destroyed him to almost nothing.

Now, the so-called thousand faces are reduced to merely two.

Windsor is one face, worshiped by the Ark Eldar, known as the "God of Hope."

Mensa is the other face, worshiped by the Dark Spirit Race, known as the "God of Tyranny."

As for Comoros? He was once a face too, known as the "God of Despair," but was already incomplete long ago, leaving only a remnant soul forged into the Comoros God Sword.

Of course, strictly speaking, the God of Thousand Faces isn’t entirely finished; he has even grown stronger—if one were willing to perceive Slaanesh as a former face of pleasure, another face of the God of Thousand Faces.

Devouring the vast majority of the Spirit Race souls and the divine status of the God of Thousand Faces, hence forming "the youngest of the four gods," in some sense indeed represents the God of Thousand Faces better than the one reduced to just two faces.

How ironic.

In this regard, Gu Hang calling Him a failure is actually quite polite.

And facing Gu Hang's sarcasm, the deity borrowing the old woman's body remained silent for a long time, without replying.

It wasn't until Gu Hang felt impatient.

He glanced at his watch and said, "Silent time is also counted. I have a lot of things to do; if you don't want to say anything, please leave."

The "God of Thousand Faces," using the old woman's body, let out a bitter laugh.

"You really are relentless."

"Then, please allow me to show you some things."

The old woman slightly raised her hand, and a light enveloped Gu Hang.

Endless streams of illusions flooded into Gu Hang.

With Gu Hang's abilities, he could easily reject these illusions.

However, after hesitating for a moment, he decided—since he's here, why not take a look.

He saw battlefields from millions of years ago, countless magnificent Spirit Race warships swallowed by the crimson whirlpools as they tried to flee; advanced Spirit Race cities dragged into the storm of Subspace in an instant, forming the foundational components of a new deity's Divine Realm.

And in the Divine Realm where the God of Thousand Faces resided, the skies were torn apart, with Slaanesh demons stepping out from the Pantheon one after another. They came from the past, came from the future, and most importantly, they were here in the present.

The God of Thousand Faces was driven out of the Pantheon, his body long divided into countless pieces.

Due to the lack of the largest part—the part belonging to Slaanesh—they could never unite again, nor could they resist, forced only to scatter and flee.

The claws of the Slaanesh Demon smashed the arrogant deities of the Spirit Race one by one.

The divine remnants screamed as they fell into the eternal abyss.

He saw how the surviving fragments of divinity drifted desperately in the eternal storm of Subspace, colliding, biting, and vying for remaining faith and conceptual power like cosmic dust.

Ultimately, on the brink of complete dissipation, a massive, reality-twisting fear of death deep in the souls of all the Spirit Race, serving as the final link, forcibly glued the largest fragments together.

This was not rebirth, but a more desperate death imprisonment—a terrifying conglomeration formed by hundreds of unidentifiable humble consciousnesses.

Chapter 961:

This is the current Windsor and Mensa.

They bear the former titles of 'God of Hope' and 'God of Tyranny', but in reality, they are nothing more than a grotesque patchwork.

They cling to life, escaping the pursuit of formidable enemies, while leading two factions of the Spirit Race to survive in different ways.

"We are not complete spirits... nor free wills... Every fall of the Spirit Race, my children... every faint tremor of the soul stone in the network... tears at our false shell..."

Countless fine, faintly glowing "spiritual threads" appeared in Gu Hang's expanded mental vision, extending out from the God of Thousand Faces' shattered core, oozing divine pus and blood.

Each one is as thin as a spider's silk, fragile enough to be broken with a breath, yet they penetrate the veil of space, casting faint, despairing projections into the physical universe.

Gu Hang followed one of the "threads," and his mind was immediately drawn into a distant starry battlefield engulfed in flames. A massive Ark World, its lines elegant like a work of art yet covered with sore wounds, was under frantic assault by bloated and filthy green warships oozing pus.

Nagor's plague missiles struck against the Ark's pale energy shields, exploding into pockets of decaying Spiritual Energy clouds. On the deck's edge, beside a fractured spirit bone spire, a warrior from the Howling Banshee charged fiercely, her battle cry piercing through the void, her Star Dart Gun aimed at plague warriors many times her number.

But Gu Hang saw something deeper.

At the peak of her charging intent, the pure, resolute Spiritual Energy radiating from her chest was not just the energy needed to activate the Star Dart Gun. Among it, a thin stream of light like a blood thread was being invisibly drawn away, rapidly flowing back along the spiritual thread in Gu Hang's vision, connecting to the God of Thousand Faces!

That tiny stream of light injected into the core of the God of Thousand Faces would briefly light up that area, only to be quickly swallowed by deeper darkness, like a famished dying person desperate for a drop of rainwater.

Simultaneously, thousands upon thousands of similar spiritual threads rose from every corner of the battlefield, from souls in the Ark World untouched by the fires of war, and even from uncharted Spirit Race colonies at the galaxy's edge, with billions of tiny streams converging toward that nearly crumbling Divine Core.

In the midst of endless illusions, Gu Hang knitted his brows, the rapid influx of so much information putting some strain on him.

But he still realized what it all meant: every extraordinary individual of the Spirit Race, every time they extracted their potential to unleash power, was instinctively using the purest flash of their soul to temporarily "ignite" this nearly extinguished divine ember, thereby exchanging for the amplified "divine blessing" of power, yet unconsciously tearing at themselves, transforming into fuel to sustain this "divine body" gasping for survival.

This seems to be a perfect cycle.

The God of Thousand Faces provides the Spirit Race with strength and protection, preventing their dead souls from sinking into Subspace to be captured by Slaanesh, but instead returning to the refuge provided by the God of Thousand Faces.

For the Ark Eldar, that is the 'soul stone', located in the spiritual realm of the Ark World; for the Dark Spirit Race, it is the soul casket, a chance to be resurrected in a new body crafted again by the Blood People.

However, at the same time, with each death, they feedback all their life experiences and soul power to the God of Thousand Faces, allowing it to continue to sustain itself.

Yet, if this whole mechanism were so perfect, they wouldn't have been decreasing in strength over hundreds of thousands of years.

The greatest flaw in this mechanism lies with Slaanesh.

This external adversary, a true terror looming over the entire race, renders all cycles unsustainable.

"Deeper corruption... is reversing along this vein..." Gu Hang heard a hoarse voice, seemingly layered with thousands of voices.

He saw that within the thin stream of extracted light, was mingled more insidious, viscous filth.

On the battlefield, the Spiritual Energy attacks of the Howling Banshee warrior did indeed seem more intense, but the unnatural blush on her body surface, the soft, inappropriate sweet whispers mingling with her battle cry that should have been sharp, were now evident...

Whenever the Spirit Race utilized tremendous power, even with numerous protective measures, it was inevitable to forge a connection with Subspace. Therein lies the source of all extraordinary power, the same for any race.

And what makes the Spirit Race unique is that every time they forge a connection with Subspace, it inevitably attracts the attention of Slaanesh.

Even if they only absorb a tiny amount, it may not affect their overall life journey.

But, when they die, as they return, whether to the soul stone or the soul casket, these receive the purest of souls. Then where did those minuscule pollutants go?

"The Dark Prince... Slaanesh’s gaze... like a cancer... is eroding every soul channel connecting the Spirit Race to me..."

"Every painful struggle and wail at the soul level accelerates Its pervasive infiltration... Our ’Divine Core’ has long been filled with Its ’delight’... Each anguished convulsion pleases It, each burst of power nourishes Its infiltrating tendrils... Unless severed... unless eradicated... the end is already certain... Our divine zombie will completely become a colossal pustule projected by It into the physical universe! And all Spirit Race souls connected here will..."

"Sever... this self-destructive cycle..." A relatively clear, sharply decisive voice briefly overpowered the countless laments of the God of Thousand Faces.

Gu Hang’s gaze was intensely drawn by the source of that voice—a large fragment deep within the Divine Core, its sharp, deathly pale appearance radiating a chilling refusal of everything.

That was Mensa’s part, maintaining the God of Thousand Faces from entirely dissolving and rotting under Slaanesh’s joyful plague, and it was he guiding the Dark Spirit Race to survive in Comoros, teaching them to use pain to resist Slaanesh’s soul extraction.

Yet at this moment, Gu Hang keenly observed that along the edge of Mensa’s fragment, something nauseating, full of malevolent iridescence was slowly crawling—Slaanesh’s venom greedily licking at this last fortress.

Simultaneously, within Gu Hang’s mental vision, he also saw some of what the God of Thousand Faces saw: the gold will network representing the Human Empire, sprawling across the galaxy like a giant net, countless nodes either dimming or flickering under Chaos’s erosion. Atop the golden network, a blue network had grown, entangling a third of the human world along with the golden network.

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Chapter 962: The Spirit Race Surrenders

Gu Hang was experiencing for the first time the perspective of another divine entity from Subspace, to understand the relations between the Human Empire, the Alliance, the Emperor, and the Storm God Kingdom.

Of course, this framework only appeared this way through the 'eyes' of the God of Thousand Faces and does not represent reality.

When observing Subspace, the things seen through different perceptions are naturally different.

Yet, from one angle, it reveals a part of the nature of these relations.

It's actually quite interesting.

Meanwhile, Gu Hang also roughly understood the God of Thousand Faces' demands.

"You want me to help you, and you also want the whole Alliance to assist the Spirit Race?"

"We... beseech you..."

The voice speaking transitioned from Mensa's bone-chilling freeze to a gentle female voice.

That was Windsor's will.

She guided Gu Hang's gaze to penetrate the fog covering the stitched structure as the God of Thousand Faces, revealing all her secrets to Gu Hang sincerely.

There, at the center of a vortex composed of the desperate cries of Spirit Race souls and the disintegration pains of deities themselves, a tiny structure emerged.

This was the ’Divine Core’ refined from the very concepts of pain and death amidst endless dying screams of deities. Its fundamental purpose was singular: forcibly welding the processes of "Spirit Race’s acquisition of supernatural powers" and "God of Thousand Faces’ absorption of pain" together.

"This is a curse... and also the last resort..." Windsor’s will helplessly explained the meaning behind this Divine Core, "If not for anchoring the acquisition channels of all Spirit Race extraordinary powers to this Divine Core, the Spirit Race and we might have long perished..."

"This structure, over the years, has acted like a rusty iron lock, temporarily protecting the Spirit Race from being wholly engulfed by Chaos, yet it also nourished the infiltration of Slaanesh like a poisonous petri dish... Now... it is on the verge of collapse..."

Gu Hang remained silent.

At this stage, he naturally understood very clearly what was meant by the God of Thousand Faces’ need for help.

The deity wanted a method that could bypass this precarious Divine Core, providing alternative energy channels for the exceptional individuals of the Spirit Race.

And this method is none other than the vast network of the Human Empire.

If Gu Hang is willing, the dual reinforcement and filtration provided by the golden network over the blue network could fully establish a temporary spiritual haven for the souls of the Spirit Race. When Spirit Race superhumans extract power, their spiritual fluctuations will have two additional layers of ’filters’, reducing the level of influence from Slaanesh’s infiltration, a corruption that humanity can endure.

Though it’s still present, the scale isn’t high and can be ignored. Humanity’s capacity for endurance is far greater, accustomed to the incessant corruption from the four divine entities, they aren’t bothered by this extra trace of corruption from Slaanesh.

An especially important aspect is, humanity's souls don't face the fate of entering the Dark Prince's domain of desires upon death, unlike the Spirit Race.

Thus, the load on the God of Thousand Faces will be greatly reduced, gaining precious respite and opportunities for self-repair.

Nevertheless, having described the predicament faced by the Spirit Race deity, offered a solution, and confirmed Gu Hang's capability to assist... the most crucial aspect, however, remained unspoken.

Helping the Spirit Race—could it be without cost? Could it be without benefits?

Gu Hang straightforwardly raised this question.

He pointed out, with composure and clarity, the nature of the transaction and the enormous underlying crisis: "Slaanesh would never allow the Spirit Race, its most coveted prey already viewed as a feast on a platter, to be saved. It would not rest, it will certainly launch furious reprisals..."

Gu Hang spoke of a hugely realistic issue.

The additional corruption is not scary for humanity; however, what impact would Slaanesh's frenzied counterattack have?

It's foreseeable that those Chaos factions worshipping Slaanesh will frantically mobilize; Slaanesh will initiate wave after wave of corruptive storms, and the likelihood of Slaanesh Cults sprouting within the Alliance will significantly rise...

The former indicates higher military costs, while the latter implies greater internal governance costs. Behind this is inevitably an ocean of Imperial blood and relentless...

And upon paying all this, what would the Alliance or Gu Hang obtain?

After a brief silence, Windsor summoned a new illusion.

In a corner of the Milky Way, at the edge of a nearly desperate defensive circle of an Imperial Guards regiment trapped in a Green Skins siege, the air suddenly flickered with eerie silver light. The next moment, a band of female warrior banshees wearing spiked helmets, descending as if in a dance of death, appeared out of the ethereal. Their Star Dart Guns precisely harvested the ugly skulls of Green Skins before the astonished eyes of Imperial soldiers!

A powerful Imperial flagship possessed by a Jian Qi Demon had its internal navigation star map altered without warning, and deadly subspace tides were poised to push the ship into a misguided journey. But at this moment, on the bridge, a human navigator looked up bewilderedly, with the sound of ethereal whispers incomprehensible yet calmly guiding him to the correct direction echoing in his ears.

On Comoros, all ports were operating at full capacity. The Spirit Race and humanity worked together, with the technology inherited from the Dark Spirit Race not hastily destroyed due to their defeat, but instead utilized one by one, transporting humanity's fleet through Veil Spirit Gate from one end of the universe to the other.

Chapter 962: Spirit Race Surrenders (2)

Here is the English translation of the provided Chinese text:

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In Subspace, purple waves of desire surge towards the Storm God Kingdom, crashing wave after wave. Nevertheless, Windsor and Mensa's silhouettes always stand at the forefront against the waves of Slaanesh. Moreover, over time, the figures of Spirit Race Gods standing alongside them would increase. The fragments slumbering within the Divine Core would have the opportunity to be completed, becoming whole, adding new support...

The God of Thousand Faces emphasized that everything shown is not mere speculation but a deduction of future possibilities.

A clear and tempting path was presented before Gu Hang: If humanity offers this temporary psychic sanctuary, even if only as fragile, temporary anchorage points, it would earn precious space and respite for all Ark Worlds, the Dark Spirit Race, and the God of Thousand Faces.
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These Ark Eldar and Dark Spirit Race, in their state of survival, would act in ways highly aligned with the current needs of the Empire—they will become reinforcements on the battlefield against the common Chaos enemy.

Though their numbers might be small, their more advanced technology, superior single combat capability, and ghostly mobility would produce exceedingly effective outcomes in various situations.

Their ancient knowledge, possibly surpassing that of the Empire, would flow like a stream, playing an astonishing role in the most critical times, such as Empire ship navigation and the restoration of sacred medical relics, tipping the strategic balance.

Including the God of Thousand Faces themselves, once their circumstances improved and more 'faces' are awakened, namely those broken Spirit Race Gods, they could serve as formidable supports in the resistance within Subspace.

The wrath of Slaanesh might not necessarily target Gu Hang accurately. Once the Gods of the Spirit Race stand up one by one, Slaanesh's problems would only increase. For the stabilization of the reality universe whose foundations are constantly pried by Chaos, this would offer substantial relief.

Having displayed all these contents, the God of Thousand Faces said little more, but their attitude was very clear.

Be it the Empire, the Alliance, the Emperor, or Gu Hang, they could certainly independently combat all enemies. The malicious gods within Subspace, true enemies like the Green Skins and Insect Swarm in the reality universe, can all be faced by humanity alone.

There's no problem with that.

But there is another path to choose.

The Spirit Race need not be enemies; rather, they can be excellent allies.

Humanity doesn't have to bear all of this alone; humanity can also have allies.

And what the Spirit Race needs is truly not much.

Help resolve the ongoing corruption from Slaanesh, allocate some resources, a few worlds, so the Spirit Race may survive.

That’s all.

For humanity, these are but things done effortlessly.

As for Slaanesh’s frenzied counteraction... indeed, even without this matter, even without helping the Spirit Race, would Slaanesh not target humanity? Clearly not.

Of the four gods causing grave disasters for humanity, none would escape. Whether this matter exists or not, both sides are irreconcilable life-and-death enemies.

With the same enemies and potentially no conflict between each other, then why insist on obliterating the Spirit Race?

This is the honest attitude presented by the God of Thousand Faces.

And every decision rests in the hands of Gu Hang.

Gu Hang contemplated for a long time and made a decision.

He presented his conditions:

"Comoros belongs to the Alliance."

"On the spine of every Spirit Race Ark, a mark of promise must be engraved."

"Your Divine Core must be handed over to me for control."

These conditions all ultimately point to one outcome:

If the God of Thousand Faces attempts to breach the agreement after self-repair, or even worse, if they still fail to resist the ultimate pollution of Slaanesh, becoming a chaotic sore threatening humanity, then Gu Hang would possess the ultimate measure—a command to detonate all extinction marks engraved in the core of Spirit Race Arks.

This would no longer be battle but the physical eradication of what's left of Spirit Race civilization!

At the same time, it represents the complete erasure of the God of Thousand Faces.

If Gu Hang wills it, all of this could become reality at no cost.

A race once reigning as a cosmic overlord would see its final remnants fade with just a thought from Gu Hang.

This fully aligns with Gu Hang's consistent demands of Comoros and the Dark Spirit Race:

Unconditional surrender.

However, now this scale has been expanded even further.

The demand includes not only Comoros but also Ark Eldar unrelated to this battle and the God of Thousand Faces behind the two Spirit Races.

Facing such conditions, Windsor's response came quickly and decisively:

"Alright."

Gu Hang was somewhat surprised, yet it felt somewhat logical.

If the God of Thousand Faces had not prepared for such understanding, they would not have come to see him today.

As for giving all to humanity—is it truly a good choice? Do they fear Gu Hang might destroy them all with a mere wave of his hand...

There's no need for much thought.

At this point, why would Gu Hang do so?

If one can fully control both Spirit Races, that clearly yields more benefits than destroying them.

...

That's all.

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Chapter 963: Comoros Special Administrative Region

The surrender of the Spirit Race was somewhat abrupt for the front-line forces of the Alliance.

Just a moment ago, the resistance of the Dark Spirit Race was still quite fierce.

The Green-Skin Army was not only a formidable enemy for ordinary human troops but also for the Interstellar Warriors.

The slave cannon fodder army of the Dark Spirit Race was slightly easier to handle.

Whenever the regular troops of the Dark Spirit Race itself emerged, or when elite species within the mercenary Aliens—minotaurs, serpents, and the like appeared—it became extremely troublesome. Human troops often required multiple times the strength just to hold their ground. Even Interstellar Warriors, if not careful, could easily be wiped out entirely under the enemy's superior forces in unfavorable terrain.

Comparing this with previous battles in the history of the Alliance, the intensity almost matched the battle of Ancache. That confrontation with the Bone Shattering King, leading arguably the most elite Green-Skin Army in the universe, was much like what we face now.

In fact, the battle in Comoros was even more brutal than that.

After all, in comparison, humans deployed even more troops in Comoros, making the situation more complex and the area affected by war even larger.

The types of warfare were also quite different. The battle against Beastmen on Ancache primarily involved head-on clashes of large armies, armored charges in open fields, artillery bombardments, and brutal positional battles.

However, in Comoros, it resembled urban street fighting more. Both sides repeatedly contested each block, district, house, and building. Even if a structure was demolished, its remaining debris still became a focal point for slaughter.

Though in overall strategy, humans seemed unstoppable, advancing step by step, forcing the Dark Spirit Race to retreat on their own homeland. But from a micro perspective, every inch of land was soaked in blood, every spot paved with the bodies of Alliance Army warriors.

Furthermore, captured areas often concealed numerous Green-Skin guerrilla squads and countless unchecked tunnels potentially utilized by Ratman forces, posing a terrifying threat to the human rear.

It's not that the human occupying forces don't want to eliminate those leftover guerrilla squads and destroy tunnels. On the contrary, Alliance Army units prefer to advance slowly to ensure thorough clean-up. However, this task often entails significant risks itself. Around half of the losses are incurred during clearing guerrillas and demolishing tunnels.

In the eyes of front-line fighters, the Dark Spirit Race is a very tough opponent. Although the warriors can still maintain high morale, believing that the final victory of the war is undoubtedly theirs, they also recognize that reaching complete victory may require a substantial sacrifice, to be paid bit by bit.

No one expected that suddenly, orders from above declared that victory was achieved and the Spirit Race had surrendered.

Could it be that the Spirit Race, fiercely resisting just moments ago, has surrendered now?

It feels surreal, difficult to grasp.

But in any case, for the front-line warriors, the war's victory is undoubtedly a good thing.

The fighting is over, and they can earn the merits they've fought for.

The next task for various front-line units is to follow upper-level orders and receive the fruits of their victory.

Spirit Race troops laid down their arms in formations, surrendering in batches. Their locations were conveyed by higher-up units, and human troops arrived fully armed. The Dark Spirit Race troops and mercenaries often had already laid down their arms, obediently lined up, and were captured entirely.

Prisoner camps had already been established early, where these Dark Spirit Race members would be temporarily held, awaiting subsequent takeover by the Alliance Government.

This was the case for most situations.

Of course, there were those unwilling to surrender.

Despite Mensa's orders and persuasion by old women upon returning to sway many governors into making a resolution, not everyone was willing to yield.

And quite a number of them remained.

Some decided to resist stubbornly in Comoros' complex terrain; others took advantage of the window period where human troops hadn't yet secured all key points to escape Comoros by spaceship, seeking refuge in the tangible universe.

The total number of these individuals might account for over a third of the entire Dark Spirit Race population.

The former group might cause the Alliance to endure long-term guerrilla attacks while controlling Comoros.

The latter could likely intensify pirate harassment throughout the cosmos. Potentially, once worlds are conquered and pirate ports are secretly established, then joined by human rebel groups, Alien forces, Chaos factions, combined with the technology and human resources of the Dark Spirit Race, it could lead to significant future troubles.

In short, they are all matters of concern.

Even if the Dark Spirit Race is defeated, surrendered, shattered into remnants scattered on the ground, it will undoubtedly have a profound impact, revealing the final legacy of this once-dominant race with countless years.

Nonetheless, these issues can be managed.

The Dark Spirit Race resistance in Comoros can be handled by the Dark Spirit Race themselves. With extensive connections, they might even have some sympathizers acting as traitors among humans. But overall, there certainly are genuine surrender factions willing to provide intelligence and betray the resistance forces. Additionally, these surrendered members of the Dark Spirit Race can form cleansing squads to suppress themselves.

The same principle applies to future pirate risks.

These are all less significant compared to the Alliance's assured acquisition of all of Comoros by now.

After the full surrender in Comoros, the Alliance's Central Front Army stationed themselves here.

On one hand, they could suppress Comoros, clear the resistance forces, and deter the surrender factions from harboring additional intentions.

On the other hand, stationing the Central Front Army in Comoros in itself holds strategic merit. Utilizing Comoros' numerous ports and Veil Spirit Gates, they can swiftly reach different parts of the universe, supporting various battlefronts, truly fulfilling the duty of the Central Group Army to 'guard the center and support all directions.'

Moreover, the Alliance Government has established the 'Comoros Special Administrative Region' here. Its administrative status is considerably high, equivalent to the level of a Space Domain Government under the Alliance Government. In the future, this special district government will primarily manage the Spirit Race, utilizing Spirit Race technology for special district construction, ensuring the maintenance of all Veil Spirit Ports, and supporting the Alliance in conducting military and commercial operations via these district ports.

Chapter 964: Taking Office

When Shang Yanwen woke up, he was already able to see through the shuttle's porthole, the cityscape of Comoros, fractured into grotesque fragments by towering spires.

A century ago, as a poor youth scraping by in the underbelly of the Korolya Nest Capital, he never imagined that his academic prowess would earn him a place at the Alliance's prestigious University of Law, and that upon graduation he would enter the ranks of government.

Even more unthinkable was that he would one day set foot in this city, once a cosmic blight, as one of its administrators.

Rubbing his eyes, Shang Yanwen asked, "How much longer until we arrive?"

"Director Shang, we'll be landing in five minutes, after which we'll transfer to a vehicle that will take us to the government building. Governor Xia Xingze is already awaiting your arrival," the female attendant's voice resonated inside the cabin.

Through the porthole, Shang Yanwen looked at the contorted cluster of buildings and recalled his hometown.

Back then, when the Alliance Army marched into Comoros' Nest Capital, he had hidden in a rusted ventilation shaft, watching polished army boots trod through pools of sewage.

The hot porridge from the recruitment center had altered the course of his life, and the letter of acceptance from the University of Law had been his ladder out of the slums.

Now, he was here to transform this dark city.

Outwardly, he appeared a scholar and civil servant, genteel and approachable. Yet etched in the wrinkles at the corners of his eyes lay a century's worth of administrative acumen. He had risen from the lower strata, and beneath his cultured exterior lay unyielding resolve.

Especially in recent decades, his rise to leadership positions had made it all the more apparent.

In the Peperosse system, he spearheaded a seventeen-year tax reform that gradually escalated tax revenues, accumulating the blood and tears of countless local elites;

During his twelve years of colonial coordination in the Mayagos Star Domain, he ruthlessly dismantled all community groups in the formerly rebellious worlds, severing countless families eternally, yet significantly reducing the risk of rebellion and prompting efficient new world development;

In the past nineteen years, during the Dark Side Expedition in the Mai Liang Cosmos Domain, he had acted in concert with a detachment fleet from the Angel Corps, leading Alliance officials to pacify and settle two hundred worlds...

Now, this experience was commemorated by the new badge on his chest—Comoros Special Administrative Region Government, Third Supervisory Officer, effectively the third-highest official in the special administrative government, primarily overseeing the settlement affairs of the Spirit Race population and assets.

The five minutes swiftly passed, and the shuttle descended upon the landing pad.

The moment the hatch opened, Shang Yanwen caught the scent of blood.

The scent emanated from the four-man Interstellar Warrior Squad awaiting them. They had been standing by for a while.

The leading figure approached, extending a datapad.

Upon Shang Yanwen verifying his biometric data on it, a chilling voice emerged from within the opponent’s breathing grille:

"Greetings, Director Shang Yanwen. I am Vikas, from the Sixth Company of the Execution Angels Corps. My squad and I will be responsible for your protection in the upcoming period."

The close protection of four Interstellar Warriors was a first for Shang Yanwen.

He had indeed seen such majestic warriors before, who were often the sharpest swords on the battlefield, tasked with resolving the most dire difficulties, exceptional offensive tools, rarely serving as bodyguards for high-ranking government officials.

If such measures had been instituted, it likely meant that the safety of government top brass was one of the most challenging problems in Comoros.

However, he had long been mentally prepared for this.

Though his past lacked no instances of personal danger encountered in iron and blood, his understanding of Comoros, from reading various documents, informed him that working here marked the period in his career when he would be closest to death.

"I'll be relying on you," Shang Yanwen replied courteously.

He was familiar with the Execution Angels Corps.

In the Alliance, most of the Blood Angel Corps' detachments were established after the conclusion of the Lord Star Campaign, following the Blood Angels' integration into the Alliance.

This phase of concentrated military formation was known as the Blood Alliance military build-up.

However, a few corps joined the Alliance during the Dark Side Expeditions, prior to the parent corps' integration; others were established in several small-scale dark side formations of the Alliance before the Blood Alliance build-up.

The Execution Angels belonged to the latter category.

And their identity has always been unique, being one of the two internal security corps, seldom deployed on external campaigns, yet they have perpetrated no small amount of killings, often responding to summons from the Alliance's Anti-Corruption Bureau, Police Department, Security Department, Ministry of Internal Affairs to handle extremely serious internal affairs.

The name 'Execution' is not given lightly. When they are deployed, it's typically when the evidence is indisputable, or even unnecessary, just requiring a headsman's axe, and it's where these elite depart when the internal departments' skilled agents cannot suffice, necessitating angelic intervention.

For internal suppression and explosive shock tactics, the Execution Angels are unparalleled.

And now, this fully staffed corps had arrived in Comoros.

The current Comoros Special Administrative Region was just the place for them to fulfill their role.

...

Switching to a vehicle, they sped along a sealed corridor within the city. The surrounding scenery unfolded before his eyes.

The avenue he was currently on was known in the past as Desire Avenue, serving as the central street within Comoros.

After the spacecraft landed, traveling from here inward would lead straight to the center of Comoros. There, it once held the Suffering Palace overseen by the Black Witch King Victor, the ruling center of the Dark Spirit Race. Now, it had become the seat of the Comoros Special Administrative Region Government, simply renamed Comoros City Center.

This avenue could still hint at its former glory. Lined with towering skyscrapers, many signs yet to be removed symbolized the prestige of numerous dark families. Such families often splurged to purchase buildings along Desire Avenue, signifying their brand; various guilds and merchant houses operated storefronts here, dealing in exotic treasures plundered from the reality universe. Many luminous, neon-colored pleasure dens, steeped in debauchery, also dotted the area.

However, it was now rather desolate. Not only were passersby scarce, but one could even occasionally spot uncleaned bloodstains.

The armored hovercar carrying Shang Yanwen sped swiftly above the avenue, encountering no threats as it headed straight for the central city, entering the Governor’s Mansion.

The Governor’s Mansion was renovated from the original Temple of Pain. Human engineers had removed the screaming statues and eradicated traces of religious and debauched elements, yet its opulence and enigma remained visible.

Upon entering, Shang Yanwen saw four Witch Spirits wearing electronic collars scrubbing the floor. Dark purple blood seeped from the gaps in the tiles as they employed minor spiritual energies to suppress and purge the transcendent energy, once suffused with the flavor of pain, that lingered here.

The Dark Spirit Race cherished such energies, but humans did not.

Shang Yanwen’s leather boots stepped onto water marks, and a Spirit Race woman recoiled as if electrocuted, the collar’s blue light flaring, causing her to spasm and press her forehead against the floor.

He passed on without altering his expression, took the express elevator, navigating within the building, and soon arrived at the Governor’s Office.

Four Execution Angels stood guard outside as Shang Yanwen entered alone, meeting with Governor Xia Xingze of Comoros.

The two held a confidential conversation briefly before Shang Yanwen emerged again.

However, a slight gravity had settled on his expression.

Chapter 965: The Eleven Executions

"...responsible for overseeing the inventory and transfer of assets from the original Dark Spirit Race, coordinating Spirit Race cooperation in municipal reconstruction, ensuring the integration of the Veil Spirit Gate system to Alliance standards..."

"...today, I need to inspect two soul box archives, establish the records; need to supervise the progress of the Blood People’s laboratory takeover..."

"...most of the assigned department officers have not yet arrived, need to meet these people first, see their quality, and then begin arranging work..."

Shang Yanwen was pondering numerous matters, but did not feel overwhelmed, rather invigorated.

Just on the first day of duty, there were already so many things to handle.

He is the overseer, in theory, unless it's a particularly important task requiring his personal handling, his role primarily involves management tasks: formulating strategies, arranging work, conducting research, reviewing reports.

Otherwise, no matter how capable he is, relying solely on himself to deal with every specific task is impossible.

The current issue lies in the low rate of officer arrivals. Comoros District holds a very high position and is very important in the overall strategy of the Alliance. The entire administrative structure is comprised of elite teams assembled from all over the Alliance.

Shang Yanwen is such a member, and his leader, Governor Xia Xingze is too. He was transferred from the position of Forward Cosmic Domain Chair to serve as the Alliance's Minister of Central Commerce, considered one of the top figures within the Alliance. It is possible he may enter the Alliance's highest authority—the Alliance Cabinet—as an executive member.

If Xia Xingze performs well in his position as Governor of Comoros, he will be a strong contender in the next Cabinet election.

The selections for both leadership and those doing the actual work are alike.

However, many of the public officials and administrative officers need to come from across the Universe. For some distant locations, even if approaching from the nearest Veil Spirit Gate, it still takes a significant amount of time.

Before personnel are in place, Shang Yanwen naturally has to handle many tasks personally.

In a way, it is also beneficial.

He has always been accustomed to directly engaging in specific tasks when taking on a new role. Without frontline work experience, it's tough to lead effectively.

Today, let's tackle each affair one by one.

The first task is to audit and settle two soul box archives.

...

The soul boxes of the Dark Spirit Race are their secrets to eternal life.

They are akin to their soul archives. They place the soul's seed there and integrate the soul into a body that fits their soul.

When they face external death, their soul is drawn back into the soul box. After a brief recovery, as long as they have a new body, their soul can be extracted again and placed into the new vessel, completing a resurrection.

Dark Spirit Race can do this, reviving thousands of times, achieving theoretical immortality.

Of course, ultimately there is a day of true death. After all, their technology is not entirely flawless. Not to mention the soul fatigues with each death, and every new body requires a lengthy period of adaptation and weakness. Just one thing—if they die and get cut off from their soul box, it can't pull their soul back.

The souls of those who cannot return only have one destination: Slaanesh's divine realm.

From this perspective, the soul box is extremely important to the Dark Spirit Race.

Now, the Spirit Race resistance forces in Comoros, and fleeing Spirits, what they prioritize carrying during escapes might not even be their own life, but their soul box.

Those who surrendered to the Alliance, naturally surrender their soul box for the Alliance to manage.

Shang Yanwen, as the third-ranking officer, centrally manages the surrendering faction of the Dark Spirit Race. Managing their soul box naturally is of utmost importance. He has a department called the 'Resurrection Administration Bureau', specifically prepared for future Dark Spirit Race resurrection efforts.

The 'Loyalist faction' Dark Spirit Race must submit an application to the Alliance for resurrection, subject to approval by the Alliance Government.

These soul boxes are currently under the control of the Alliance Army. The soul box archives encompassing entire families are typically guarded by an Alliance Army unit.

Now, Shang Yanwen's task is to inventory these, then under the army's protection, transport the soul boxes to a unified management center for preservation. They undergo registration upon entry, and only those Dark Spirit Race members with registered soul boxes have 'basic human rights' within the Alliance.

Basic rights where one won't be easily killed without committing errors, similar to the four ground scrubbing slaves he encountered upon entering the government building's entrance.

However, his first mission encountered a problem.

While leading the team to complete the preliminary inventory of the 'Mingdala' family's soul box archive, preparing to transport the materials and soul boxes away, a painful scream rushed from the ventilation ducts!

Shang Yanwen was pushed down behind an alloy counter by his security chief, Execution Angel squad leader Vikas. Three venom-tipped arrows struck where he had stood, hissing as they corroded the ground.

Twelve Spirit Race in shadow camouflage burst through the windows, slicing the chests of two clerks with sharp blades, splattering hot blood on the data screens.

"For Victor!" The resistance leader's roar was cut short by the chain-saw sword's thundering slash. Four Execution Angels crashed into their formation, casually firing explosives that blew the upper bodies of the attackers into blood mist, slicing the attackers into fragments with chain-saw swords.

Shang Yanwen noticed the flag-bearing Spirit, seemingly a youth, pinned to a sacrificial pillar by a power sword, his struggling feet leaving blood trails on the silver column; also witnessed the bravest female warrior among the enemies slice off Interstellar Warrior's arm brace with a scimitar, only to have her neck snapped by a reverse hand move a second later.

The battle concluded swiftly, leaving three captives captured by the Execution Angels.

After a brief interrogation, Vikas issued the order: "Execute."

The Execution Angel Squad Leader announced on the communication channel, his voice seeping coldly through the faceplate's apertures. As the chain-saw sword plunged into the body of the Spirit Race, it brought out blue-violet organs, the dull grinding sound of the saw teeth shredding the spine mixed with the burnt stench of seared flesh.

This is not merely the annihilation of the flesh.

On the Execution Angels, there are devices that isolate triggers. Within close proximity, the slain Dark Spirit Race will achieve complete 'freedom.'

Wiping the bloodstains off his power armor, Vikas explained to Shang Yanwen, "These aliens blew up the eastern district pipelines, rendering our newly drawn eastern district pipeline map useless. They probably snuck in through those pipelines."

Standing up, Shang Yanwen's expression barely changed.

He thought for a moment, then slightly shook his head.

After a whole squad of human soldiers rushed over, he demanded that all members of the small Mingdala family be brought in.

The family’s governor, Insel, bowed compliantly before Shang Yanwen.

However, at this moment, the civil official appeared extremely heartless: "I believe this attack is not unrelated to you; this is your territory. I suspect there are sympathizers of the rebellion among you."

"Absolutely impossible!" Insel’s body trembled, "You have no evidence to..."

"I only want you to hand over the culprit." Shang Yanwen raised a finger.

"I..." Insel understood his meaning and said with a pale face, "I will give you a satisfying answer and find the culprit for you."

"Not one," said Shang Yanwen, "but a hundred."

Insel’s expression turned even paler.

His family numbered no more than over nine hundred people.

"It was me!" Insel’s son stepped forward, "It has nothing to do with others..."

"Muir!" Insel shouted, but was interrupted by the ’bang’ of an explosive bullet.

It was Vikas who fired.

He had already received an advance order from Shang Yanwen, without any hesitation, shooting Insel's child dead.

Shang Yanwen continued to say to Insel: "There are still ninety-nine to go."

Insel clenched his fists but finally loosened them powerlessly.

Although he vaguely guessed that perhaps his son had connections with the resistance, providing information, facilitating infiltration, and taking advantage of the opportunity when Shang Yanwen, a high official of the Alliance, arrived to launch an assassination attempt. He was also prepared that if things couldn't be settled, he would turn them over to save the family, even if it was an inevitable sacrifice.

But his son had voluntarily stepped forward and was dead, and still, this was demanded?

What did Shang Yanwen mean by this?

Eleven more executions?!

But... no matter what is said, eleven executions are better than killing them all.

...

Sitting in the vehicle on the return journey, Shang Yanwen's expression remained unchanged, but internally, he was somewhat shocked.

If Vikas had been a second slower, he would have really died just now.

But the killings were not just for personal revenge.

A bloody example must be set.

And this time, what the human troops brought back to be kept collectively were not only the soul boxes of all the remaining living members of the 'Mingdala' family but also their entire clan.

His lunch was held on a terrace overlooking a theater ruin. While Shang Yanwen chewed on synthetic steak, the square below was conducting the surrender ceremony of the Mingdala family. Over eight hundred people, watching closely as ninety-nine of their own kind knelt on the ground after being disarmed. Their soul boxes had already been picked out and lain in front, to be crushed one by one by an Execution Angel.

With every crushed box, a Spirit Race member would silently collapse to the ground.

Their weapons and equipment had long been confiscated, leaving them unable to resist.

In such a desperate atmosphere,

a young Spirit Race suddenly lunged at the Execution Angel, but with a single blow to the head, it was smashed.

All of this was observed by Shang Yanwen. Reflected in the clean metallic cutlery he used to eat was his face, etched deeply with lines of authority.

The boy who scavenged for food in the garbage heaps a hundred years ago now controls the fate of countless Dark Spirit Races.

Chapter 966: Divinity Fragment

The data tablet in his hand reflected the first work report of the Comoros Special Administrative Region government.

Gu Hang had just glanced at it and casually wrote annotations.

The Comoros Special Administrative Region was, of course, very important, as it was the Alliance's greatest gain in the current war.

However, after the establishment of the administrative special region, there were differences in the specific benefits. This could be seen from the seating order of the administrative leaders in the special region government.

Among the three chief officers, Shang Yanwen, who was responsible for managing all matters concerning the Dark Spirit Race population, was only ranked third.

Ranked second was the official responsible for the recovery and analysis of all Dark Spirit Race technologies, and for transforming these technologies into projects that could truly be applied by humans.

The governor of the special region, who ranked first, although also bearing leadership responsibility for the work of the second and third officials, primarily personally focused on the management of all ports and logistics in Comoros.

This precisely reflected the value of Comoros.

How to utilize the Dark Spirit Race population, how to settle the Spirit Race pirate threats that defected from Comoros, and how to handle the internal resistance organizations of Comoros were certainly important. However, their importance was far less than the former two tasks.

In fact, the proper utilization of the Spirit Race population essentially served the purpose of supporting the former two tasks. After all, the technologies of the Spirit Race could, of course, be better utilized by their technical experts and the Blood People; the Spirit Race resistance army posed a threat to the operation of Comoros' ports.

If Shang Yanwen excelled in his work, resolving the resistance forces and eliminating threats, and if he could better enable the surrendered Dark Spirits to assist humans in quickly mastering and applying their technologies, it would undoubtedly be a significant achievement.

As for other aspects, to be honest, Gu Hang was not that concerned.

In the entire report, he almost completely ignored the current situation of the Dark Spirit Race and the cruel suppression and enslavement by humans in Comoros.

In his view, these were all justified. As long as they effectively contributed to his valued objectives, he wouldn't mind the means.

After all, they were just some aliens.

As for his transactions and alliances with Spirit Race Gods... wasn't there the Ark Eldar?

Gu Hang neither enslaved the Ark Eldar nor ordered those 'white bean sprouts' to bring their arks to the Alliance to obey his command. At most, he planned to assign a political commissar to each Ark Fleet as a liaison officer.

He felt this was not excessive either.

In terms of allies, the God of Thousand Faces and the Ark Eldar were considered allies.

The Dark Spirit Race was a spoils of war.

Moreover, even the Dark Spirit Race originally faced a destiny of extinction.

Whether annihilated by humans in the Comoros War, or in thousands of years when the core of the God of Thousand Faces becomes utterly corroded and unable to provide protection for the Spirit Race through soulstones and soulstones, causing them to die and be immediately taken by Slaanesh.

Anyway, it was extinction.

And now, Gu Hang was saving this race from such a terrifying future.

What more could they possibly wish for?

From this perspective, Gu Hang believed that the work of the entire Special Administrative Region government was still quite satisfactory so far.

However, his focus had now shifted from Comoros.

Besides various Alliance affairs that required his attention, the entire Storm God Kingdom demanded his leadership, occupying most of his time. The little discretion he had left was primarily devoted to two areas of research.

The first was related to his son and the divinity of Comoros.

The second concerned the ’inheritance’.

The first point was related to his transaction with the God of Thousand Faces.

The transaction between Gu Hang and the God of Thousand Faces had been settled.

But once settled, how the agreed upon matters would be executed and realized fell upon Gu Jing.

Gu Hang did not intend to return the divinity fragment of Comoros, which belonged to the God of Thousand Faces, to him.

Nowadays, whether it was the alliance with the Ark Eldar or the subjugation and enslavement of the Dark Spirit Race by humans, it was fundamentally possible only with the acquiescence or even support of this Spirit Race God.

But did Gu Hang have any means to balance the God of Thousand Faces?

It currently seemed that the God of Thousand Faces had a strong willingness to cooperate. After all, throughout the universe and even subspace, few had the power and willingness to share the corruption of Slaanesh with him, allowing him to stop worrying about further deterioration, and even enabling him to repair the many 'faces' slumbering within his Divine Core, so that the multitude of the Spirit Race's Pantheon might have a chance to reappear in the world in the future.

From a benefit perspective, Gu Hang shouldn't worry too much.

Moreover, the Divine Core of the God of Thousand Faces was even in Gu Hang's hands, currently lying in the Storm God Kingdom, seemingly awaiting Gu Hang's command to summon thunder and strike it, potentially obliterating the ageless legacy of this Spirit Race God completely into ashes.

This seemed like an excellent insurance policy; they even handed over their life, so what was there to worry about?

But in truth, there wasn't.

Gu Hang had no evidence, but he always felt that the main god of the Spirit Race wouldn't be without a backup plan. Should he really entertain any malicious thoughts, this Divine Core might just vanish in the blink of an eye.

He had a vague intuition.

Although he had no intention of touching the Divine Core, as long as the God of Thousand Faces didn't turn against him; given the level of mutual interest, the God of Thousand Faces had little room to betray.

But events are unpredictable, who knows what may happen in the future?

A higher level of measure was necessary.

This measure lay in the divinity fragment of Comoros that had been separated.

As one of the ’faces’ of the God of Thousand Faces, a god within the Pantheon, its connection to the Divine Core was deeply intertwined, as if they were essentially one; yet simultaneously, due to its separated state, it allowed it to be handled individually.

Gu Hang was researching how to stably possess it.

The ultimate purpose was to anticipate that if anything unfavorable were to happen, Gu Hang could leverage the unremovable Comoros divinity fragment in his possession to track and locate the Divine Core.

Without discussing the ultimate goal, even now, selecting a person to hold this artifact could grant them significant power.

This person had long been selected by Gu Hang.

It was his own son, Gu Jing.

Trustworthy enough, and with the additional power bestowed, Gu Jing could make the most of it.

With this empowerment, considering Gu Jing’s innate spiritual power and his Great Demon incarnation, Gu Jing could likely ascend to a higher level in terms of combat capability, gaining the power to contend with notable Divine Sovereign Demons or even Sons of God.

After investing significant effort, Gu Hang had completed the related research.

The fragment of divinity had also landed in Gu Jing’s hands.

As for Gu Hang’s second area of research, it was related to the ’inheritance’.

Chapter 967: Relic

The so-called "inheritance" is the original body of the Phoenix, the current commander of the Alliance's Southern Line, Martins Salas, after ascending to the original form with Gu Hang, obtained it after personally participating in combat for the first time.

In the Papalier Star System, a Calamity Fleet was obliterated. Their strategic goals were also exposed.

The commander of the Chaos Starfield Warriors, leader of the Calamity Fleet, a historically known human traitor, King of White Wolves - Zachariah, was captured alive and transported to the Alliance heartland, currently detained in a secret chamber on Rage Owl Star.

Along with this captive, the fleet's intended plunder was also sent over.

That item was originally stored in a bronze sarcophagus in an underground crypt of a chapel in Papalier.

Now, that bronze sarcophagus has also been delivered.

The captive and bronze sarcophagus have actually been in Gu Hang's hands for some time. However, Gu Hang has been too occupied to personally conduct any research.

The Alliance Intelligence Department is interrogating the captive, while multiple sects of the Sect of Mechanics and scholars from the Psychic Cultivator's Association have sent people to conduct joint research on the bronze sarcophagus.

Even without Gu Hang's direct involvement, the Alliance has mobilized its existing resources from various sectors.

The goal is to uncover the nature of these "things," to understand their purpose and what the Chaos Forces are scheming.

Yet, the specifications, levels, and depths of this item were somewhat beyond expectations.

Without Gu Hang's direct participation in the research, after much effort, they can only ascertain that it appears to be some kind of "inheritance." Initially thought to be a treasure left by some ancient civilization, they started calling it "inheritance" internally. However, as research deepened, understanding of the contents within the bronze sarcophagus grew, leading to a revised theory that it's not a product of civilization, but rather something left by some powerful individual or entity.

Beyond this, research yields little else. The energy levels within cannot be measured or used; moving the bronze sarcophagus using spiritual energy is a laborious task. Furthermore, the sarcophagus is merely a container, not the essence. The essence within remains inaccessible.

Research progress reports are continuously sent to Gu Hang's desk, where he reviews them with great interest.

After resolving affairs in Comoros and delegating control of divine fragments to his son, Gu Hang freed up time to start dealing with this matter.

Gu Hang's interest grew even more as the research progressed!

It's no wonder the sages from the Sect of Mechanics and the scholar masters from the Psychic Cultivator's Association could not delve deeper.

Their previous conclusion, however, wasn't incorrect.

This item indeed is a "legacy"; it originates from an ultra-ancient civilization, akin to a divine existence.

Gu Hang believes this.

Yet, its origin can be set aside for now. Its function resembles that of the God of Thousand Faces' divine core.

Though potentially not identical, their effects are likely similar; mastering and assimilating it could elevate one to godhood!

But saying so is easier than doing it. Even with Gu Jing's ability, claiming "a face" of the God of Thousand Faces was nearly impossible. Only with Gu Hang's intense efforts and the God of Thousand Faces' cooperation due to a transaction—helping rather than hindering—could Gu Jing succeed.

However, this current fragment is entirely different from the God of Thousand Faces.

Autumn's harbinger; Gu Hang sees this fragment as merely an insignificant piece of the complete form. Thus, extrapolating its complete version must be far more powerful than the God of Thousand Faces—even greater than at its prime!

What does this imply?

At its prime, the God of Thousand Faces sat in the Pantheon, transforming into countless deities, it sheltered the then-universal hegemon, the Spirit Race Empire. Despite not reaching the current Four Gods' level because of certain traits, one of the current Four Gods, Slaanesh, originated from a "face" of the Thousand Faces, ultimately manifesting.

From this, the gap between the primed God of Thousand Faces and the Four Gods wasn't much—merely a hair's breadth.

Even stronger than that implies that the complete divine core could rival the Subspace's primary deities, equaling the Four Gods?

But... pondering this, Gu Hang can't help but harbor a thrilling thought:

"Can the Four Gods die too?"

This universe is filled with entities called "god." Earlier, something like the Primal Fury Owl on Rage Owl Star could be deemed one.

Yet, the true Four Great Evil Gods are terrifying and overwhelming in their power.

Are entities of this level also subject to demise?

Even divided into countless fragments?

What are the Chaos Forces attempting then, collecting these fragments?

Resurrecting that god?

This question necessitates combining with information extracted from the interrogation of Zachariah, the former King of White Wolves, now a prisoner.

The Chaos Forces aren't entirely unified; though currently, they're seemingly consolidated by Chaos Warlord Alchaton, internal disputes and factions are numerous.

The hostile relationship between the Four Gods is likely no less than the enmity with the Human Emperor. Chaos cultists, if they believe in one of the Four Gods, would naturally struggle to cooperate, relying on Alchaton to forcibly unite them. Of course, some like Alchaton don't solely worship any one Evil God, generally siding with Chaos but not truly believing, instead borrowing power from Subspace, each pursuing their own ambitions.

White Wolf King Zachariah is one of them.

He dreams of replacing the Chaos Warlord, then during the Warlord's formation of the Calamity Fleet, leveraging a collaborator, a powerful entity from Subspace, an Inferior Deity named Bas Sol.

This entity possesses great power and considerable influence within Subspace.

If it were just this, it would be nothing noteworthy; besides the Four Gods, many inferior evil gods and demon princes inhabit Subspace as well.

However, Bas Sol harbors a grand ambition—to elevate even further.

This aspiration may be shared by many Subspace inferior gods. Yet, most don't have the path to realization; it's merely a frightening fantasy.

Bas Sol differs; he has already taken a crucial step.

Chapter 968: The Path to Godhood

In reality, Zachariah, as a major faction within the traitors — the head of a branch in the Wolf Pack Legion and also the Commander of an entire Calamity Fleet, holds quite a high position within the entire Chaos faction.

If it weren't so, Bas Sol wouldn't have chosen Zachariah as one of his most important collaborators.

However, even so, Zachariah actually has no idea what Bas Sol is collecting those 'relics' for.

He doesn't even know what the relics actually are.

It doesn't really matter. He just needs to know that Bas Sol aims to become a god and that these 'relics' are the key to his ascension, and that's enough.

But Gu Hang is different.

When he obtained the information from Zachariah, a high-level prisoner, and combined it with the research findings of the relic he had seized, Gu Hang gained a significant understanding and speculation about Bas Sol's plan.

The remnants left by this once Four Evil God-level existence, if assembled completely and reassembled with enormous magical power, would surely become a transcendent Divine Artifact.

And mastering this Divine Artifact, for someone like Bas Sol, who was originally just a step away from the Four Gods as a Subspace Evil God, might indeed help him cross that crucial step.

Unfortunately, merely from Zachariah's words, it is impossible to know to what extent Bas Sol has progressed.

But Gu Hang thinks that with Bas Sol, he must plan for the worst-case scenario.

Now he's leveraging the army of Chaos Traitors and the power of Chaos Warlord Alchaton, collecting the fragments of the 'legacy' across the universe, which can be said to be a high-profile campaign.

Even if Gu Hang has only just learned what he intends to do and where the critical points of the 'relics' he is gathering are, the rulers in Subspace, those Four Evil Gods, surely have a clearer understanding.

Even the Emperor should be more aware than Gu Hang.

The main reason is that Gu Hang is too 'young.'

In terms of calculations, it's been over a hundred years since he arrived in this universe. By the lifespan of an ordinary mortal, this is already an age to look up to, but for the human nobility who can undergo life extension surgeries, under one hundred and fifty years is considered young, let alone when compared to the eternally existing Evil Gods, Gu Hang is just an infant.

No matter how strong an 'infant' is, there are many things that require lengthy experience to know, which he naturally cannot understand.

Would these great beings really wish for a new Evil God to appear in Subspace?

Looking at the malicious relations between the Four Gods, and between the Four Gods and humans, it clearly reveals that they would never want to see a new entity equal to themselves emerge.

Bas Sol himself clearly understands this point as well.

The fact that he now dares to boldly advance his plan, in Gu Hang's view, suggests three possibilities:

Either he has fully prepared so thoroughly that he is not worried about intervention from the Four Gods or the Emperor.

Or he is at a point of no return where he must push the matter rapidly forward as it can no longer be delayed.

Or he is no longer a sole enemy; he now has strong support behind him that allows him to act with confidence.

These three factors are not mutually exclusive and could all exist simultaneously.

And this is what Gu Hang fears the most.

Imagine if Bas Sol has already thoroughly prepared for divinity and is just waiting for the critical point of the relics. Moreover, having already collected many relic fragments, he may be left with just the final batch that is too conspicuous to be secretly gathered, requiring an overt plunder.

Additionally, if he has negotiated some interest exchange with one or several Evil Gods, forming a tacit understanding, or even support... just thinking about it is terrifying.

That would mean Bas Sol will be extremely hard to stop.

Plus, considering the second scenario where Bas Sol has reached a situation where he has no choice but to ascend or perish, which means he would be very aggressive while being hard to intercept, posing a tremendous threat.

However, regardless of the circumstances, one thing is certain: Gu Hang must find a way to stop him.

Having four Evil Gods lurking in Subspace is already immense pressure. If there is another powerful Evil God malevolent towards humanity, the situation will undoubtedly worsen.

And the method to stop him is now quite clearly laid out — prevent the collection of the complete legacy.

But there are two problems.

The first cumbersome issue is that from the research on the fragment Gu Hang seized, he believes this piece is a small fragment compared to the complete state of the relic.

This is not a necessary fragment of the complete relic.

It's great if it's included; at the final stage of integrating the fragments, it should save some time and lower some difficulty. However, if it's absolutely not available, with Gu Hang's capability, spending some time could make up for the small fragment's absence, not to mention the much more powerful Bas Sol in the art of creation.

This means Gu Hang cannot simply hide this object in his possession and rest easy knowing that the other side can't get it.

What a pity. If it were a necessary fragment, Gu Hang could sit back and wait for them to come knocking. Holding the home ground would obviously be more advantageous.

Without this advantage, Gu Hang must at least find a necessary fragment to block Bas Sol's path to ascension.

This leads to the second problem: how to find those relics?

Before Bas Sol began searching for the relics, no one noticed the peculiar nature of these lost fragments scattered across various worlds. Were it not for the fact that his minions had activated the item in Papalier's underground mausoleum, even if the Alliance knew the object they sought was in the cathedral's underground tomb, determining the specific sarcophagus containing the relic would require a long time of carpet-search to identify.

If even a mausoleum cannot be thoroughly understood, expanding the search scope to the entire universe is virtually an impossible task.

Bas Sol must possess some method to resonate or locate the relic fragments.

And Gu Hang must have this method as well.

The next thing he needs to do is to use this fragment in his possession, through its connection with other fragments, to create a means of localization.

It sounds simple but is extremely difficult to accomplish.

This relic fragment is not like the fragment of the God of Thousand Faces, Komo, which Gu Hang once possessed.

The God of Thousand Faces is still alive; resonating from one of his fragments to him is relatively easier to accomplish.

However, the relic left by this unknown existence, fragmented over unknown tens of thousands of years, attempting to resonate with other fragments is incredibly challenging.

Bas Sol, having prepared for this for so long, certainly has the means to do it.

Gu Hang is unsure if he is still in time.

Chapter 969: Terra in Peril

To prevent Bas Sol from ascending, seizing the necessary fragments of the artifact is essential.

Of course, Gu Hang will dedicate significant research effort to the localization technology for the artifact fragments.

But compared to Bas Sol, who has unknowingly prepared for long eons, Gu Hang is just now starting to catch up. It's feared that even if he develops some usable localization technology, it would be far less efficient than the opponent's.

However, besides directly localizing the artifact fragments himself, there is another direction humanity can pursue to thwart the enemy.

The Chaos side collects those artifact fragments by dispatching the Calamity Fleet to plunder across the universe. In the past, the Alliance didn't know what the frequent activities of the Calamity Fleet meant, thinking they were just like typical Chaos enemies, merely causing havoc and spreading Chaos corruption—with low efficiency.

But now, the Alliance knows that the Calamity Fleet's goal in cosmic activities is the artifact fragments.

So why not just follow the Calamity Fleet?

Of course, easier said than done.

The Calamity Fleet, a Chaos Fleet using subspace engines for interstellar navigation, is elusive and difficult to track. Once they appear, they often quickly rush to their target, accomplishing their mission with a strike and some destruction, then swiftly retreat.

Indeed, they are difficult to handle.

But isn't that convenient?

During the Komarr War, the Dark Spirit Race launched two pirate raids against the Alliance, which were not small in scale, being desperate efforts of their entire race.

Moreover, speaking of elusive movements and ship maneuverability, compared to the Chaos Fleet, which can utilize the Veil Spirit Gate for faster interstellar travel, the Spirit Race's ships are generally faster and more agile in the real universe.

Furthermore, the Dark Spirit Race being pirates and conducting such operations is not something new but backed by tens of thousands of years of experience.

Over this long period, their entire race accumulated extensive tactical and strategic experience, along with many excellent commanders and leaders.

Overall, aren't the Dark Spirit Race's pirate fleet clusters much more difficult to handle compared to the Calamity Fleet?

Nonetheless, during the Komarr War period, the Alliance managed to effectively curb the Spirit Race pirates' actions by setting up the 'Hunting Fleet.'

Of course, there was a price for it.

To form a force capable of countering the frantic Dark Spirit Race, humanity had to give it their all. Not only was the Central Front Army in combat, but many high-speed ships from the Southern Line, Angel Corps, and Eastern Line were also pulled out.

These ships being redeployed genuinely affected the efficiency of the Dark Side Expedition.

Logically, after the Komarr War ended, there shouldn't be much need for the 'Hunting Fleet' to continue to exist.

However, since there is still the Calamity Fleet to deal with, the 'Hunting Fleet,' which has accumulated rich coping experience, can still play a role.

Only, the scale doesn't have to be that large.

...

Currently, Gu Hang's methods to face Bas Sol and the Calamity Fleet include, firstly, researching new localization technology, but this is a long-term tactic; secondly, using the already established 'Hunting Fleet' specifically to counter the Chaos Calamity Fleet.

Ultimately, the threat of the new Evil God is a long-term threat, not immediate.

However, right now, a bigger problem lies before Gu Hang—Robert's side is not progressing smoothly.

The Komarr War's second stage is marked by the departure of the Terra Expeditionary Army from Komarr, at which moment the Dark Spirit Race of Komarr suddenly betrayed, tearing up the peace agreement that had only short-lived effects and launched a blatant attack against humanity.

And during this process, there were some losses for the Terra Expeditionary Army.

As the entire fleet left through the Veil Ridge Gate, the Dark Spirit Race violently closed the door, leading to a section of the fleet's tail not passing through the Veil Spirit Gate and getting lost in the Veil.

Though termed 'lost,' it can essentially be considered 'lost.'

Having just arrived in the real universe and yet to do anything, Robert abruptly suffered such a severe blow and was certainly displeased.

The total losses amounted to about 1% of the entire fleet.

Though not particularly huge to the point of being crippling, it indeed counted as an inauspicious beginning.

But Robert had no other choice; he could only send a message to Gu Hang via a Star Speaker, expressing his dissatisfaction.

Then, he led the fleet, heading at full speed to Holy Terra.

That was his ultimate goal.

Where the Veil Spirit Gate opened, it was said to be already close to Holy Terra, but in fact, it was in the neighboring system. Flying there, logically it would take about two standard Terra Days to locate the warp point, then another half day to warp into the Solar System, followed by three days to reach the Human Ancestral Star.

During this process, Robert constantly tried to contact Holy Terra.

Initially, there was no connection.

The psychics on the ship discovered that there were very fierce subspace waves in the Solar System.

At this time, there was already an ominous feeling—could the most feared situation have still occurred?

Robert held onto a shred of hope because, although he couldn't contact Holy Terra, he managed to contact Satellite V.

From Satellite V, he learned that inside the Solar System, the subspace turbulence was a 'normal' occurrence.

Since the great cataclysm and the appearance of the Scarlet Scar in the real universe, subspace turbulence had started appearing in the Solar System, and over these hundred years, it grew stronger and stronger.

Previously it didn't heavily interfere with communications, but now, communications became increasingly difficult.

On Satellite V, the last communication with Holy Terra happened approximately three standard Tera Months ago.

At that time, the message from Terra was that everything was normal, urging the Imperial Army on Satellite V to dutifully perform their tasks.

Upon hearing this news, Robert was not relieved but became even more anxious.

He kept urging the fleet to speed up.

And when they arrived in the Solar System, they immediately attempted to establish communication with Holy Terra and Mars.

Holy Terra said everything was normal there, questioning Robert's identity, and claimed, 'If you are a loyal Son of God, please have your army remain at the edge of the system to await identity verification.'

But the message from Mars was different.

"Terra is in trouble, come quickly!"

Chapter 970: Return at Once

Faced with differing messages from Holy Terra and Mars, who should Robert trust?

Of course, he trusts no one!

From the current situation, it's clear that something has gone wrong.

It's hard to pinpoint exactly who's at fault without adequate information, but Robert decided to see for himself.

To protect himself and avoid falling into a trap due to issues on Mars, he carefully led his fleet forward, maintaining formation, and deployed numerous scout ships for reconnaissance.

Eventually, it became apparent that the problem was indeed with Holy Terra.

The forward-most scout ships witnessed as war unfolded on Holy Terra!

Robert closely monitored the situation, demanding all frontline intelligence be sent directly to him.

From this intelligence, Robert felt that the war currently occurring on Holy Terra seemed to be not an 'external' invasion, but rather an internal upheaval.

But this made it all the more strange.

Holy Terra, with its massive population of over a trillion, densely packed with nest capitals that drain the oceans, has cramped living spaces and inevitably areas lacking control.

Riots occurring are actually quite normal.

Not to mention since the Catastrophe Era, even in better times, the situation was not always peaceful.

Given such a large base, coupled with the Empire's truly corrupt and inefficient nature, some unrest is very normal.

However, while unrest easily erupts, it is also easily suppressed.

Not considering the Imperial Guard stationed long-term within the Imperial Palace, after all, those 'homebodies' barely step out no matter the gravity of the situation.

Besides the Imperial Guard, one of the original warbands, the Golden Knights, have long been stationed on Holy Terra. They have many historical records of suppressing revolts.

Furthermore, the defensive forces on Holy Terra remain formidable.

The Sun Legion, a leader among the Star Realm Army, numbering in billions, had a considerable portion outside Holy Terra when the Catastrophe hit and couldn't return, yet nearly half remain stationed on Holy Terra.

They are the main force for quelling unrest on Holy Terra.

Moreover, the Legal Department cannot be ignored. It is rooted in Holy Terra, with police forces not inferior to elite armies in equipment and personnel. The police focus more on investigation, riot control, urban and small-scale warfare.

Perhaps in large-scale field battles, the Legal Department cannot match the military, due to differences in equipment and training for different scenarios. However, in urban environments, they are significantly more professional in suppressing uprisings.

The number of Legal Department personnel on Holy Terra is no less than the Solar Expedition Army.

Beyond the basic police forces, the Legal Department also has elite officers. Power Armor and Terminator Armor - feedback versions equipped for mortals - are available.

Besides the Sun Legion and Legal Department, there are forces like the Tribunal and Assassin Court...

There are plenty of talents on Holy Terra capable of quelling any riots.

Historically, there have been hardly any successful uprisings on Holy Terra.

But what if it isn't just a simple riot?

In the Solar System, amidst the surging Subspace waves, deep Chaos corruption is more than normal.

In fact, before the Catastrophe Era, in the lower nest capitals of Holy Terra, Chaos corruption was not uncommon among the impoverished population.

Under the Scarlet Scar, it certainly became more severe.

Nonetheless, riots caused merely by Chaos corruption aren't frightening by themselves.

But what if the very defenses meant to suppress these riots are also corrupted?

Star Realm Army leaders, police officials... these have happened throughout history.

Reaching this point is still not particularly terrifying.

After all, Chaos corruption has always been a core threat faced by the Human Empire, with the National Church, Sect of Mechanics, Tribunal, and Legal Department all having rigorous mechanisms for oversight.

But what if the depth of corruption increases? To the extent that these institutions themselves have corrupted elements?

At this point, it becomes quite troubling.

We could add another layer of frightening reality—even without Chaos corruption, is humanity a perfect, flawless species?

In such troubled times, the many nobles on the planet, even without Chaos corruption, surely have their hidden agendas.

Further exacerbated by Chaos corruption, whispered temptations from Subspace...

"Whew..." Robert let out a long breath.

No matter how complex or difficult the situation on Holy Terra, he must face it now.

He had prepared himself to face this.

Otherwise, why bring a massive Terra Expeditionary Army rather than coming alone?

...

When the Terra Expeditionary Army reached near Holy Terra, they didn't need to initiate contact with the surface; a communication arrived first.

However, it was a warning message.

They still did not recognize Robert's identity.

It was completely within expectations.

Whether they were truly cautious and disbelieved the revival of the Son of God or if they did believe but did not want the Son of God to reclaim his throne and power, they could likely do this.

Robert sent a stern reply, emphasizing his identity and legitimacy, demanding that all political and military forces on Holy Terra obey his orders if they remain loyal, in the name of the Empire's Regent King.

Here, he avoided falling into an identity verification trap.

Even if his identity is genuine, the ground forces have countless ways to delay indefinitely under the guise of procedural justice.

Instead, he needed to hold the initiative.

Where does his initiative lie?

There are two essential aspects.

First, his identity.

Before his slumber, besides being the Son of God and leader of the legion, he had another crucial identity as the Empire's Regent King.

The title alone indicates the weight of this position.

He was the Empire Government's undisputed highest legal ruler, even a dictator.

Without the Emperor's return, he was the Empire's master.

This identity, never revoked even after his injury-induced slumber, still stood.

Naturally, who could revoke it? What effort would it take to disturb the eleven ancient mythical figures already asleep?

Now, this legitimate identity is his greatest source of legitimacy to rule the entire Empire.

The second source of his initiative is the large, reinforced, peak-recovered Expeditionary Force he commands.

He was determined to fully leverage his advantage.

His orders to Holy Terra were not solely directed at the government; he also used secret channels to send differently worded letters to every crucial faction on Holy Terra, including the Imperial Guard, seeking their support.

Moreover, he advanced his army to the lunar orbit.