Governor 971

Chapter 971

The Moon is the Human Ancestral Star, Holy Terra's only satellite, and naturally, it plays a significant role.

It is a natural transit port, home to some high-tech factories, and the largest natural external fortress, naval port of Holy Terra.

Robert came to the Moon first, with his own intentions.

If possible, he did not want to overly challenge the nerves of the people on Holy Terra, especially given the current chaotic situation on Holy Terra.

His reconnaissance forces were warned with warning shots as they approached.

The reconnaissance ships sensibly did not come too close.

On one hand, it was dangerous; approaching too closely would expose them to the intense orbital defensive firepower from Holy Terra, likely easily shot down. Close-range reconnaissance meant little.

On the other hand, it was Robert's order — not to provoke Holy Terra's nerves.

Holy Terra was in turmoil, even from a distant observation by the reconnaissance ships, one could clearly see that all factions were constantly fighting. At this moment, it was impossible to discern how many parties were fighting, their respective attitudes, who were loyal, and who were corrupted traitors. Rashly engaging in the chaos on Holy Terra could lead to mistakes.

Conversely, the Moon was a very good target.

Attacking the Moon would also provoke Holy Terra, yet there was warfare happening on the Moon. Even though the images returned by the reconnaissance fleet were very blurry due to the distance,

Robert could sharply detect and speculate that the war on the Moon seemed inconsistent with the war on Terra.

Specifically, Robert believed that the factions involved in the chaotic warfare on the Moon were not entirely affiliated with those on Terra. The chaotic Holy Terra, at present, had insufficient control over the Moon's warfare.

Moreover, Robert's targeted message sent was conveyed to the Moon and received a reply.

That reply was from the 'Moon Guard Legion'.

They claimed there was a rebellion on the Moon. A portion of the Imperial Army's Sun Legion soldiers attacked them. The Imperial Naval Marine Corps, claiming to assist them in suppressing the rebellion, had some ships bombarding the Sun Legion soldiers, and the Marine Corps had landed, although they were fewer than the Sun Legion's 'rebel' forces, they overall provided support.

However, the Moon Guards soon felt something was off.

The Marine Corps soldiers, under the guise of assistance, wanted them to hand over some important defense strongholds?

The Moon Guards initially tolerated this somewhat, but after realizing it was inappropriate later, they outright refused.

This resulted in having yet another wave of enemies.

Thankfully, the Navy did not fully engage in combat, a large number of naval ships seemed lost and hesitant, unsure of what to do. They helped none of the three parties — not fighting the Sun Legion's army, nor their own Marine Corps, nor the Moon Guards, purely remaining neutral.

This gave the Moon Guards some relief — at least they still had their own warships, orbital defense systems, and strong fortresses to station themselves. They could at least confront those 'rebel' navy forces, maintaining a degree of control over the orbit.

Currently, there are four forces on the Moon's orbit. Besides the neutral Imperial Navy ships which make up half, there are the Moon Guard's fleet, the fleet transporting army forces, and some of the participating Imperial Navy ships, all in chaotic combat with each other.

But in terms of naval warfare, the orbital conflict has been somewhat restrained.

After all, the Imperial Navy's main fleet does not seem fully inclined towards one side for now. With them as a stabilizing presence, the struggle for the Moon's orbital control remains relatively peaceful.

However, on the ground, there is no stabilizing presence.

The three factions are almost fighting fiercely.

It's human troops fighting like this, which is really disgraceful.

Yet, this is also Robert's opportunity.

He decisively affirmed the Moon Guard's stance.

It wasn't because the Moon Guards replied to his message that he trusted them greatly. Rather, logically, the Moon Guards were most trustworthy.

This specially structured troop's name alone suggests their duty — they are the Moon's defense forces.

Moon Guards, guarding the Moon, is that not their rightful duty?

Conversely, the Imperial Army attacking the Moon Guards, or the Marine Corps claiming assistance but not cooperating — both claiming they sought important fortifications from the Moon Guards and then attacked them... no matter how plausible their reasons and grievances, a fact stands:

They are fighting where they ought not to be fighting.

Even after the Moon Guards replied, the Marine Corps also responded, claiming they were there to suppress the rebellion and support the Moon Guards but were unjustly attacked by the Moon Guards, inviting Robert's troops to enter the Moon and join their positions.

But, Robert did not trust them.

He directly deployed a Vanguard Army.

Without hesitation, he used his most elite force — the Glory Guard of the Infinite Corps, the Ever Victorious Army!

At least three hundred Interstellar Warriors, led by fifty Ever Victorious Army, plus some elite mortal assault troops, swiftly infiltrated the Moon via spacecraft.

Chapter 971: The Mutinous Marines

The Expeditionary Fleet provided cover, and the Regent King's command deterred the neutral Imperial Navy, keeping them neutral and inactive. Some engaged Navy forces and orbital defense cannons seized by the Sun Legion attempted interception, but were responded by the ships of the Moon Guard.

After landing, the commander of the Ever Victorious Army brought the Regent King's directive.

He demanded that all forces on the Moon cease fire, remain stationed, and come under the Regent King's jurisdiction.

Any forces that defy orders and persist in battle will be recognized as traitors and suffer devastating strikes.

The Navy Marine Corps and Moon Guard both halted, obediently accepting the orders.

Although they had significant doubts about the sudden arrival of the Infinite Corps and Robert's resurrection, and were reluctant to easily hand over their weapons and positions, at least the ceasefire was entirely in the interest of the loyalists.

However, the soldiers of the Sun Legion, the most numerous on the planet, paid no heed, instead launching even more frenzied attacks.

The warriors of the Infinite Corps were thus uncompromising. They first labeled these invading Sun Legion soldiers as traitors, then authorized some Navy Marine Corps and Moon Guard units to join them in mounting fierce offensives against these Star Realm Army soldiers.

During the battle, the warriors of the Infinite Corps also relayed the real-time battle conditions back to the flagship where the Son of God resided.

Frontline reports showed that those soldiers of the Sun Legion were indeed traitors—they could largely be judged as corrupted by Chaos, having lost their sanity, with red eyes and charging with howls in inhuman form.

So far, the accounts from the Moon Guard and Navy Marine Corps have been consistent and credible.

The major battle lasted several days, with strong suppression of the insurgents.

Meanwhile, as ground battles raged fiercely, Robert was not idle.

Matters need to be resolved one by one, and the greatest force in the Moon's situation isn't anything else but that largest-scale naval force which has been keeping still.

Robert believes they are entirely worth winning over.

Although they seem quite muddled and haven't done anything to aid the situation, doing nothing in such chaotic circumstances proves their loyalty even more.

Typically, not seeing clearly, understanding nothing, not knowing what happened, unsure who to believe, with completely conflicted internal opinions... Various reasons compounded, rendering them unable to make any decision.

But if someone could earn their trust through an imposing and undisputable stance, especially once this person's identity is confirmed and holds supreme prestige, what would be the result?

This chaotic, leaderless fleet could be immediately usable!

Besides, despite many issues surely existing within the fleet, Chaos corruption is omnipresent, and nobody knows if it exists here.

However, as long as it hasn't immediately surfaced, under the urgency of the situation, these forces can be utilized.

The stability of the ground battles on the Moon also bolsters the credibility of Robert's rhetoric.

Especially the valiant fighting appearances of the Infinite Corps warriors corroborated Robert's identity to a considerable degree.

Who else could gain the devoted allegiance of the Infinite Corps?

Only their Father of Genetics, Son of God—Robert.

Finally, after several rounds of negotiations, eight Major Generals, four Lieutenant Generals, and three Generals were willing to represent the entire fleet to meet Robert.

As Robert predicted, there were many factions within the fleet, with none capable of fully controlling everyone to make a comprehensive decision. It took so many to meet him.

But that's exactly what he wanted.

He gladly accepted the meeting, willing to take the risk of bringing only a few guards to the Moon's surface to a neutral landing platform to show sincerity.

The clearing of this landing platform area was not under the Expeditionary Force's control but instead let those Navy General's troops land first, securing control around, all to maintain sincerity.

Yet Robert wasn't rash. Quite a few forces on the Moon maneuvred nearby under the name of combat. Also, the entire Expeditionary Fleet was combat-ready.

Although he didn't believe these Navy Generals could stir much trouble, if anything went awry, from space orbit to ground troops, he ensured he had ample forces to intervene.

Initially, everything in the meeting went smoothly.

Those Navy Generals indeed harbored little malintent; upon seeing the Son of God's majestic figure and resolute yet gentle face, mythic, canonical, and historical images of the Son of God emerged in their minds.

With these two images overlapping, over half the Navy Generals knelt on one knee, expressing their reverence.

The rest might not have knelt immediately, but raised hardly any questions.

This identity blending mythology, religion, and history with the living image in front was overwhelmingly stirring, instantly capturing everyone's hearts.

They all knew, whether on the scale of the current fleet's predicament or the entirety of Holy Terra's crisis, the fundamental reason lay in lacking a central figure uniting everyone and making them willingly fight.

Now, this natural centerpiece arrived.

Robert wasn't surprised by this outcome. He had prepared his speech long ago, lightly patting each General's shoulder, waving to the officers, guards, soldiers they brought. His smile was measured, his expressions calibrated, knowing well how to inspire everyone as a leader.

At this moment, everything seemed perfect.

The largest force on the Moon's orbit, previously neutral Imperial Navy, was entirely aligned with Robert.

On the ground, the Moon Guard and Navy Marine Corps appeared loyal, following his orders and attacking the visibly Subspace-psychically controlled army soldiers alongside his troops.

Whether Chaos Cultists or corrupt Imperial soldiers, they were being defeated steadily.

Continuing this trend, the Moon would soon be recovered.

By then, he'd have a stable base. Whether sorting out possible Chaos corruption within his ranks or gradually planning toward Holy Terra with this base as a core, this was indeed a decisive first step.

However, at this critical juncture, an unexpected development occurred.

First, the frontline had a unit urgently report that corrupted soldiers from the Sun Legion under Chaos Wizard leadership seemed to be constructing a Sacrificial Array.

No need for Robert's order; the frontline naturally set destroying this mysterious Chaos Array as the top priority.

But just as the action neared success, a Navy Marine Corps unit attacking alongside suddenly turned traitor.

This traitorous Navy Marine Corps suddenly revealed many extremely formidable individuals. Even, some soldiers directly transformed into demons!

No, rather than saying they transformed into demons, it would be better to say they were disguised as demons all along.

They seized control of that Sacrificial Array!

Chapter 972: Divine Abomination

The sudden betrayal by the Navy Marine Corps was clearly premeditated.

They had made up their minds to act this way.

All their previous cooperation and obedience were just a facade.

But if it was just a betrayal, perhaps the issue wouldn't be so big.

With the Navy already loyal, the forces under Robert's command were already enough to sweep across the planet's surface.

p>Especially after his ground troops had firmly grasped the lunar surface, he could continue to deploy more ground forces. With the support and assistance of the vast Imperial Navy Fleet, even if the entire Moon Guard joined the betrayal with the Navy Marine Corps, it would not affect the bigger picture.

However, the most concerning aspect wasn't the betrayal itself, but the sacrificial array they had stolen.

What was that sacrificial array used for? Why was it worth such a huge sacrifice from the Navy Marine Corps? The dead were a secondary concern; more importantly, they gave up a great opportunity to secretly stay by Robert's side.

If they had continued to remain hidden, they could have been among the first to defect to Robert's Holy Terra forces. Later on, if they could keep hiding, they could, at some critical moment, spring a major surprise.

Especially when the report from the frontline described the demons and Chaos Cultists disguised as Navy Marine Corps, Robert was able to correlate with the knowledge he had crammed, and deduce that it was probably the so-called 'Jianqi Cult'.

The followers under this Evil God have always been adept at scheming. Their nature inclined them toward long-term covert operations.

And the reason they hadn't done so likely indicated one thing — the array they stole itself bore great conspiracy, representing the so-called 'critical moment'.

While commanding his troops, Robert personally set out with his closest guard to thwart the enemy's operations.

Although he acted immediately, time was too tight, and he might not make it in time. On the way, he contemplated what exactly he'd have to face next.

He was already preparing for the worst-case scenario.

However, when faced with it, he still stood in shock, unable to believe his eyes —

A terrifying giant, with a single eye, nine horns adorning its head, demon wings on its back, and red-purple skin swirling with countless witching eyes...

How could Robert bring himself to believe that such a dreadful entity was actually one of his brothers?

Magnus... had turned into this?

This Son of the Emperor, once a Son of God and Father of Genetics of the Wise Man's Legion, had now become a 'Scion of God'!

Robert knew that many of his brothers became traitors. He had fought against many of them and seen their detestable forms.

No matter how much he loathed their betrayal, the bond of kinship once shared still lingered.

It was because of this kinship that the betrayal felt so profound and heartbreaking.

In general, when they first betrayed ten thousand years ago, even if their souls had fallen apart, at least outwardly they still bore some semblance of ’humanity’.

Magnus was one of the ’brothers’ Robert had not seen since betraying. He hadn’t expected that, upon awakening from the static field ten thousand years later, the first brother he would see appeared like this.

His face was awash with mixed emotions: sadness, grief, hatred, rage... strange in its assembly.

Magnus, however, appreciated his demeanor greatly.

He seemed to want to greet his brother of ten thousand years with an open mouth.

But instead, he was met with Robert’s rapid attack, blasting a fierce blow!

The Regent King had no intention of exchanging any dialogue, charging forward while firing fiercely.

The praised traits of Robert, such as reason, wisdom, and caution... were all thrown out at that moment.

Pain and anger consumed his heart; all he saw was his fallen brother before his eyes. The flames ignited by the Emperor’s Sword exemplified his inner fury.

This wasn’t the first time such an event happened. Whenever he calmed down, he would always regret his impulsiveness, realizing there were more rational and efficient solutions. However, in the face of incidents capable of stirring major emotional upheavals, he consistently lost control.

Time and again, when sensitive triggers came about, he plunged into anger and sorrow.

Commonly referred to as being 'hot-headed'.

Once hot-headed, he wouldn't care, longing just for a bloodbath to the end.

Despite his genetic progeny trying repeatedly to restrain him, he wouldn't heed them.

So what else could be done?

His numerous progeny had no choice but to hastily follow.

While Robert charged ahead, his focus on the demonized brother, his progeny paved the way at the sides.

Those trying to block him, attempting to overwhelm him with sheer numbers, faced staunch resistance from the Infinite Warriors.

And 'Scion of God' and Demon Prince Magnus, seemed eager for a proper meeting with his brother.

Chapter 972: Divine Abomination (Part 2)

He proactively moved forward.

Halfway forward, around him, rifts in Subspace opened one after another. Countless demons surged out, rushing towards the human side.

From a bird's-eye view, the demons surged forth, almost filling up the entire area completely.

But Robert charged too far ahead, and he, along with his closest guards, appeared quite insignificant, like a small boat sailing against massive waves of demons.

Yet, small though they seemed, no one could ignore them.

Especially when Robert held the Emperor's Sword, starting to cut down those demon enemies trying to block his path, it became all the more noticeable.

No matter the rank of the demon, none could withstand a single slash from him.

The most terrifying feature of the Emperor's Sword was its ability to truly kill demons, completely shattering their Subspace essence.

This was horrifying for the demons.

After several had died, the Jian Qi demons with some sense became less willing to stand in his way.

Useless, and at a high cost.

Only those mindless lesser demons, either because they didn't deeply consider such danger, or because they had not been born long enough to hear of the Emperor's Sword's name, or were forced by higher-ranking demons to face forward, were compelled to obey...

How could these lesser demons possibly stop Robert and his Ever Victorious Army around him?

Their forward speed increased more and more, until—

They met up with their 'brothers.'

Robert encountered his blood brother, Magnus, and the dark psychic power blasted upon him. Even though he had Son of God-level spiritual energy resistance and possessed excellent defensive Destiny Armor, he still staggered.

And the genetic progeny surrounding him, whether they were from the Ever Victorious Army or the slightly more ordinary warriors of the Infinite Corps, they too encountered opponents of equivalent strength.

Magnus was once the leader of the Wise Man's Legion. Though after his fall, he no longer fully led the whole Wise Man's Legion, and the legion, like many rebellious forces, splintered into numerous factions, but most still remained part of the Wise Man's Legion, not entirely under Magnus's command.

But generally speaking, the 'Sages' who pursued knowledge largely fell into Jian Qi's embrace, becoming followers of the Lord of All Changes. Magnus, as the Demon Prince of Jian Qi, combined with the link between Father of Genetics and genetics, upon appearing in the real universe through a stolen sacrificial rite by Jian Qi followers, and tearing open numerous Subspace rifts to summon helpers, his pink-armored traitorous offspring appeared alongside.

The 'Sage' warriors were almost all Interstellar Warriors with strong combat skills, outstanding users of spiritual energy, powerful Chaos Wizards...

Though the total number of the Wise Man's Legion was one of the smallest among all the rebellious legions. Otherwise, their current power and infamy would likely be much more severe than it is now.

Even so, the Ever Victorious Army and many Infinite Warriors now experienced just how troublesome these rare traitors were.

The Sages were few, but not much fewer than the Ever Victorious Army now deeply embedded in enemy lines. More annoyingly, these Chaos Wizards had little sense of honor as warriors. They scorned duels with the Ever Victorious Army, preferring to use spiritual energy to cast Chaos Magic, igniting terrifying spiritual energy flames on the Infinite Warriors, or summoning pink ethereal tendrils to suddenly grab the ankles of Interstellar Warriors, if not tripping them, at least restricting their movement.

And when the Ever Victorious Army aimed their Blast Bomb Guns or Plasma Guns at their rear, they would use their spiritual power to pull nearby Jian Qi demons over as shields or scapegoats.

And when trying to charge swiftly into close quarters with the Chaos Wizards, it was very difficult. They had to break through numerous demons blocking them, and often, when they finally reached their

target, the Chaos Wizard would already be engulfed in a flashing light, teleported dozens of meters away.

The previous dangerous charge had to be done again.

A large number of demons stood in the way, and during this process, constant interference from the Sage Wizards' spells made it very risky.

However, a few outstanding Ever Victorious soldiers accomplished this feat. The Chaos Wizards were unable to perform a second teleportation in a short time, and while they resisted with spell swords in close combat, they often weren't a match, had their Spiritual Energy Shields broken, and were killed.

Yet, the Ever Victorious soldiers would see that the slain 'Sage' often had their armor disperse, revealing no flesh and blood inside, just a stream of sand flowing out from the armor's gaps.

No one knew if they were truly dead!

Of course, whether it was true death or not, it meant another 'Sage' had permanently exited the battle.

However, those Ever Victorious soldiers who managed to close in and kill a 'Sage' were often too deep into enemy lines. Even with remote firepower support from comrades, retreating safely was still extremely challenging.

Often, they themselves would be overwhelmed and unable to return.

The Infinite Warriors were suffering losses.

Though the rate of loss was not quick, facing endless demons pouring out from the Subspace rifts, this situation could only end in their defeat.

The real key to this battle remained with Robert and his brother.

Yet, what's worse is that Robert had not gained the upper hand.

On the contrary, he was at a disadvantage.

Perhaps if Robert had the chance to get close enough to Magnus, the Emperor's Sword in his hands could provide this traitor with a lesson from his father.

But doing so was very difficult indeed.

Powerful spiritual energy and all sorts of Chaos Magic were effortless for Magnus. He tore open Subspace rifts even faster to summon more demons, while suppressing Robert with spiritual energy. Given this, he could even multitask, mocking Robert with many vile words.

This only fueled the flames of anger within Robert's heart.

This spiritual wrath intensified the flames burning on the Emperor's Sword he held.

Even though he was far from Magnus, he swung a furious slash at this traitor, forming a fiery blade that would soon cut across Magnus's face!

The Demon Prince was a bit surprised, but he had countless ways to fend off attacks. In an instant, he summoned a Spiritual Energy Shield in front of him, much thicker and stronger than the previous one used to resist Robert's blast bombardments.

However, the fiery blade pierced through Magnus's Spiritual Energy Shield, slightly weakened, but still struck him hard.

He cried out in pain, a scorched sword mark appeared on his chest.

When he looked at Robert again, it was with great apprehension.

Shang Yanwen pushed open the blast door and walked into the circular office. Inside, engineers from the Shadow-eating Clan were kneeling as they adjusted the environment system. The screech of air filters drowned out the minute instructions from the Spirit Race adjusting the parameters. His new terminal, remodeled from an Obsidian Altar, had a touchscreen marred by unknown biological scratches. The moment the interface was activated, eight hundred surveillance windows unfolded on the curved screen: Spirit Race porters at Port Seven were hauling two-ton reactor components uphill, the chain collars around their necks leaving purple marks; soldiers of the surrender faction were being whipped with laser whips on the training field; in the Blood People laboratory, a pale Alien physician was demonstrating to a human technician how to open the Kane Crystal casing.

"Supervisor, the Valak family refuses to hand over the Star Gate calibration codes." Vikas's bald-headed projection rose from the floating screen. Shang Yanwen brought up the archives, his fingertips gliding over the three logistical routes and twelve warehouse groups managed by the family. "Tell the Valak representative," he opened the schedule and marked tonight's liquidation meeting in red, "two hundred new soul caskets will be added to their nursery tomorrow."

Lunch was held on a terrace overlooking the ruins of the Theater of Pain. While Shang Yanwen chewed on synthetic steak, a surrender ceremony was taking place in the plaza below. A thousand Spirit Race warriors disarmed and knelt into a pool of rotten blood, their phase weapons pressed into metal ingots by engineering mechas. A young Spirit Race suddenly lunged at the execution Angel and was vaporized by a hot melt gun into drifting blue smoke. Vikas refilled Shang Yanwen's coffee: "These fools don't understand, only by living can they protect the secret of the Holy Artifact..."

"Like this?" Shang Yanwen picked up the object wrapped in a napkin. A pale green Kane Crystal rotated in his palm, at its core a tiny struggling light spirit suspended. "Found in the third storage room." Vikas's neck scales spread out nervously, "It can amplify the Subspace probe's accuracy by thirty times..."

The alarm shredded the afternoon once more. The communication from the execution Angel exploded in Shang Yanwen's earpiece: "The resistance has hijacked human workers in Zone B7!" A holographic map unfolded on the table, red dots flashing densely at the intersection of sewage pipelines. Vikas enlarged the projection with his clawed fingers: "From the route... it's the former Blood People clinic."

When Shang Yanwen rushed into the clinic with the rapid response team, the sticky scent of preservatives mingled with fresh blood. Shoulder lights of three execution Angels pierced the darkness, illuminating seventeen human corpses hanging from the surgical chain. Their throats were cut in a standard execution method, blood flowing along the clavicle into the collection trough below—a blood bath for the Spirit Race.

"The hunt begins." The Judgment Badge on the back of the captain’s power armor glowed coldly under the scanning ray. Vikas’s trusted aide dragged in five bound Spirit Race children, their electric collars causing them to whimper like dying small beasts. "They’ll smell the bone blood of their kin." The old Spirit Race pressed the children towards the blood droplets falling from the corpses’ ankles. The children’s noses twitched furiously, emitting a high-frequency scream under the electric field’s stimulation.

A sonic tracking map formed on the tactical display. The heavy weapon squad of the execution Angels broke through the clinic’s rear wall, grenades and flamethrowers igniting the underground pipelines. Blue-skinned resistance fighters struggled and howled in the inferno, as Shang Yanwen noticed Vikas collecting strands of human dead’s hair. "What a quality specimen of vengeance..." The governor of the Shadow-eating Clan’s whisper was drowned out by the explosion.

The evening liquidation meeting was held in the former Victor Throne Hall. The Valak family representative knelt on the cold Spirit bone floor tiles signing the transfer agreement, his young sons being fitted with neural inhibitors behind bulletproof glass. Shang Yanwen checked the list of Star Gate password transfers as Vikas pushed a bloody crystal vial in front of him, "Today’s sacrifice worker’s genetic sample... perhaps it might be suitable for cultivating a special crop?"

The armored vehicle returning to the residence passed through newly set checkpoints, where human soldiers used laser pointers to scan the Spirit Race team laboring outside the car window. A Spirit Race architect with handcuffs slowed down a step, and a shock baton exploded blue light on his spine. Shang Yanwen closed his eyes, leaning against the bulletproof interior, the Kane Crystal in his pocket emitting a chill through the fabric—today’s conflict mortality rate statistics flickering on his retinal projection.

At midnight, Shang Yanwen stood on the balcony of the newly assigned official residence. Below, the streets were brightly lit, with human engineers directing surrender faction Spirit Race to inspect the energy tower. A technician from the Spirit Race fell from a hundred-meter steel frame, the dull thud of hitting the protective net carried by the night wind. He flipped open the agenda for tomorrow: in the morning, review the safety regulations for the soul stone cutting workshop, in the afternoon, inspect the curriculum settings of the surrender faction nursery brainwashing center.

The defense terminal flashed a red warning. An encrypted message from the execution Angel came with spatial coordinates: "Based on infant pheromone tracking, eliminate the C-zone resistance nursery nest. Execute 12 adult females, 47 infants. Victor’s Sword fragment has been confiscated." The holographic image accompanying the message showed a pile of bloodstained Spirit Race swaddles beside an extinguished incubator. Shang Yanwen pushed open the blast door and walked into the circular office as

engineers from the Shadow-eating Clan were kneeling to adjust the environment system. The screech of air filters drowned out the minute instructions from the Spirit Race adjusting the parameters. His new terminal, remodeled from an Obsidian Altar, had a touchscreen marred by unknown biological scratches. The moment the interface was activated, eight hundred surveillance windows unfolded on the curved screen: Spirit Race porters at Port Seven were hauling two-ton reactor components uphill, the chain collars around their necks leaving purple marks; soldiers of the surrender faction were being whipped with laser whips on the training field; in the Blood People laboratory, a pale Alien physician was demonstrating to a human technician how to open the Kane Crystal casing.

"Supervisor, the Valak family refuses to hand over the Star Gate calibration codes." Vikas's bald projection rose from the suspended screen. Shang Yanwen pulled up the files, his fingers tracing over the three logistical corridors and twelve warehouse clusters managed by the family. "Tell the Valak representative," he opened the schedule and marked tonight's settlement meeting in red, "their childcare center will receive two hundred new soul boxes tomorrow."

Lunch was held on the terrace overlooking the ruins of the Theater of Pain. As Shang Yanwen chewed on synthetic steak, a surrender ceremony was taking place in the plaza below. A thousand Spirit Race warriors were kneeling in the pool of decayed blood after doffing their armor, their phase weapons pressed into metal ingots by engineering mechas. A young Spirit suddenly lunged at an execution Angel and was vaporized into drifting blue smoke by a hot melt gun. Vikas refilled Shang Yanwen's coffee: "These fools don't understand that only by living can they guard the secret of the Holy Artifact..."

"Like this?" Shang Yanwen picked up the object wrapped in the napkin. The pale green Kane Crystal rotated in his palm, with tiny struggling light spirits suspended at its core. "Found in the third storage room." Vikas's neck scales tensed and spread, "It can amplify the subspace detector's precision thirtyfold..."

The alarm ripped through the afternoon again. The execution Angel's communication blasted in Shang Yanwen's earpiece: "The resistance has hijacked the human workers in Section B7!" A holographic map unfolded on the table, dense red dots flashing at the intersection of the sewage pipes. Vikas enlarged the projection with clawed fingers: "Judging by the path...it's the old clinic of the Blood People."

As Shang Yanwen rushed into the clinic with the rapid response team, the viscous smell of preservatives was mingled with the freshness of blood. The shoulder lights of three execution Angels pierced the darkness, illuminating seventeen human corpses hanging from the surgical chain. Their throats were cut in the standard execution method, the blood flowing down their clavicles into a collection trough below—it's a blood bath used by the Spirit Race for bathing.

"The hunt begins." The Judgment Badge on the back of the captain's power armor gleamed coldly under the scanning rays. Vikas's trusted aide dragged in five bound Spirit children, their electric collars causing them to whimper like dying small animals. "They will smell the bone and blood of their kin." The old Spirit pressed the children toward the blood plasma dripping from the corpses' ankles. The children's nostrils flared madly, producing high-pitched screams under the stimulation of the electric field.

Sound wave tracking charts appeared on the tactical screen. An execution Angel's heavy weapon team smashed through the clinic's back wall, while grenades and flamethrowers ignited the underground pipes. The blue-skinned resistors struggled and howled in the inferno, as Shang Yanwen noticed Vikas collecting the hair of the human dead. "Such fine revenge specimens..." the Shadow-eating Governor's whisper was drowned out by the explosions.

The evening's settlement meeting was held in the former Victor's Throne Hall. The Valak family representative knelt on the cold spirit bone floor tiles after signing the transfer agreement, his young children were placed in neural suppressors behind bulletproof glass. Shang Yanwen verified the Star Gate code handover list, and Vikas seized the chance to push a blood-streaked crystal bottle in front of him: "Today's gene samples from the sacrificed workers...might be suitable for cultivating special crops?"

The armored vehicle returned to the residence passing through newly established checkpoints, where human soldiers used laser pointers to scan the outside of the vehicle at the lineup of Spirit Race laborers. A Spirit architect, shackled and moving a step too slow, was hit in the spine by an electric baton that exploded with blue light. Shang Yanwen closed his eyes and leaned against the bulletproof lining, feeling the Kane Crystal in his pocket radiate coldness through the fabric—the death rate statistics from today's conflict flickering in projection on his retina.

At midnight, Shang Yanwen stood on the terrace of the newly assigned mansion. The districts below were ablaze with lights, human engineers directing the surrendering Spirit Race to service the energy towers. A Spirit technician fell from a hundred-meter steel frame, the dull thud of his impact with the safety net carried over by the night wind. He flipped open the next day's agenda: reviewing safety regulations for the soul stone cutting shop in the morning, inspecting curriculum setups at the surrendering faction's youth indoctrination center in the afternoon.

The defense terminal flashed a red warning. An encrypted message from an execution Angel attached with space coordinates: "Tracking by juvenile pheromone, eliminate the resistance nursery in Zone C. Execute 12 adult females, 47 juveniles. Fragment of Victor's Sword has been confiscated." In the holographic image accompanying the message, blood-smeared Spirit cradles were piled next to an extinguished incubation chamber.

Chapter 973: Falling Like a Meteor

The strike that Robert inflicted upon Magnus not only shocked the Demon Prince himself but also took Gu Jing, who was hastily hurrying to the battlefield, by surprise.

Gu Jing could even surmise Magnus's psychological reactions.

To outsiders, it was merely a Son of God wielding the Emperor's Sword, unleashing something akin to 'sword energy.' Although surprising, it seemed quite normal—it was a testament to the Emperor's blessing on a loyal son, wasn't it?

But that understanding stems from a kind of religious veneration, and the more versed one becomes in Spiritual Energy studies, the more one realizes that everything in the world is not whimsically imagined. Under normal circumstances, even a Son of God coupled with the Emperor's Sword couldn't unleash such a strike.

Robert's Subspace essence isn't related to Spiritual Energy, nor has it awakened, hence it shouldn't have such an effect.

Could it be that his Subspace essence has partially awakened?

Or perhaps, it truly is the Emperor's supreme power, penetrating the barriers of the Divine Realm, and aiding Robert in some imperceptible manner?

This bafflement is precisely why those with profound knowledge are shocked.

Aside from astonishment, Gu Jing and Magnus's perceptions were starkly different.

Magnus was furious from his injury, feeling fear and trepidation from possibly guessing that his hated and definitely undesirable father might have assisted.

But Gu Jing was simply joyful.

At the outbreak of the battle, once he realized a big event had occurred, he rushed to the ground at full speed.

He must provide some assistance to Robert.

Before this, he hadn't participated in this war but remained stationed in the ship, assuming a role akin to Chief of Staff as an advisor, helping Robert devise strategies and manage logistics. While this undoubtedly wasted his formidable Spiritual Energy power, it was also a different way of showcasing what he excelled in.

If possible, Gu Jing was happy not to join the battle.

Unfortunately, it wasn't viable.

If it were another 'Divine Abomination,' things might not be as severe. Yet, Magnus is different—tallying all Divine Abominations—no, even counting all Divine Sovereign Demons and Demon Princes, he's arguably among the most outstanding Spiritual Masters.

Magnus, endowed with astonishing wisdom, was already the most outstanding Spiritual Master even before his fall. He learned various Spiritual Energy techniques and control methods quickly, and he could draw connections among them to chart his own path, making pioneering feats.

And after his fall, having ascended as a Demon, he immersed in the root of Spiritual Energy—Subspace—for ten thousand years and received blessings from Jian Qi, possibly making him far stronger than before.

Indeed, other 'Divine Abominations' are similar—except that specializing in Spiritual Energy is Magnus's exclusive trait.

And this very trait, in Gu Jing's judgment, was extremely lethal to Robert.

Magnus is nearly an unbeatable foe for Robert.

Even if 'Divine Abomination' and 'Son of God' are on the same level, Robert, with his prowess in strategizing, economic policymaking, and military command, his chances of prevailing against Magnus are likely not high.

Had it been another 'Divine Abomination,' Robert might have made some progress as a warrior. His swordsmanship skills and warrior experience are quite ample, although not top-tier; coupled with the aid of the Emperor's Sword, a Divine Artifact, he could still put up a fight.

But against Magnus... Gu Jing truly feared that Robert might struggle even to get close.

The development indeed went that way, until the appearance of that long-distance fire sword blade that could penetrate Spiritual Energy Shields.

Magnus was clearly scared; he seemed somewhat restrained and cautious.

Both good and bad.

The suppression Robert suffered wasn't as strong, yet similarly, Magnus, now no longer advancing and even cautiously retreating, wouldn't easily be threatened.

He is now vigilant of that flaming sword energy, and since Robert can't replicate that powerful effect every time his rage flares, this move carries a certain element of chance...

In summary, Robert is still no match for Magnus.

But at least, he held on until Gu Jing arrived.

Gu Jing descended like a meteor falling from the sky, despite anti-air firepower targeting him, it was futile.

Even when Magnus partially lifted his head and fired a beam of Spiritual Energy towards the sky, he couldn't halt the meteor from crashing to the ground.

The 'meteor' that slammed into the ground unleashed powerful energy, overturning many demons while a light shield enveloped the now limited number of Infinite Warriors, preventing harm to them.

In this single slam, countless demons were banished back to Subspace!

And the most significant help to the current situation from this slam was that half of the Subspace rifts were forcibly closed by him!

This directly altered the battlefield drastically: Firstly, a huge gap appeared in the cleared battlefield allowing human forces, previously stuck behind and unable to advance, to quickly move forward and offer support.

The Infinite Warriors, previously dwindling due to heavy loss in battle, received invaluable reinforcement, drawn back from the brink of annihilation. They also provided strong support to Robert—at least now, he no longer needed to focus on dealing with small fry, focusing solely on counteracting the influence of Chaos Evil Magic Magnus imposed on him.

Another aspect is a substantial reduction in the number of demons flooding out.

And afterwards, Magnus would find it harder to easily tear open more Subspace rifts.

Because Gu Jing had arrived.

Truth be told, previously, in such a level of battle against a foe like Magnus, though Gu Jing could join in the fray, he mostly served a minor, unremarkable role.

Though he himself is a top-notch Psychic, he's merely a Psychic.

Even though he possesses a Jian Qi Demon caught and crafted into a combat assistant by his father, enhancing his power.

But that's just about it.

A Jian Qi Demon coupled with the maximum strength of an Alpha-class Psychic to oppose a 'Divine Abomination'?

Quite difficult.

However, after capturing Comoros, his father somehow obtained a fragment of a so-called Spirit Race God.

This was powerful.

With the enhancement from this fragment, representing 'despair' Divine Power in hand, his individual strength crossed a certain threshold, reaching the level of Divine Abomination and Son of God!

Now, not only does he have the qualification to partake in battles of this tier, he can even critically influence the outcome!

Chapter 974: Unexpected Reinforcements

With Gu Jing's assistance, the situation on the battlefield finally stabilized.

Magnus encountered someone capable of opposing him in the manipulation of spiritual energy.

He had no choice but to divert his power to confront Gu Jing.

On the other hand, with the significant reduction in pressure on Robert, he managed to escape his previous predicament and advance step by step.

By the time he reached Magnus, the ’Divine Prodigy’ had no choice but to draw his magic sword for a close combat confrontation with Robert.

At this moment, Magnus could no longer speak of any advantage.

On the contrary, he had to devote most of his spiritual energy to opposing Gu Jing, while also dealing with Robert and his Emperor’s Sword in close combat.

In terms of swordsmanship and close-quarters combat skills, Magnus was objectively very strong. Any interstellar warrior or ordinary subspace demon could be torn apart by his physical strength alone.

However, in a confrontation of the same level, his swordsmanship and physical strength were not particularly noteworthy.

Robert was indeed not the best combatant among the Sons of God, but in terms of swordsmanship, he was stronger than Magnus.

Especially when Magnus’s spiritual energy was being entangled by Gu Jing.

Suppressed, Magnus let out roar after roar of anger.

But to no avail.

He couldn’t find a way to reverse the situation.

And worse things were happening.

In the sky, warriors from the Terra Expeditionary Army’s Infinite Corps and numerous subsidiary groups on the expedition ships, upon hearing that the Father of Genetics was engaged in a tough battle on the ground, were extremely anxious.

They quickly prepared for deployment. Drop ships launched from the vessels, with some eager individuals boarding drop pods, drawing brilliant arcs like individual meteors crashing onto the lunar surface.

Drop pods were the fastest means to support the battle. They mainly landed as close to the battlefield as possible, and even directly on top of the demons.

Those that weren't shot down in the air, upon successfully landing, opened their iron doors to reveal interstellar warriors stepping out with blazing fury. They wielded blast bomb guns, shooting fiercely, and quickly cleared space at the doors so that other brothers could step out. After emptying their magazines, they pulled out chain-saw swords or power swords to strike at their foes.

Occasionally, interstellar warriors were overwhelmed by the sheer number of demons, but avenging brothers quickly followed, and more warriors would descend from the sky.

On the demon side, said to be endless in number, many demons had swarmed in due to the large number of subspace rifts Magnus had opened.

But with Gu Jing's arrival, the situation had already changed.

Not only did he 'shatter' many subspace rifts upon landing, but during the confrontation with Magnus, one rift after another was gradually being closed.

Magnus has tried his best to stop this, but he has to deal with Robert wielding the Emperor's Sword, making it impossible for him to fully prevent it.

But victory wouldn't be so easy.

The Divine Prodigy's spawn wouldn't act recklessly without certainty.

Even if Magnus wasn't adept at strategic considerations, focusing more on magic, witchcraft, and spiritual energy, Jian Qi had plenty adept at intrigue and deceit.

Through the subspace rifts, Gu Jing could already sense something else — the Great Demon!

More than one, and not ordinary ones.

Behind Magnus, on the other side of the subspace rift, at least nine Divine Sovereign Magic Lords exist!

The leading one was even a ’famous figure’, recorded in the Empire’s top-secret history, known as the ’Weaver of Fate’.

The greatest difference between it and other Magic Lords of Thousand Changes was that it had two heads.

Its strength alone might not be less than, or even greater than, an average Divine Prodigy or Son of God.

Let alone adding the other eight Divine Sovereign Demons.

Any one of these Divine Sovereign Demons might not be able to defeat a Son of God individually, but they would undoubtedly pose a significant threat to someone of that level.

And if they focused on massacring regular mortal soldiers or interstellar warriors, their efficiency would be exceedingly high.

Magnus had been holding out until now, waiting for these allies to arrive.

Gu Jing aimed to prevent them from arriving.

This was a force capable of deciding the outcome.

However, it posed quite a challenge.

The pit dug earlier was too deep.

If Gu Jing had been there at the very start of the battle and prevented Magnus from opening so many subspace rifts, it might have been easier to handle.

But now... though the Weaver of Fate had not yet entered, one head of the Divine Sovereign Magic Lord was about to enter.

Where there's one, there's two.

One entry would significantly aid Magnus, and the second head was likely to follow quickly.

One after another would enter, and once the Weaver of Fate entered the battlefield, the situation would collapse completely.

But at this moment, the two unexpected reinforcements arrived like straws that broke the camel's back for Magnus and his many demons!

The first unexpected reinforcement came from Holy Terra!

A troop, answering the call of the Regent King, disregarded the Holy Terra Government's opposition, boarded a ship, and reached the lunar orbital sky, then used teleportation to reach the battlefield as swiftly as possible.

Their numbers were small, only about two to three hundred, yet they brought immense change to the battlefield.

Because most of them donned golden battle armor, their stance more formidable than the interstellar warriors.

They were the Ten Thousand Man Team guarding the Imperial Palace, the Emperor's Imperial Guard!

The arrival of these Imperial Guards brutally cleaved the already weakened Demon Legion.

Their crucial objective was to escort those wearing black armor within their formation to Magnus and many subspace rifts.

These female warriors, known as 'Silent Sisters', actually had the same effect, if not stronger, than the core 'Disruptors' from the Alliance's Disruptor Corps.

Near these Silent Sisters, subspace forces would theoretically be suppressed and nullified.

Though this didn't entirely strip Magnus of his ability to cast spiritual spells, it was enough to interfere with him and hasten the closure of the subspace rifts.

The second force came from the Alliance's Disruptors!

Once the Terra Expeditionary Army stabilized on the moon, they sent a small Veil Spirit Gate device to the surface.

Now it has been constructed, and a unit from the Alliance's Disruptors has traversed the Veil Spirit Gate to join the battlefield.

Among these Disruptors were a hundred 'Disruptors'!

Each Disruptor's suppression of subspace was slightly less than that of the Silent Sisters, but their numbers counted!

Chapter 975: Silent Sister

If the arrival of the Imperial Guard serves primarily to express the stance of this political power, the two hundred Forbidden Army soldiers, while a formidable force, hold more symbolic significance than actual value.

After all, in this battle, if victory is possible, they can win even without the Forbidden Army; if they lose... at most, the Forbidden Army can serve as the last line of defense.

This makeshift role still plays a part.

The leading Forbidden Army Guardian Officer likely possesses the combat level of a divine champion. Among the two hundred or so Forbidden Army members, there is another with the strength of a divine champion, and the number of battle group champions has reached more than thirty, with the rest all at the level of company champions.

The levels mentioned here correspond to the respective levels of Interstellar Warriors.

In fact, the ratio of divine champions emerging from the Imperial Guard is indeed high, reaching about two to three per thousand; the number of battle group champions is around five to ten percent. The rest are almost all at the level of company champions.

This proportion is much more terrifying than that of Interstellar Warriors.

To say the Forbidden Army can fight a hundred times the number of Interstellar Warriors might be an exaggeration; but fighting ten times the number of Interstellar Warriors is more than sufficient.

Altogether, this group of Forbidden Army soldiers might be able to handle four or five Great Demons?

Adding Robert and Gu Jing to handle Magnus and the Weaver of Fate. Plus, within the Infinite Corps and various sub-corps, there are also some battle group champions and even divine champions. The latter, like Nero, the overall leader of the Infinite Corps, or Chief Intelligence Director Terriot, can also deal with some Great Demons...

In that moment, Gu Jing’s mind had already considered a possibility. If the situation developed to the worst-case scenario he least wanted to see, with the arrival of nine divine Magic Lords of Thousand Changes led by the Weaver of Fate, the human side would not be entirely without countermeasures.

However, if it came to that point, who knows what sacrifices would have to be made, and who knows who would win or lose this battle.

More crucially, the cost of losing would be extremely heavy.

It's not just the loss of troops, the loss of top experts. More critically, if demons were allowed to occupy the moon, they might drag the whole moon into Subspace. Or, as the Empire commonly put it, they would 'demonize' the moon.

After the desecration rites, a 'demonized' moon would possess both Subspace and real universe properties. Those endless demons could indeed swarm from there.

Using the moon as a springboard and base, they could attack Holy Terra directly.

And what's the current state of Holy Terra?

Clearly, it's in a battered state.

Otherwise, the most important satellite fortress of Holy Terra—the moon, wouldn't have ended up in this condition.

There must be a lot of Chaos corruption festering on Holy Terra. The current eruptions of riots and wars on Terra are likely related to these Chaos corruptions. Some of the rulers on Terra might have secretly embraced Chaos. Otherwise, it would be difficult to explain why, during the previous moon unrest, the Sun Legion, evidently corrupted by Terror Demons, turned into traitors in large numbers; traces of following Military Affairs Department orders were also present in previous commands to the Navy Marine Corps.

When the Chaos Demon army from the moon, coupled with the traitorous high officials on Holy Terra, destroyed the fortress from within... Even if Terra had complete defense measures at the time, along with the founding unit Golden Knight, the Ten Thousand Man Team Imperial Guard, and many elite troops and trump cards, the outcome might not be much better under a prolonged siege in the future.

Even if Robert and Gu Jing could escape this time, even if the Alliance could gather an army to reconquer, it's uncertain if there'd be enough time.

Even if there is time, the cost of war will become extremely high.

Therefore, to prevent this chain reaction of worsening, they have no choice but to—either stop those Great Demons now and drive Magnus away; if they are released, they must be defeated here with all their might.

They cannot retreat any further.

This is precisely why the Forbidden Army is considered the last line of defense.

The last line of defense is necessary, but before that, the Sisters of Silence brought by the Forbidden Army, as well as the Alliance Breaker unit emerging from the newly constructed Miniature Curtain Spiritual Gate, must play a crucial role.

As these entities capable of suppressing Subspace, the 'Inviolable Ones,' continually advance, every Subspace Demon that approaches them is significantly weakened—if not for Magnus, these demons wouldn't be able to maintain their forms and would be directly banished back to their Subspace lairs by the Inviolable Ones and Sisters of Silence.

Yet Magnus was not having a good time either; besides dealing with Robert and resisting Gu Jing's continuous breakthrough of his Spiritual Energy to close the Subspace rift, he was also constrained by a near-hundred Sisters of Silence and Inviolable Ones, significantly affecting his Spiritual Energy operation.

There's hope!

Magnus also realized the severity of the situation.

He roared, unleashing a torrent of demons with venomous profanities, surging toward those Inviolable Ones.

Even though they would be severely harmed and suppressed upon approaching as if sending themselves to their deaths, they still had to advance; those surviving Jian Qi followers and even the Sun Legion Terror Demon puppets whose minds Magnus had stolen were also utilized.

They were not Subspace Demons, so they wouldn't be suppressed by the Inviolable Ones upon approach.

However, at that moment, over two hundred Imperial Guards, led by the Guardian Officer, formed an insurmountable golden frontline, holding firm against all assaults.

Even when the first divine Magic Lord of Thousand Changes managed to emerge from a Subspace rift and attack them, they could not harm the Inviolable Ones and Sisters of Silence.

Instead, when its ability to manipulate Subspace Energy was restricted, it was banished by the joint effort of two powerful Forbidden Army champions.

Following this wave of assaults, the Forbidden Army even escorted the Inviolable Ones and Sisters of Silence close to the Subspace rifts.

Whenever they approached a rift, it would be closed; whenever a rift was closed, the summoning time of the Great Demon would be delayed.

When finally, they even seized an opportunity to suddenly approach Magnus with the Forbidden Army's protection, even this so-called strongest Spiritual Energy 'Divine Offspring' was subjected to some suppression.

Chapter 976: Gu Hang's Opinion Must Be Respected

The Silent Sisters and the Nullifiers advanced suddenly, under the protection of the Imperial Guard, to a place very close to Magnus, bringing a critical change to the battle situation.

Although Gu Jing was also unable to easily project his spiritual energy due to the influence of the Silent Sisters and the Nullifiers, it allowed Robert to seize the opportunity.

A swift slash from the Emperor’s Sword severed one of Magnus’s arms; another sword strike followed, aiming directly at His head.

If not for two of his nine golden horns breaking, releasing a strong burst of spiritual energy that deflected the Emperor’s Sword, he might have had his head split open by this strike!

But this also woke Magnus up.

He realized that if he continued fighting under the current circumstances, he might indeed meet his end under the Emperor’s Sword.

And to die under the Emperor’s Sword would be different from being banished from the material universe in the past.

"Godspawn" can also be slain.

Magnus, who had to admit defeat, could only take the initiative to "leave" while the warp rifts had yet to be completely closed.

No matter how vicious the curses he left behind before fleeing were, they could not conceal the fact that he had run away in disgrace.

...

With Magnus gone, and the warp rifts being closed one by one, the demons on the moon naturally became rootless duckweed, not even needing to be killed; they quickly weakened themselves, turning to ashes and vanishing without a trace.

However, the remaining cultists required a bit of effort to deal with, yet they were trivial enough to be handled by ordinary troops.

Given the current situation, it could essentially be said that the moon had been pacified.

The naval fleet in the moon's orbit, although only a small part of the Solar Fleet, actually had its main forces stationed in Holy Terra's orbit nearby. They chose to remain neutral and observe.

But at least, the allegiance of this segment of the fleet was a very good omen.

Not only did it serve as an excellent augmentation to the fleet under Robert's command, but also provided a pretext to contact the other Navy Generals of the Solar Fleet through their connections. If another meeting could be convened like the previous one, perhaps more Navy Generals of the Solar Fleet would be swayed by the majestic presence of the Regent King.

Meanwhile, the Moon Guard had mostly sided with Robert. They had no other choice, and once the moon was fully controlled, their importance was, frankly, greatly diminished. After all, whether it's their weapons and equipment or their training, all were specialized for defending the moon. Their absolute strength and numbers were insufficient, and they were more defensive than offensive. If a war were to break out with Holy Terra later on, they could not be of much help.

Robert, in reclaiming the entirety of Holy Terra, would primarily have to rely on his own power.

Of course, another key factor is the existing military forces on Holy Terra.

The Imperial Guard was a good example. In the confrontation against Magnus, the sudden arrival of the Imperial Guard represented a very clear stance—these folks who have been "housebound" in the Imperial Palace for ten thousand years seemed to be breaking from their traditional neutrality, deciding to truly enter the fray.

This was not actually unexpected.

While for the vast majority of people in the Empire, the non-involvement of the Imperial Guard in politics seemed like an ironclad rule, this was not the case for Robert. In his era, during its early days, the Imperial Guard acted with The Emperor, launching expeditions and fully participating in the founding wars.

Even after The Emperor's ascension, the Imperial Guard played a significant role in combating many of the Empire's traitors.

Even during Robert's tenure as Regent King after the Empire's civil war, he maintained quite a good relationship with the Grand Marshal of the Imperial Guard, which served as a very sharp blade under his command.

Robert does not see the Imperial Guard as an untouchable group to be won over.

Their initiative in partaking in the lunar campaign was a very positive signal.

These palace guards did not hurriedly depart back to the Terra Imperial Palace after the battle but stayed on the moon. The Tribune leading them also spoke with Robert, and they would obey his orders and conveyed greetings from the Grand Marshal.

"The Grand Marshal looks forward to speaking with you."

Holy Terra is shrouded in a layer of chaotic warp surges, making long-distance communication difficult, and it's likely to encounter intentional interference from other forces on Terra.

But presumably, the Imperial Guard is not worried about this.

Having guarded the palace for ten thousand years, in the palace's underground chambers, among countless secret Imperial Guard rooms, there are too many hidden assets. It seems they would have some way to establish fixed communications with Robert.

And it's not just the Imperial Guard; Robert plans to communicate with many factions on Holy Terra.

The military operation on the moon serves as a rehearsal for actions on Terra. The situation on Terra might be more complicated than on the moon, with more factions entangled in mutual skirmishes. He must clearly distinguish between friend and foe and proceed with even greater caution.

The Chaos side managed to conjure his erstwhile blood brother to fight against him on the moon, so on Holy Terra—with its larger scale and unknown depth of corruption—who knows what grand machination they might attempt?

Chapter 976: Gu Hang's Opinion Must Be Respected

However, before engaging in dialogue with any forces on Holy Terra, Robert knew there was one thing he must do.

That was to talk with Gu Hang.

At this moment, he recognized more clearly than ever that to save the Empire, and even to save Holy Terra now, the strength he most needed to rely on was the strength of the Alliance.

Without Gu Hang's support, without the support of the Alliance, his idea of saving the Empire was nothing more than an illusion.

In fact, without the Alliance's help, he couldn't even reach the Moon.

And even if he managed to get there, in the previous lunar battle, Gu Jing's presence was also the key to victory, and the Alliance's breaker forces emerging from the miniature Veil Spirit Gate were equally unignorable.

Furthermore, if the situation in the attack on Holy Terra went poorly—which was very likely—the Alliance's help would be his strongest support.

Without the Alliance, there would be nothing.

This was something he had actually been aware of for quite some time, but this time, he planned to openly discuss it with Gu Hang.

The discussion wouldn't just cover the current battle, but also what form the Imperial Central Government should take after the war ended.

...

Robert stared at the holo-table's image of a planet marked with a scarlet hue, Holy Terra's silhouette appearing distant and weighty in the void. The command center on the Moon was still filled with the smell of sterile gel and the scent of plasma-burned metal. Outside the heavy soundproof doors was a battlefield where lunar dust had yet to settle, and the engineers and Protection Army raced against time to repair the orbiting defense array desecrated by demons.

Gu Hang stood beside him—a projection from a remote call, yet appearing incredibly real.

The hall was left with only the two of them, the heavy alloy doors blocking out the mechanical hum and the suppressed commands of the communication officers outside, the air heavy with the weight of post-war smoke and future decisions.

Robert first broke the silence, his gaze still fixed on the planet symbolizing the heart of the Empire, yet possibly a corrupt ulcer: "The stench-ridden abyss on the Moon is but a bubble rising from the mire of Terra. The Sun Legion's betrayal under the lash of Terror Demon is just the beginning; who knows how many Navy and Military Affairs Department units have been corrupted by the Jianqi Cult, even the Starport's ship cannons could target the loyalists... I admit, the little luck I harbored has been completely shattered."

Gu Hang stepped closer, gently pointing his fingertip to the void region between Terra and the Moon on the star map: "The fissure in space continues to expand. This isn't a natural storm, Regent King; it's a man-made desecration ritual digging deep into the bone. Chaos' tendrils extend beyond the filth of the lower nest capitals; they've gripped the administrative throat of Terra."

"Every chaotic report from Terra slices away the glory of the past. The Golden Knight Order, mired in the mud, unable to respond for so long, and the communications of the Star Language Hall being devoured by some silence—that's no simple technical failure. The riots surging within the nest capital megacities reveal unprecedented levels of coordination and destruction, far beyond mere hunger or despair-driven uprisings..."

"The orders come from the four Evil Gods, but the hands executing them are hidden in the deepest shadows." Gu Hang's voice remained as steady as an ancient well, yet his assessment sank Robert's mood into the pit.

He knew those four Evil Gods, even though they weren't widely known in the glorious age he once lived in. But after his revival, through the various data he had seen, and after leading the Expeditionary Force through the Subspace utterly different from his past impressions, he had fully realized the terror of those four Evil Gods.

The civil war he experienced, which nearly destroyed the Empire, was closely related to those four Evil Gods. His blood kin brothers, everyone was turned into loathsome beings under the influence of these four.

And now, it seemed that the four were focusing their attention on Holy Terra.

This seemed only natural.

As Evil Gods, if they sought to destroy humanity and once again unleash a chaotic tide in the real universe, then from their perspective, wouldn't the heart of the Human Empire, the universe's overlords, appear as the brightest pearl?

It would be extremely obvious for them to want this pearl.

So much so that the current turmoil on Holy Terra was hard to ascertain how much was due to these Evil Gods contending among each other.

They wanted not only to seize this pearl, but also to 'enjoy it exclusively.'

Since the cataclysm and the tearing of the Empire by the Scarlet Scar, the attention of the four Gods had likely already been cast.

Over the past century, underlings of these Gods patiently advanced countless corruption plans within Holy Terra. Now, with Robert and his Expeditionary Force arriving in the Solar System, it acted as a massive catalyst.

The worshippers of the Evil God would have realized their time was limited. They can no longer afford patience, just as the Jianqi Cult aggressively stole the sacrificial rituals of the Terror Demon followers on the Moon, summoning the ’Demon Offspring’ Magnus. Even if they failed on the Moon this time, it was certainly just a prelude. They would likely continue with one radical move after another on Holy Terra.

"I need your support, Gu Hang."

"Of course." Gu Hang’s answer was clear.

He turned to face Robert, making his commitment and assurance: "When the campaign to reclaim Holy Terra begins, the Alliance will do everything to provide you with all the support you need."

Robert paused for a moment.

Even though Gu Hang said ’everything,’ Robert still needed further confirmation.

"Including you?"

Gu Hang’s subsequent answer completely reassured him: "Yes, when you need me, I will descend."

Robert breathed a sigh of relief.

Gu Hang himself was the greatest assurance of all.

After witnessing the current state of his blood kin brother Magnus, he didn’t have much confidence in the upcoming war.

The presence of an invincible, absolutely powerful individual could heavily influence the outcome of the war.

There’s even a possibility that the future great war might attract a certain Evil God to participate directly!

Of course, this was merely a possibility.

For an Evil God to enter directly, the conditions would likely be quite severe, the difficulty very high.

If they could appear so easily, how could the real universe maintain its current foundation?

As for specific war strategies, the two didn’t delve into them.

Later, both their advisory teams would discuss these matters thoroughly.

Their conversation at this moment started to reach a deeper level:

"After the war is won, what form should the Imperial Central Government take?"

This question was first raised by Robert.

Robert certainly had his own ideas about this matter.

Since his awakening, and since embarking on the expedition to Holy Terra, he had pondered this question countless times in depth.

But at this moment, he needed to hear Gu Hang’s thoughts.

Gu Hang met Robert’s examining, sharp gaze directly, without hesitation.

Since he wanted to hear, then Gu Hang would speak.

"The anchor of imperial theocracy must never be shifted. As the Regent King, you are the only legally effective spiritual beacon in this shattered universe. But the operation of a vast empire requires a precise and efficient machine. The old feudal councils and the oligarchic clans that hollowed the Empire's muscles must be uprooted! A new core of imperial government must be based on absolute responsibility and capability."

"And the Alliance Government I lead is more suited to undertake this responsibility than any other group today."

Chapter 977

Gu Hang and Robert are both exceedingly intelligent individuals.

Between them, there's no need to spend much time repeatedly explaining their thoughts or persuading each other. They can clearly determine what their core interests are and quickly understand what the other's core interests are, which are non-negotiable.

Precisely because of this, their communication is quite efficient.

Soon, some of the most fundamental, inviolable consensual principles were established.

Firstly, The Emperor is the Empire's supreme representative and religious authority. On the day he returns to the mortal world in the future—regardless of whether it happens—He is the human Emperor, reigning over all of humanity spiritually, soulfully, and physically.

This is undoubtedly foremost and undeniable.

But besides this, a clear dual-governance model will be established in the Empire.

The Empire will have two leaders—Robert and Gu Hang.

The Regent King and the Imperial Prime Minister.

The title of Regent King is self-explanatory; he is the supreme military and political leader across Holy Terra and the entire Empire.

As for the role taken by Gu Hang, this Imperial Prime Minister position is somewhat different from the prime ministers of the past ten thousand years. Instead, it resembles the full responsibilities of the first prime minister during the era when The Emperor was still present, overseen by the 'Eternal Life'.

The current Prime Minister's primary role is as a member of the Imperial Supreme Council, the head of the Empire Government, overseeing the four major departments of the Imperial Central Government, theoretically commanding the ministers of the Legal Department, Military Affairs Department, Department of Taxation, and Administrative Court.

However, historically, hardly any prime ministers of the Imperial Central Government have simultaneously held all four positions. It's common for a single department's minister to grow politically strong, become assertive, and sideline or even overshadow the prime minister.

Regarding the military aspect, the Prime Minister cannot directly command the troops, nor can he easily influence military strategy. The heads of the Star Realm Army and Navy's Grand Marshals are not under the Prime Minister's leadership. Even though the Prime Minister may indirectly intervene via the Military Affairs Department, such indirect leadership is often weaker, much like the Prime Minister's potential inability to control government departments.

Not to mention, there's no indirect authority over forces like the Tribunal, Sect of Mechanics, Assassin Court, or Interstellar Warriors available to the Prime Minister.

Being a truly powerful prime minister, like Zebert before the Great Cataclysm, is rare in imperial history. Additionally, even after becoming prime minister, he spent decades in subordination and further decades managing the situation before gradually succeeding.

Yet, despite realizing his goals, the fundamental power of the Imperial Prime Minister still rests on government departments. To wield greater power, one must rely on controlling the Supreme Council.

Simply put, those who become powerful prime ministers do not possess significant power by virtue of their position; rather, they must be formidable individuals, skillfully managing the Supreme Council. Essentially, the power exercised is that of the Supreme Council.

From this perspective, the authority of the Imperial Prime Minister is quite limited.

But according to the new agreement between Gu Hang and Robert, things will be different.

In the future, the Supreme Council will become ornamental. Under the complete leadership of the Imperial Prime Minister, the Imperial Council will become a subordinate institution—this marks the authority once held by the first prime minister.

Gu Hang, the future holder of this prime minister role, the Imperial Council will be accountable to him, with the authority to appoint resting in his hands. Beyond leading the departments of Administration, Finance, Legal Affairs, and Military Affairs, all government bodies across the Cosmos Domain and Star Domain will also fall under the direct appointment and dispatch of the Imperial Central Government led by the Prime Minister.

The structure where the Cosmic Domain Chair resembles an Alliance Leader, the Star Domain Head resembles a feudal prince, and the Planetary Governor resembles a feudal lord will be dismantled.

Personnel management, economic development, military construction, and legal maintenance throughout the Human Empire will achieve a higher degree of centralization.

From this perspective, although the Regent King is nominally the supreme military and political leader, the scope, breadth, and depth of actual responsibilities are far less than those of the Imperial Prime Minister. The Regent King is more of a supreme commander fighting externally, a political representative, while the real execution is under the Imperial Central Government led by the Prime Minister.

Under this structure, the Regent King’s orders and the Prime Minister’s orders will be implemented across the Star Sea from two directions.

But precisely because of this, Robert will undoubtedly have concerns.

In this structure, the role of 'Regent King' is easily marginalized.

Therefore, whether it's the Regent King's orders or the Prime Minister's orders, one prerequisite is that the Empire's law must override all specific governance matters. The authority of Prime Minister and Regent King orders is confined by the Imperial Reorganization Charter.

This charter framework is drafted by legal experts jointly appointed by Robert and Gu Hang.

Once the charter is signed, both parties will merge to form a new department, the Imperial Charter Committee, independent of the Prime Minister and Regent King, whose main task is to oversee and review whether each royal and prime minister's orders violate charter provisions.

While this committee appears to be a third-party supervisory body, the so-called 'supervision' is merely illusionary.

The Imperial Charter Committee is composed of legal experts sent by Gu Hang and Robert, representing the will of the Prime Minister and Regent King respectively. They certainly wouldn't oppose their own leaders, more often opposing the other side. Even if the committee rules a certain order 'unconstitutional,' what it fundamentally means is one side has overpowered the other within the committee.

Chapter 977_2

That's definitely not a good sign; it could symbolize a conflict arising between the two, forcing them to have an open confrontation within this typically ornamental institution.

Under normal circumstances, the two should have mutual understanding, neither exceeding what the charter stipulates. If they must exceed it, then discuss it first, amend the charter, and proceed to the next step.

Of course, this thing as a supervisory institution—whether or not it will remain merely nominal in the future—it must still exist. At the very least, it should give the two Imperial leaders a place to sit down and negotiate when conflicts arise.

Besides this charter committee, there’s another one, which is probably just a formal "restriction."

The power and responsibility of the Regent King and the new Prime Minister are enormous. Therefore, the new "Charter," providing the latest legitimacy to the Regent King and Prime Minister, must be acknowledged by the Regent King and Imperial Prime Minister and signed in the presence of the Grand Marshal of the Imperial Guard, Founding General of Mars, and Pontiff of the State Religion.

The same procedure applies to future revisions.

The recognition of the dual heads of state is, of course, the most crucial. After all, the charter, in the end, is their mutual agreement on what each does, outlining their respective "spheres of influence," ensuring the unpleasant aspects are dealt with upfront for easier collaboration.

As for other so-called witnesses... well, they’re just there to witness.

When the so-called "Imperial dual leadership" becomes molded, under two highly centralized tycoons, what of the Martian Sect, or the Imperial Forbidden Army, then? Aren’t they ultimately bound to obediently follow orders?

While the Imperial Guard might be fine, can Gu Hang tolerate the existence of the so-called "other head on the Imperial Double-headed Eagle emblem," like the Martian Sect?

Just look at the survival environment of the Sect of Mechanics within the Alliance to understand.

Gu Hang will provide the Sect of Mechanics with respect, but this respect is built on the fact that the Sect of Mechanics integrates into the Alliance’s research and production systems.

The situation where the Sect of Mechanics’ fleet roams globally collecting technical data and recycling black boxes, ignoring other matters, is not allowed to happen within the Alliance. The Protection Army and Mechanical Sect Fleet within the Alliance have already been reorganized. Except for the fleet and army unit names retaining their original characteristics and preserving the cultural elements symbolizing their origin—perhaps also maintaining some of their unique command systems—when it comes to overall strategic planning, they must completely follow the orders of the Alliance Supreme Command.

If told to join a particular army in the Dark Side Expedition, they must go without negotiation; and upon arrival, there's no independent command authority—they must follow orders from the army command center and complete missions effectively. Failure leads to stripping of uniforms and facing military tribunals.

Similarly, the Alliance will hand over all distinct technology acquired worldwide, technology from alien races, and technology left from the Golden Age to the Alliance's research institutes. Once fully integrated, the Sect of Mechanics can naturally access them freely.

As for the National Church, it faces even more severe restrictions.

High efficiency demands a unification of national power. Gu Hang doesn't allow a situation where multiple forces fracture, lacking affiliation, and even backstabbing and obstructing one another.

In the future, when the Alliance's political system replaces the Empire's old government, the corresponding scenario will unfold across every inch of the Empire.

Undoubtedly, it will incite considerable controversy and even struggle.

But Gu Hang is determined to eliminate these resistances.

In Gu Hang's mind, no matter how thoroughly the reform, it's still inadequate if aiming to save the entire Empire.

According to Gu Hang's idea, his interest lies not in taking over Holy Terra or transforming the Empire's old government.

No, there's no such transformation.

This isn't about transformation; it's a revolution.

He wants to overthrow the Empire’s old regime, using his Alliance Central Government, with which he’s currently satisfied, to completely replace the old Empire’s government.

The existing system should be utterly destroyed in this war to allow new life to rise from the ruins.

When Gu Hang laid bare his thoughts on Holy Terra, even Robert, who somewhat anticipated it, felt a tinge of panic.

To him, this seemed a bit too radical.

The Holy Terra Government isn’t quite that hopeless, is it?

Leaving nothing behind?

If there’s no transition, would it be too chaotic in the interim? Could there be issues integrating the Empire’s powers?

He harbors numerous concerns.

But Gu Hang provided a clear answer.

The Holy Terra Government is indeed so unsalvageable.

Moreover...

"Abandon illusions, abandon luck, Your Highness the Regent King. Now, we must have the determination to rebuild the Empire."

"Rebuilding is not just rhetoric; it’s a genuine rebirth in flames. Starting with the Alliance’s Dark Side Expedition, including when we regain control of Holy Terra in the future, we’ll launch expeditions

against parts of the Empire's Holy Territory from Holy Terra; it's akin to fighting another grand founding expedition."

"You must be prepared for this. It's about recreating the Empire."

"Future history might refer to the Empire from this point onward as the Third Empire, perhaps."

Upon hearing the term "Third Empire," Robert's heart skipped a beat.

At least two things here struck him profoundly.

First, it's Gu Hang's ambition—or perhaps determination—of such magnitude. Completely recreating a new Empire with the Alliance replacing the Empire is immensely significant.

Yet, before further pondering this, Robert must contemplate why Gu Hang described their rebuilt Empire as the "Third Empire?"

If the old Empire was the First Empire, then what is the "Second" Empire?

He recalled a part of deeply hidden history—buried within the Empire's civil war—the Second Empire.

It's a secret he never wants revealed: during a time they thought the civil war was lost, Holy Terra had fallen to traitors, and the Golden Throne had crumbled, he and another loyal blood-relative brother, Father of Death Angel Genetics, crowned a new Emperor within the Infinite Starfield for their kin.

It was an absurd farce. Upon learning Holy Terra hadn't fallen, nor had the Golden Throne collapsed, they proactively ended the farce, burying the Second Empire in history, rallying armies, and saving Holy Terra.

But thereafter, neither dared to publicly mention the event.

Public exposure would raise the question of who was the true traitor?

Such overstepping and betrayal... so profane.

Were someone else to mention it, Robert’s first act would be to draw the Emperor’s Sword, kill the person, and launch a massive, covert investigation to eliminate all who knew.

But since Gu Hang spoke...

Alright, he neither has the means to dispose of Gu Hang nor finds it surprising that Gu Hang is aware of this matter.

...

According to Robert’s words, "This fortifies a foundation for the newborn ’Imperial dual leadership’ to withstand millennia of turmoil. The King and Prime Minister must maintain absolute mutual trust."
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Chapter 978: Bloodless Victory?

Gu Hang has immense ambition.

But he prefers to call it determination.

By now, he roughly understands his role in this universe. At this position, he has no room to escape.

So, if he’s going to do it, he must do it well.

Retaining the mess of the Old Empire and then expending who-knows-how-much effort with uncertain results—

Why bother?

As for Robert, Gu Hang knows he will find it hard to accept at first.

On one hand, there's a worry over Gu Hang's 'ambition' and a lack of trust.

On the other hand, there's a concern about whether this approach will work.

Regarding the latter, Gu Hang believes Robert will understand.

If he really started from scratch, having nothing, relying solely on brute force to overthrow the Old Empire's system and build anew from the ruins, it would lead to major issues. The Empire's territory is too vast, and governing it too difficult. Even a poor old order is still order, and destroying it would lead to significant chaos if any problems arise during reconstruction.

But the situation is different because Gu Hang does not rebuild the Empire from scratch; he has the Alliance. He spent over a century forming an efficient administrative system capable of swift takeover.

Regarding whether the Alliance Government is capable of such a takeover, and if the Alliance Central can manage this enormous Human Empire after replacing the Central Empire, Gu Hang believes that Robert, known for his reason and wisdom, is entirely capable of discerning this clearly.

The Alliance is, of course, not perfect; no one can achieve perfection.

Even The Emperor himself couldn't do so when he ruled directly.

As long as it's stronger than the old system, and significantly so, that's enough.

As for Robert's potential first concern, that depends on him.

It depends on whether Robert possesses enough wisdom to form mutual trust with Gu Hang.

More importantly, does Robert truly uphold the ideal of 'Empire Supremacy, Humanity Supremacy,' devoid of personal desire?

If he harbors a desire for power, valuing the immense authority represented by the position of 'Regent King' more, then regardless of a potential honeymoon period, eventually, they might have to part ways.

But if he is both smart enough and selfless, then no matter how much friction arises in between, he will ultimately see clearly that having Gu Hang fully control the Empire is the best choice.

Gu Hang has said that the mutual trust between him and Robert is the foundation for millennia of stability in the New Empire. But he never said that this foundation is a 'dual leadership.'

Of course, discussing this now might be a bit premature.

They haven't even taken Holy Terra yet.

Before grasping this heart of the Empire, everything being discussed is just castles in the sky.

The distribution of post-war benefits depends on winning the war.

Without Terra, what is there to discuss about kings and ministers?

And this war is already underway.

Currently, the situation seems favorable.

After finishing his 'discussion' with Gu Hang and roughly confirming the future distribution of benefits, Robert immediately began preparing for the war on Holy Terra without delay.

Honestly, Robert had never imagined being on the attacking side of the Holy Terra defense battle.

However, he does have the advantage.

He understands Holy Terra very well.

He knows all about the defense installations in the Human Empire capital, including many secret trump cards.

As the Regent King of the Human Empire after the Emperor's ascension and the civil war's hard-won victory, he was the supreme ruler for over a century.

Originally, he was worried about whether there might be changes in the orbital defense cannons, defense strategies, and various other trump cards on Holy Terra. After all, a millennium had passed.

But... based on current observations and intelligence, there have been none.

Humanity hasn't progressed at all in this millennium.

Furthermore, even if they haven't progressed, they have regressed a lot.

The Imperial Guard told him so.

Regarding the defense situation on Holy Terra, they're certainly well-informed. Undoubtedly, the largest, strongest, and most steadfast fortress on Holy Terra is the Imperial Palace. They, the marchers are obviously most aware of the palace's internal defenses.

Furthermore, moving forward, they should take over the entire palace forcefully.

In the past, not only the Empire Government, but many important Empire departments operated in the Terra Imperial Palace. Now, they plan to seal all those. The palace will go on lockdown, with the Imperial Guard taking full control. The Imperial Palace Guard, completely subordinate to the marchers, is a mortal unit whose loyalty and purity should be unquestionable. However, the Imperial Guard will still closely reassess the Palace Guards' reliability, for caution's sake.

Moreover, besides the Imperial Guard and the Palace Guard, all other military forces will be cleared from the Terra Imperial Palace.

Afterward, Terra Imperial Palace's defense facilities will no longer be an obstacle to Robert's assault.

This removes Robert's greatest concern.

If the firepower atop those deep palace walls was aimed at the sky, the sacrifice needed to control the planet's orbit would be immense.

Of course, the orbital defense forces on Holy Terra are not limited to the Imperial Palace. Removing the palace still leaves about seventy percent.

Robert also suggested whether the Imperial Guard, if resources permit, could actively engage in controlling some of these.\p>

It's not just leaving it to them to do. After all, though the Imperial Guard is strong, their numbers are too few. Subsequently, Robert's expeditionary force will risk an airborne operation, attempting to land a significant number of troops on the landing field opened within Terra Imperial Palace.

At that time, they will, under the leadership of some Forbidden Army Soldiers, attack those strategic points.

This has been agreed upon, and the Imperial Guard has approved.

Thus, the issue of controlling Holy Terra’s orbit has been partially resolved.

The other part of the threat lies with the Solar Fleet.

This navy has a contingent on the moon—where many Navy Generals once bowed to him.

They can now follow Robert’s commands and are no longer an obstacle.

However, they make up only ten percent of the whole Solar Fleet.

Relying on them to turn their guns on their past comrades right now is a bit unrealistic.

First, it might provoke backlash, and also because their internal situation is complex, lacking loyalty checks and thus uncertain reliability. If they suddenly change sides in battle, it could be disastrous.

Yet, turning it around, since they are already part of the Solar Fleet, they could contact more Fleet Commanders and Captains, hoping to win more to their side.

This process is already underway, with many Captains expressing their intent.

Therefore, Gu Hang and Robert are in a good mood, feeling that things are progressing smoothly.

If we’re optimistic, perhaps political diplomacy and leveraging influence might take Holy Terra without bloodshed?

Chapter 979: Boundaries of Authority

Robert’s knuckles pressed against the cold metallic edge of the holographic table, producing a slight friction sound. Time flowed slowly in the silence, as if a heavy hammer was weighing two entirely different yet necessarily interlocking future gears. After a long time, he did not withdraw his raised hand, instead pressing it heavily on the position marked by the reorganization parliament emblem—symbolizing the core node of the prime minister’s authority (Robert makes a decisive gesture of acceptance). "Yes." The two words, firm and decisive, carried the power to split mountains and cut

through peaks. "But there is one precondition: the Empire's laws must override all specific governmental affairs. The authority of the Prime Minister's order is framed by the 'Imperial Reorganization Charter'. The power and responsibility you demand are immense, and the charter itself must be formally signed and recognized by you and me, the Grand Marshal of the Imperial Guard, the Founding General of Mars, and—provided we can find and ascertain their loyalty—at least two living Primarchs or their genetic descendant representatives (Robert sets governance boundaries)." He stared into Gu Hang's eyes, "This is not doubt, Gu Hang. This is forging a foundation for the 'Dual Monarchy System' of this new Empire that can withstand a millennium of future upheaval. You and I may have this magnanimity, but future successors will require the chains of contracts to prevent power from once again slipping into the abyss of dictatorship (Robert explains governance stability concerns)."

"Very reasonable." Gu Hang nodded, without a trace of hesitation (Gu Hang accepts boundaries readily). He raised his hand and injected a spiritual rune, glowing with a faint golden light, into the holographic image. "The charter framework is to be jointly drafted by your Empire Legal Affairs Department advisory group and the Alliance's Supreme Council of Decrees, with the Imperial Guard serving as the witness on behalf of The Emperor

Chapter 979: The Decadent Chancellor of the Old Empire

The core of power in Holy Terra is steeped in silent decay.

Although the Prime Minister should be working from the Terra Imperial Palace, Zebert had long left.

The new Prime Minister's residences were numerous. Zebert would meet with government officials in one of them. Nobody knew which residence he would be in each day, not even the people scheduled to meet him; they could only be informed at the last moment.

Yet most of the time, he was actually in none of the residences, but on his 'carriage,' plotting various matters.

His Prime Ministerial orders still occasionally appeared in the public broadcasts of Holy Terra; many Empire Government officials would still receive his commands.

However, whether they would actually be followed was not guaranteed.

Any bureaucrat loyal to the Empire or humanity, upon seeing his current form, could no longer remain loyal to him, or believe that he was still the same Zebert as before.

In the depths of Zebert's bulging eyes danced a murky green light, while corrupt fluids seeped from beneath his velvet robe, nurturing one after another of rotting plants at his feet, where numerous mosquitoes and 'little spirits' frolicked, exuding an eerie vitality.

His fat and swollen knuckles tapped on the edge of the table, his belly so large it could hold three adults, the rolls of fat on his face squeezing out his features... In this form, only those very familiar with him would barely recognize that he was once the final unifier of old Empire politics, the once skillful Imperial Prime Minister!

By rights, his life should have ended decades ago.

It's true that the powerful human elites could undergo life-extension surgeries, with lifespans of three to five hundred years being quite common.

However advanced such technology may be, it was still only a life-extension surgery, not an immortality surgery.

Zebert, who could not become an Eternal Life, had already reached the end of the lifespan granted by his fifth life-extension surgery, leaving him with no other options.

Undergoing a sixth life-extension surgery? That would be a gamble; in the Empire's ten-thousand-year history, only two or three people had ever walked away from the sixth operating table.

Even so, when elites—especially people at Zebert's level—had no other options, they would often insist on another attempt even if it meant wasting resources. But rationally, everyone knew it was just trading one form of death for another—either dying naturally or on the operating table.

Before the Great Cataclysm, he had paid a high price to obtain a promise from Gu Hang.

A nominal high lordship seat was exchanged for an improved life-extension surgery that could extend his life by another sixty to a hundred years.

However, the outbreak of the Scarlet Scar changed everything.

Separated by the rift, with no news from the Alliance on the other side in the Empire's Eastern Border, despite his efforts, he simply could not locate Gu Hang to perform the surgery.

But Zebert really didn't want to die.

Before the Cataclysm, he had already seized the highest power in the Empire; the Great Cataclysm's outbreak utterly destroyed all his plans, yet he still managed to keep the Terra Government running. Back then, the situation across Terra, and even the entire Sun Star Domain, was still quite manageable.

Yet, his life was already like a flickering candle in the wind.

In the last phase of his life, he had lost interest in politics and instead explored every possible way to stay alive.

However, ironically, he clung to power with a tenacious grip.

There's no contradiction in that.

If he wanted to survive, he obviously needed sufficient power; otherwise, how could he mobilize so many people and resources to find a way to extend his life?

If he did survive but lost power, what meaning would there be in such a life?

The weaker he became, the more obsessively he desired power. Anything that posed the slightest threat to his power was dealt with ruthlessly.

This undoubtedly caused significant damage to government operations, especially during such difficult times.

Yet, no one opposed him.

A sick tiger is still intimidating; who would dare provoke it?

Everyone knew he was going to die, and no one wanted to endure his madness before death.

Moreover, there was no need.

Just bear with it; once he died, everything would be fine.

However, no one waited for that day to come.

After exploring every possible way to survive to no avail, an endless despair and longing for life filled his inner being. At this moment, he heard a voice from the void, infinitely kind, bringing with it a miraculous blessing. If he accepted it, he could restore his health.

At first, he hesitated, but in his dying moments, he couldn't resist.

And the blessing came so quickly.

His withered body filled out in a very short time. He felt vigorous and full of life.

He outwardly claimed that it was a blessing from The Emperor. The Emperor appreciated his more than one hundred and forty years of service as Imperial Prime Minister and graciously granted him kindness that restored his health.

But the hateful, disgusting traitors dared to claim it was a blessing from an Evil God, saying he was tainted!

The Tribunal, the Golden Knight Legion, the Legal Department, the Imperial Guard, the Assassin Court... all these people who once benefited from him lined up to come after him.

At first, they started from the shadows, investigating and probing.

Later, it escalated into covert assassinations and open challenges.

But what was the use?

He had long prepared, doing too many things in secret.

He made passionate speeches at the Supreme Council, and the High Lords in the council continued to support him as always.

These High Lords remained as close as ever with him, and privately, he generously shared the blessings he received with them.

Though not entirely, it was enough to secure many votes in the Supreme Council.

Everyone gained health and eternal life from the divine blessing—what could be wrong with that?

The future could be endless, ruling the Empire eternally hand in hand!

However, even with a conclusion already reached by the Supreme Council, those damned traitors relentlessly persisted!

In the end, even the Tribunal led the way, with the Imperial Guard leading the charge, storming his Prime Minister’s mansion in the Terra Imperial Palace!

But even that, he had foreseen.

He had moved early on.

He declared these people as traitors and called on the entire Empire's might to completely bury them!

Many government officials left the palace with him, maintaining another operational Empire Government. Large numbers of troops loyal to the Prime Minister's Office also received eternal blessings and fought for him.

In the Nest Capital, amidst Holy Terra's billions, the blessing had actually been spreading over the past years.

People, inspired by the Prime Minister's kindness, gathered around him rapidly, expanding the scale of inspiration and blessing.

Countless billions continued to chant the name of the benevolent father.

The Empire would indeed be eternal.

No matter in what form it achieved eternity.

Chapter 980

In the Holy Terra Orbit, madness of another kind pervaded the 'Base Holy Grail' orbital fortress.

Galaraldo, the Prime Minister of the Military Affairs Department, gazed at the tactical star chart. Each of those glowing dots represented a ship, divided into two piles. The stationary pile consisted of the Solar Fleet stationed in the Holy Terra Orbit. On the other side, the advancing force was the Expeditionary Fleet led by Robert.

What was displayed on the tactical star chart was far from exciting. Both sides were at such close proximity, yet there were no beams of light, missiles, or the glow of Colossal Cannons being fired; instead, some ships seemed to be closing in on each other.

He knew the reason why.

Robert, leveraging relationships with the navy generals captured in the previous lunar battle, had established contact with many of the Solar Fleet's commanders.

As the Prime Minister of the Military Affairs Department, Galaraldo had close ties with the military, especially the Solar Fleet he focused on developing. Through the connections he built within the Solar Fleet, he held much of the information concerning the current engagement between the Solar Fleet and the Expeditionary Fleet.

In fact, many of the interactions between the two sides were instigated by Galaraldo, urging those commanders and fleet officers who followed his orders to act.

And today's mission was the objective.

"Do you think it would be so easy to let you in?"

He let out a cold laugh.

Seated before his desk were several individuals.

One of them asked, "Prophet, should we start now?"

"Yes, it's time."

One person nodded slightly and left the room.

Galaraldo’s gaze returned to the tactical star chart.

The change occurred swiftly.

Suddenly, a batch of ships erupted into action, launching an unprovoked attack on the Expeditionary Fleet amid ’friendly exchanges’.

Moreover, the number was significant.

This sudden betrayal and act of treachery was something the Terra Expeditionary Army had not adequately prepared for.

Even though they quickly managed to react and counterattack, the sudden turn caused them significant losses.

However, the direct losses experienced by the Expeditionary Army were only one aspect; a greater impact was their inability to discern who was truly an enemy.

Was it a fraction of the ships? Or all of them?

At that moment, as retaliation began, it became extremely difficult to differentiate. The Expeditionary Fleet under Robert’s command could not precisely determine who was an enemy and who was an ally.

Within the Solar Fleet, besides those who suddenly backstabbed, some ships were completely unaware of the occurring events. They received various contradictory and conflicting orders.

There were orders claiming that these so-called Expeditionary Fleet ships were traitors, and Robert’s identity as the Son of God was fabricated. It was a meticulously planned ambush previously kept secret; now, the battle was termed a great success, and it was time to seize the opportunity to pursue victory and eliminate as much of the enemy’s manpower as possible!

The credibility of this order was quite high, bearing the signature of the Empire's Imperial Navy's Grand Marshal - Lee Li, along with endorsements from two vice-commanders of the Solar Fleet and signatures from multiple fleet commanders.

Consequently, many ships unwittingly obeyed the order and fired upon the Expeditionary Fleet.

Can they be blamed?

It's hard to say.

They tried to verify the order with their superiors, but responses were either delayed, and the constantly changing space battle wouldn't allow for hesitation, forcing them to make a decision—to fight or not—with no third option.

And some received direct instructions to open fire.

No matter the confusion, they could only follow the orders with doubt.

The core reason they obeyed the orders wasn't necessarily Lee Li's signature.

Although he was the highest commander in theory over the entire Imperial Navy, the title itself seemed too grand.

Is the superior's superior my superior?

It's hard to say.

Moreover, would a high-ranking figure like Lee Li directly issue combat orders to frontline captains? Is that normal?

Furthermore, if truly following the commander's orders, why wasn't the signature of the Solar Fleet Commander-in-chief - Song Min there?

Still, all the signatures pale in comparison to those from fleet commanders.

They are the direct superiors to many captains.

Among the ships that obeyed the order and opened fire, there were also ships questioning the orders.

However, few had the courage to immediately contact the Expeditionary Army and defect on the spot, firing upon their former fleet comrades.

The utmost they could do was to simultaneously question both sides, reveal their stance, and then maintain full alert, activate the Void Shield, and withdraw from the battlefield, aiding no one.

Yet some ships merely feigned neutrality, then unexpectedly switched sides, unleashing their firepower on the Expeditionary Fleet.

And some ships, without receiving any orders or receiving orders from superiors to remain inactive, proactively shut down communication channels and launched aggressive attacks on the Expeditionary Army without hesitation.

The situation quickly descended into chaos.

The Expeditionary Fleet was unable to discern who was friend, foe, or neutral.

If faced with less extreme conditions, they might as well treat all visible ships as enemies.

Even if there might be collateral damage, if it's for the ultimate victory, such sacrifices are inevitable.

However, even this won't do.

Those traitors, choosing this critical moment, to backstab so decisively in this manner, isn't their purpose just to completely derail the negotiations between the Expeditionary Force and the Solar Fleet?

Sending brainless, indiscriminate attacks against all ships of the Solar Fleet, would surely be falling into the enemy's desired situation.

In this way, the Terra Expeditionary Army ships can only choose self-preservation, maximizing all defensive equipment and propulsion engines, and retreat at full speed.

Disengage first, then talk about the rest later.

...

Chaos is only temporary, Galaraldo himself knows.

Even if the negotiations between the Expeditionary Force and the Solar Fleet are sabotaged on the spot, as long as the Expeditionary Force hasn't fallen into the dire situation of treating all ships as enemies, misunderstandings can eventually be resolved.

What a pity, it's because Robert arrived too early, too swiftly.

If given more time, perhaps he could really acquire control of the entire Solar Fleet.

In that case, there would be no need to engineer so many things. In the lunar war, with superior naval forces, a bigger trap could be set to completely bury Robert on the moon.

At present, the corrupted ships in Galaraldo's hands only include slightly over twenty percent of the Solar Fleet.

During the previous chaos, a large number of ships were confused or deceived due to miscommunication.

Once they re-evaluate, attempting such a maneuver again would be very difficult.

Moreover, those twenty percent of ships under his control would gradually be identified due to the prior events. And once exposed, with external reinforcement from Robert's fleet, they might soon be cleansed.

However, it doesn't matter now.

The goal of this operation was merely to buy time.

With the Solar Fleet destined to be acquired by Robert and the Imperial Guard clearly siding with the opposition, Robert smoothly leading his Expeditionary Force to take over Holy Terra is inevitable.

So what is the point of those other people making so much fuss?

Yet, this is precisely what Galaraldo absolutely refuses to see.

Robert is merely a running dog of Gu Hang.

That liar is too adept at deception. Galaraldo absolutely does not want him to easily control Holy Terra!

Speaking of this matter, we must go back a hundred years.

That was when he first met Gu Hang.

Their first encounter was definitely not pleasant. He was the Apostle of War, sleuthing around for the Sun Lord's expedition; Gu Hang was a Planetary Governor who hadn't fully gained control of his planet. He wanted to squeeze money from Gu Hang, as an extra tax.

It was indeed a small sum, but it was this small sum that incited such malice in Gu Hang towards him.

During Chaos's invasion of Nest Capital World Korogia, he fell into Subspace and nearly died there.

He was saved by Gu Hang, and he was grateful to him. Despite initially pressuring Gu Hang, Gu Hang ended up saving him!

He wasn't one to necessarily repay kindness—he understood himself. But with Gu Hang, he made an exception.

Arriving at Holy Terra, he rose through the ranks while constantly fighting for benefits for his brother far away in the Imperial's Eastern Frontier...

However, when he realized that the peril he faced when falling into Subspace was partly due to Gu Hang's meddling, he felt sheer disgust recalling the help he'd given Gu Hang!

That deceiver trapped him in Subspace; pretended to rescue him while in reality implanting a Spiritual Seed within him, controlling and altering his thoughts, making him the slave of that liar!

Truly despicable!

Galaraldo suddenly remembered everything during a nap in the tenth year of the Cataclysm.

Was this his own awakening?

He suspected it wasn't.

Objectively speaking, Gu Hang is a Spiritual Master, while he was virtually none in this domain. Without external influence, it was almost impossible for him to remember the truth on his own.

There must have been some external force influencing him.

But he doesn't care.

He is sure what he remembered is indeed the truth, not another implanted, fabricated memory.

Because... he knows himself, he's definitely not the kind to repay kindness. Even if Gu Hang truly saved him, given his character, it's more likely he'd be ungrateful, rather than going out of his way to help Gu Hang in later years.

He detests this deception, loathes that his self-assumed prosperity was under Gu Hang's manipulation all these years!

He absolutely refuses to accept this reality, his ultimate objective is revenge.

For revenge, he is willing to pay a great price.

Moreover, it's now cosmic chaos! A once-in-a-millennium grand upheaval!

In such a scenario, rising with the tide, wielding power and influence, and achieving greatness is precisely what he must do!

And that goal aligns perfectly with his quest for vengeance.

He gazes into the mirror, repeatedly calling out the name of the great entity that awakened him, freeing him from the deception.

Suddenly, he sees himself in the mirror with nine eyes gradually opening on his forehead, face, neck, and chest...

He hears a holy voice, containing supreme truth and endless knowledge.

...

He wasn't one to necessarily repay kindness—he understood himself. But with Gu Hang, he made an exception.

Arriving at Holy Terra, he rose through the ranks while constantly fighting for benefits for his brother far away in the Imperial's Eastern Frontier...

However, when he realized that the peril he faced when falling into Subspace was partly due to Gu Hang's meddling, he felt sheer disgust recalling the help he'd given Gu Hang!

That deceiver trapped him in Subspace; pretended to rescue him while in reality implanting a Spiritual Seed within him, controlling and altering his thoughts, making him the slave of that liar!

Truly despicable!

Galaraldo suddenly remembered everything during a nap in the tenth year of the Cataclysm.

Was this his own awakening?

He suspected it wasn't.

Objectively speaking, Gu Hang is a Spiritual Master, while he was virtually none in this domain. Without external influence, it was almost impossible for him to remember the truth on his own.

There must have been some external force influencing him.

But he doesn't care.

He is sure what he remembered is indeed the truth, not another implanted, fabricated memory.

Because... he knows himself, he's definitely not the kind to repay kindness. Even if Gu Hang truly saved him, given his character, it's more likely he'd be ungrateful, rather than going out of his way to help Gu Hang in later years.

He detests this deception, loathes that his self-assumed prosperity was under Gu Hang's manipulation all these years!

He absolutely refuses to accept this reality, his ultimate objective is revenge.

For revenge, he is willing to pay a great price.

Moreover, it's now cosmic chaos! A once-in-a-millennium grand upheaval!

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