

The Shining Star Above The Heaven

#Chapter 501: Arriving at Black Dragon Pavilion - Read The Shining Star Above The Heaven Chapter 501: Arriving at Black Dragon Pavilion

Chapter 501: Arriving at Black Dragon Pavilion

"How—"

Realizing what he was about to say, Grand Elder Shin shut his mouth. Without hesitation, he dashed in the opposite direction at full speed. Elder Choi Yongshuk did the same, as if the two had already reached a silent agreement to escape. But before they could get far, they collapsed to the ground. Sect Master Ryu's aura exploded outward, pressing down on them with crushing force.

Everyone in the training ground could feel his power, seething with rage, and it sent chills down the spines of every elder present. Though his aura targeted only Grand Elder Shin and Elder Choi, all of them felt its weight—laced with killing intent. For a moment, it felt as if they stood before the grim reaper himself, as if death could come in the very next breath.

Elder Jung Gonwoo was already on his knees from the pressure, simply because he was near the sect master—even though the aura was not directed at him. As for Aldrian, who stood even closer, he only looked at the sect master calmly before turning his gaze to the traitors.

It had been three years since he last saw Sect Master Ryu. In that time, the sect master had broken through to the peak Emperor stage, making him the strongest cultivator in the Demon Territory.

Back when Aldrian first met him, Sect Master Ryu had already been on the verge of a breakthrough. So it was no surprise that he had reached the peak level on this continent after three years. On top of that, his domain changed the environment's heaven and earth energy, making cultivation easier. It was no wonder he had advanced.

The sect master's aura faded as he withdrew it, and he shouted,

"Bring them to the lowest level of the Demonic Hell's Abyss!"

At those words, many elders shuddered. The Demonic Hell's Abyss was where the Piercing Heaven Sect imprisoned its most severe criminals. It was a place of death, where the environment was so harsh it could drive even Emperor-stage cultivators to

madness. The prison had seven underground levels, and the lowest floor was the most brutal—a place so dreadful that even a second spent there was unbearable.

Right after the sect master's command, shadows appeared behind the two traitors and immediately engulfed Grand Elder Shin and Elder Choi. The two tried to resist, but it was as if their cultivation had been sealed, their bodies completely restrained by the shadows.

"No! Sect Master! Have mercy! Mercy!"

"We were wrong! Please, mercy!"

Their bodies began to sink, slowly swallowed by the shadowy figures, until they vanished entirely. The scene was chilling, but those who watched could only lament the traitors' fate for turning against the sect.

Aldrian watched the scene with interest. The shadowy figures just now was the sect's secret guardian and the keeper of the Demonic Hell's Abyss. It was a spiritual beast with a shadow element, possessing high Emperor-stage cultivation, and had obeyed the sect master of the Piercing Heaven Sect for many years.

With such a beast already present, it was clear that Sect Master Ryu had prepared everything in advance to capture the traitors today.

Even after the traitors vanished, the atmosphere remained tense. The elders still feared that more traitors might be among them. But Sect Master Ryu's next words brought them relief.

"All of you, dismiss. Engrave it into your memories—the fate of traitors will be worse than death."

"Yes, Sect Master!" the elders shouted in unison before dispersing. Yet many of them stole glances at Aldrian as they left.

Once they were gone, the sect master turned and smiled at Aldrian.

"Let's go somewhere better. It's not ideal to keep standing here," he said, before leading Aldrian to a private pavilion behind the main building. Only a few selected individuals were permitted to enter this space.

Situated at the center of a vast pond, the pavilion offered a beautiful view and a serene atmosphere.

Upon arrival, Sect Master Ryu personally served Aldrian a herbal drink made from a blend of rare and expensive spiritual herbs known to enhance cultivation. It was an extravagant gesture, reserved only for the most honored guests.

They exchanged a few pleasantries before Aldrian turned the conversation to the main issue.

"Sect Master, I believe you already know that what happened in the Demon Territory could not have taken place without the involvement of the major families or sects within each territory."

Sect Master Ryu nodded. He had reached the same conclusion. The scale of the incident was likely far greater than he initially thought—and powerful sects or families had to be behind it.

Aldrian then took out an information crystal and placed it on the small table in front of him, push it toward Sect Master Ryu.

"Inside this information crystal is the grand plan of the devils in the Demon Territory, along with a complete list of the families and sects—or more specifically, the individuals—who are involved in their scheme," Aldrian explained.

"It also contains details of their actions. With this, I hope the Piercing Heaven Sect can help cleanse the Demon Territory after the devils are purged. Even though the devils will be gone, the traitors must still face the consequences."

Sect Master Ryu picked up the information crystal and examined its contents for several minutes. Suddenly, his aura flared once more, causing the calm water around them to ripple with vibrations. He struggled to suppress the rage boiling within him as he looked at Aldrian.

"To think that so many parties were involved and betrayed us—this is outrageous! How dare they target the three great sects! It seems they've all forgotten the strength of the great sects!" Sect Master Ryu exclaimed, his eyes flashing dangerously.

"It seems we need to hold a meeting with the three great sects again. We'll take action right after the devils are eradicated from the Demon Territory."

However, the sect master's gaze turned curious.

"By the way, how did you got all of this? This information is so detailed, it couldn't have been obtained without you interrogating someone deeply involved in this plan."

"Well, I got it after making Joon Suk my slave. He's quite useful, so it would have been a shame to just kill him," Aldrian replied casually.

Sect Master Ryu was stunned but nodded in understanding. No wonder Aldrian had such detailed information. If the Beggar Sect was already under his control, it would indeed make things easier. These traitors had just lost a significant portion of their information network across the Demon Territory.

Sect Master Ryu took a sip of his herbal drink before asking,

"Young Master, you mentioned earlier that you visited the Thorny Flower Garden Sect. How is their condition? The last I heard, something happened to Sect Master Baek, and they closed their doors entirely, even denying visits from the other great sects."

"Because of the agreement between the three great sects, we can't simply barge into the sect and involve ourselves in their internal affairs unless it concerns the successor of the Three Heavenly Demon Scripture."

Aldrian took a sip of his herbal drink and placed the cup back on the table.

"Well, there were traitors involved with the devils who usurped the sect master's seat. Sect Master Baek was injured, and there was a lot of bloodshed, which forced the Thorny Flower Garden to focus on recuperation. It may take a long time for them to regain their strength."

Sect Master Ryu raised his eyebrows.

"That severe?" he asked, to which Aldrian responded with a nod.

Sect Master Ryu sighed, he felt impatience. He couldn't wait to deal with all these traitors.

"Anyway, I can't stay for too long. I need to visit Black Dragon Pavilion and inform them about this as well, so you and the others can discuss it during the three great sects meeting," Aldrian said.

"Is that so? What a pity," Sect Master Ryu replied. "I wanted you to stay longer. There are so many things I'd like to hear from you about your adventures. Young Master, you've truly caused big ruckuses across the continent."

Aldrian smiled at his words.

"Then next time, when the timing is right, I'll tell you my stories. But I should warn you—they might be quite long."

"That would be wonderful. I'm sure your stories must be interesting, Young Master."

Aldrian continued to smile as he took one last sip of the herbal drink before setting the cup down. "Alright, see you then." With that, he disappeared, leaving Sect Master Ryu to sigh. The situation was far more complicated and dire than he had imagined. Luckily, he had someone like Aldrian on their side.

"Well, as expected from the one chosen by the fate of the Heavenly Demon, he truly is special, unlike anyone else in the history of the continent."

Aldrian appeared on a vast land with rocky terrain. There was little to no vegetation in sight, only the rugged ground stretching toward the mountainous range on the horizon. The environment truly could be described in one word—rocky.

Not far ahead stood a sturdy wall stretching for about 20 kilometers, with a massive gate in one section. The gate was 500 meters wide and 200 meters tall. Above it hung a large board, with golden letters gleaming on its surface as if to showcase the glory of the place. The inscription read, *Black Dragon Pavilion*.

Aldrian nodded in appreciation. As expected of one of the great sects.

He began walking toward the gate, where four guards stood watch. After a few moments, they finally noticed his approach.

Chapter 502: Meeting Again With Sect Master Kang

The four guards saw someone approaching and instantly became alert. Given the current situation, they had to remain wary of anyone who came near. With devils infiltrating many places, they could not predict what kind of act might be carried out—even here.

"Halt! State your identity," one of the guards said as he finally got a clear look at Aldrian.

However, there was something about Aldrian that felt familiar, and the other guards shared the same thought.

"Tell Sect Master Kang that Aldrian is here to see him." Aldrian responded calmly.

The moment they heard the name, it was as if thunder struck in their minds. Everything suddenly clicked. Now they understood why Aldrian seemed familiar—he was the one who had become the center of attention recently. His identity had been revealed as the mysterious swordsman, and the uproar he caused had shaken the continent.

Realizing that Aldrian was the real deal, one of the guards ran inside while the others looked at him with unconcealed respect. Even though they were demonic cultivators, they could not help but be impressed by his strength and the achievements from his battles. In the demon territory, strength played the most important role in their daily lives.

A few minutes later, the guard returned and approached Aldrian before bowing deeply.

"The Sect Master is waiting for you in the special guest place. Allow me to escort you, young master," he said. Aldrian responded with a nod.

He finally entered the Black Dragon Pavilion, and beyond the wall, he saw a sprawling complex of buildings arranged like a city. The place was bustling with activity, much like any ordinary city—but the people here were all disciples of the Black Dragon Pavilion. With tens of thousands of them living and training in this remote location, it was no surprise the sect functioned like an independent city.

He was then led to a carriage already waiting for him near the gate, and it began moving down the road.

As Aldrian was escorted by a guard in the carriage, he drew the attention of many disciples. They could not help but wonder who was important enough to receive such treatment. This kind of escort was reserved only for distinguished guests, and they had not heard anything about an important visitor arriving today.

Given the chaos outside that had forced many disciples to leave in order to maintain order, they assumed no one would choose to visit the sect at a time like this.

Aldrian was then brought to the inner area of the sect, which was separated from the outer grounds by another wall. This part of the sect was quieter and more serene, with fewer people around. The surroundings were beautiful, filled with greenery, giving it a peaceful atmosphere that felt distinct from the outer area.

But Aldrian's journey did not end there. The guard continued to escort him deeper into the sect, until they reached the core area where the Sect Master resided. This area also housed the elders, core disciples, and direct disciples.

Not long after, the carriage stopped at the edge of what appeared to be a lake. When Aldrian stepped out, he saw a separate building situated at the center of the beautiful lake. It was a seven-story pagoda, and to reach it, he would have to cross a wooden bridge. From the building, he could sense the most powerful presence in the sect emanating from its top floor.

"This way, young master," the guard said, leading him toward the topmost level. There, Aldrian finally saw someone already waiting—seated at a table with a herbal drink set before him.

It was a black-haired, middle-aged man with a burly frame, his body radiating explosive power that could be sensed even without any aura being released. Though the man sat calmly, Aldrian could tell he had grown far stronger than when they last met three years ago.

Sect Master Kang was now close to the bottleneck of the peak Emperor stage, on the verge of attempting a breakthrough.

As soon as Sect Master Kang saw Aldrian, he stood and greeted him warmly with a smile.

"Ah, young master, I'm truly shocked to hear that you've visited this place. At first, I had my doubts, but it really is you. Anyway, welcome to the Black Dragon Pavilion," he said as he cupped his hands.

"My apologies for not informing you in advance," Aldrian replied, also cupping his hands. "For various reasons, I had to visit you as soon as possible. Once again, my apologies."

But Aldrian could sense something from Sect Master Kang—he smelled a familiar scent that made him pause.

The scent of blood.

"It seems he's personally made a move," Aldrian thought.

After the guard left, leaving Aldrian and Sect Master Kang alone, they exchanged pleasantries for a few moments, which, in truth, made Aldrian feel a little strange. The last time he had met Sect Master Kang, he had the impression that the man hadn't been concerned with how he acted in front of him—if anything, Sect Master Kang had been somewhat rude.

But now, seeing how polite Sect Master Kang was, it felt as though Aldrian were facing a completely different person. However, Aldrian understood that the way Sect Master Kang saw him had changed since three years ago, and naturally, the man now treated him with more courtesy.

They continued their pleasant conversation before Aldrian finally turned the discussion toward the main topic.

"Sect Master, as you know, the demon territory is filled with devils lurking without anyone preventing them, and I'm sure you're aware of how all of this came to be," Aldrian said.

Sect Master Kang nodded. He wasn't stupid. With the heavy surveillance in place throughout the demon territory to detect the devils' presence, especially after the incident with Dual Horns Peak City, there was no way the devils could have infiltrated so many places and spread across the territories without traitors within the families and sects.

Aldrian then took out an information crystal containing the same details he had given to Sect Master Ryu.

"Inside this information crystal is the grand plan of the devils in the Demon Territory, along with a complete list of the families and sects—or more specifically, the individuals—who are involved in their scheme," Aldrian explained.

"It also contains details of their actions. With this, I hope the Black Dragon Pavilion can help cleanse the Demon Territory after the devils are purged. Even though the devils will be gone, the traitors must still face the consequences. I have already informed Sect Master Baek and Sect Master Ryu about this as well."

Sect Master Kang took the crystal and examined its contents for a few minutes. When he finished, he placed it down, his expression darkening.

"To think they planned all of this, and that so many have betrayed us—this is truly outrageous!" he said, his aura leaking from his body. "But with this, it's also confirmed that I've caught the right person."

Aldrian was curious about what Sect Master Kang had just said, and Sect Master Kang seemed to know exactly what was on his mind.

"Today, I, along with many elders and disciples, went out to personally control the situation and ensure the devils didn't escape anywhere. Afterward, I captured the traitors within the sect, which included one of my Grand Elders and a few other elders. I've already taken them to a secure location, but I haven't executed them yet because I need information about their accomplices and to understand why they betrayed me," Sect Master Kang explained.

"However, with this new information, I'm now certain they are the traitors, and I no longer hesitate to execute them."

Aldrian nodded, but Sect Master Kang looked at him curiously.

"How did you get this kind of information? It's so detailed. I'm wondering if you ever infiltrated this group of traitors," he asked.

"Well, it's not too hard—" Aldrian then gave the same explanation he had provided to Sect Master Ryu, including a brief account of what had happened at the Thorny Flower Garden, which left Sect Master Kang impressed.

"I see. To think something like that happened at the Thorny Flower Garden... it's truly unfortunate," Sect Master Kang said. Aldrian nodded, drank his herbal tea, and set the cup down before said to him.

"That is why the three great sects must work together to gather those still untouched by the devils' influence and purge the traitors. However, we need to approach this carefully, or else the strength of the Demon Territory will drop significantly."

"I agree. This is truly a tricky matter, but with this information, we can separate the rotten ones," Sect Master Kang replied.

They both took a moment to enjoy the serenity before Aldrian broke the silence.

"Anyway, I have to go back to the Thorny Flower Garden. I know you still have much to do after all the chaos, so I don't want to disturb you any longer."

"Wait, young master, before you go, may I request something from you?" Sect Master Kang said.

Aldrian tilted his head.

"What is it?"

Sect Master Kang flashed a smile.

"Fight with me."

Chapter 503: Against Sect Master Kang

Aldrian was stunned by Sect Master Kang's request. He had not expected something like this and looked at the sect master with raised eyebrows.

Sect Master Kang was still smiling at Aldrian.

"You know, I haven't had a good fight in a long time. Ever since I became sect master, no one has been able to stir my spirit or make me want to go all out. All I've encountered are weaklings, not even worth half my strength. I can't just challenge Ryu Hyukjae because of our positions and responsibilities. However—" His gaze sharpened, brimming with burning determination.

"You're someone I can ask. I want to test myself against a strong opponent like you. I saw your battle with the traitor from the church, and I want to feel that power for myself. Maybe it's selfish, but I want to savor the thrill of battling someone who can actually excite me."

Aldrian now understood what was on Sect Master Kang's mind. He was the type—a battle fanatic. People like him, who lived for the thrill of fighting, could be troublesome. Still, for Aldrian, this might turn out to be a valuable experience.

Battling a powerful body cultivator would deepen his comprehension of this kind of fighting style for future encounters with opponents like Sect Master Kang. It would be a completely different experience from his fight with Kang Yongjin, the successor of the Heavenly Demon's Black Dragon Scripture.

Aldrian smiled at him.

"Sure. I also want to feel the power of the Black Dragon Pavilion's sect master. It will be a good experience for me," he said.

"Then follow me."

Sect Master Kang stood up with vigor and walked out of the building, with Aldrian close behind. They took to the sky and flew far from the sect, eventually landing five hundred kilometers away in a desolate expanse of rocky terrain, with no one else in sight.

They put five hundred meters of space between them and faced each other.

"The rule is simple. We can use whatever we have. Whoever can't continue or surrenders loses," Sect Master Kang said with a grin as he removed his upper robe and tossed it aside.

His burly, muscle-bound physique was now in full view. Every muscle seemed to contain a frightening power, and even Aldrian could not take it lightly. These were muscles honed through relentless training, cultivated to push the limits of the cultivator's body—and surpass them.

Aldrian nodded.

"Alright."

Aldrian decided to begin the fight in the style of a body cultivator.

"The battle starts when this stone hits the ground," Sect Master Kang said, picking up a stone.

"Ready?" he asked.

Aldrian answered with a nod.

Sect Master Kang then hurled the rock high into the air, aiming for the center of their battle area. The moment it left his hand, his aura surged. The force of it made the surrounding space ripple. He had yet to move, yet his very presence pressed down on the area—oppressive and suffocating.

Aldrian watched him and inwardly nodded in admiration. Of course, Sect Master Kang would be on a different level than Kang Yongjin, whom he had fought in the past.

This kind of fight needed a wide battle area, and Aldrian understood exactly why. If they had fought in the sect's training ground, there was no telling how much destruction they might have caused once the battle intensified.

The stone reached its peak, then began to fall. In that brief moment, the eyes of both Sect Master Kang and Aldrian sharpened, like two predators fixated on the fight ahead.

There was only the sound of the wind. Neither made a move.

And then—

Crack!

Boom!

The moment the stone touched the ground, Sect Master Kang and Aldrian vanished from where they stood and reappeared in the center of the battle area. Their fists collided midair, canceling each other out with a thunderous shockwave. The wind howled, and even the space around them bent from the force of their clash.

The ground beneath them shattered into a crater, but neither seemed to care. They held their positions for a heartbeat—then vanished again.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Explosions echoed across the land. Gusts of wind tore through the terrain, the ground split apart, and space itself cracked under the pressure. In just under five seconds, their fists had already clashed dozens of times. They moved so fast their figures had become invisible to the naked eye.

They paid no mind to their surroundings. Each was fully focused on landing a decisive blow. Yet, every strike was either blocked or met with an equal force—neither had managed to land a clean hit.

Despite the intensity of the clash, both of them wore smiles—clearly enjoying the fight. As time passed, their punches grew faster and heavier. This alone made Sect Master Kang inwardly reel in surprise.

Aldrian's raw power and the strength of his body were beyond what he had expected. Even though he could sense that Aldrian was only at the peak of the Duke stage, his physique could rival that of an Emperor-level cultivator.

"How is that possible?!" he thought.

However, something had felt strange from the moment their fists first collided. Sect Master Kang had noticed that Aldrian's punch lacked the sturdiness to withstand his own—at least, it should have. By all logic, Aldrian's hand should have broken if he kept matching blows with him.

But the reality was different.

As the fight continued, it was as if Aldrian grew stronger by the second. His fists became harder—more stable, more durable. And no matter how much Sect Master Kang increased his power or speed, Aldrian kept up with it, meeting every blow head-on.

"Is his body cultivation truly on par with mine?" Sect Master Kang wondered.

Aldrian, fully focused on blocking, countering, and attacking, had no room to relax. Each of Sect Master Kang's punches came fast and heavy. At first, Aldrian had intended to test his limits using only one of his smaller domains—Forgeheart Kingdom Domain. He knew that without the domain's power, his hand would have broken instantly given the difference in their cultivation levels.

Even with it, his hand had nearly broken from the very first exchange. That alone proved just how overwhelming Sect Master Kang's raw strength was. And Aldrian could tell—the sect master was still holding back.

Afterward, he added another domain while continuing to match Sect Master Kang's attacks. This was also a way to measure how far he needed to go to meet the sect master's strength—so he could truly enjoy the thrill of the battle.

If he overwhelmed his opponent too easily, the fight would lose its meaning. What he sought was the experience of clashing with a powerful body cultivator on equal ground.

They continued exchanging punches and kicks for nearly a minute before a new thought crossed Sect Master Kang's mind.

"Then let's see how you block this one."

He suddenly leapt back, creating distance, then pulled his fist back and launched a powerful punch toward Aldrian. The force of the strike compressed the air into a wave of searing heat, cracking the space around his fist. The air pressure shot forward at blistering speed.

Aldrian mirrored the movement. He stepped backward and unleashed his own punch—this one compressing space itself into a visible distortion that surged straight at Sect Master Kang.

The two forces collided and a deafening boom echoed across the barren land. The shockwave tore the ground and left spatial rift in the sky, briefly exposing the void beyond, but no spatial storm erupted.

Sect Master Kang's eyes widened in genuine awe. Aldrian could compress space with a punch. That alone was incredible. But rather than feel discouraged, the sect master grinned.

"You'd better start using your elemental techniques, or you'll be in real trouble."

He shifted into a stance as if preparing to leap. Thick demonic energy poured from his body like steam. Veins bulged along his arms and legs, and his sharp gaze locked onto Aldrian.

"Let's see then," Aldrian replied with a calm smile. He stood his ground, fully prepared to react.

In the next instant, Sect Master Kang vanished—and reappeared right in front of him. His fist was already inches from Aldrian's chest.

But Aldrian had anticipated the attack. He raised his forearms in a crossed guard, shaping them into a solid shield to absorb the full force of the strike.

Boom!

The punch landed squarely against Aldrian's guard. Behind him, the land was obliterated for over three kilometers—torn apart by the residual force of the strike. The air trembled, and the space behind him warped, nearly collapsing before stabilizing.

Sect Master Kang was truly shocked when he saw that Aldrian was still standing, unharmed after receiving his Black Dragon Fist's first technique, Piercing Void.

He had expected to push Aldrian back, yet the young man remained firm in his defensive stance.

But Sect Master Kang didn't have time to be amazed. He quickly prepared to follow up with his next technique. However, before he could act, Aldrian struck first.

"My turn," Aldrian said, his voice calm as golden energy enveloped his fist. He thrust his fist forward, targeting the sect master's chest.

"This is bad!" Sect Master Kang thought, his instincts kicking in. He bent his body just enough for Aldrian's punch to past him, then immediately launched a swift kick aimed at Aldrian's head.

But Aldrian swiftly tilted his head, narrowly evading the kick. In the next moment, the two were locked in another round of fierce close combat, exchanging blows with precision and speed.

The battle raged on for several minutes, their clash growing more intense with each passing second. The elders within the sect, who had been focused on their own matters, notice the sparks and eruptions of energy emanating from the battle.

While they knew Sect Master Kang had taken Aldrian outside, they hadn't known the purpose—and from the looks of it, they were fighting!

What they saw left them stunned. The destruction across the land was immense, and if such a battle had taken place within the sect's core area, the entire area would have been obliterated.

They dared not approach any closer, fearful of getting caught in the crossfire.

At that moment, a terrifying concentration of energy emanated from the battle, sending a chill down their spines.

"Do Sect Master and that young man intend to kill each other?" they wondered.

Chapter 504: End of Sparring

At the battle area, already scarred by destruction, Sect Master Kang and Aldrian stood facing each other from a distance of 500 meters. Their auras blared around them, the space between trembling under the pressure. The air felt hot, and the atmosphere was suffocating—yet both figures wore excited expressions as they smiled.

Though their bodies were already wounded and bruised, they did not seem to care.

"How about we use one technique to decide the winner?" Sect Master Kang said with a smile. "I know you're still holding back. If we continue like this, we might end up fighting for days or even weeks."

Aldrian smiled at him.

"The same goes for you, Sect Master. But I'll follow your suggestion. One technique, then."

Their auras thickened, but it was clear to everyone that Aldrian's was more dominant. It could not be helped—his aura was shaped by a body that contained golden energy, and such energy had its own properties. One of them was demanding submission.

Sect Master Kang, being the closest, felt the full weight of it. His heart trembled, and for a moment, an urge to kneel surged within him.

This feeling was the same as when he first met Aldrian during their meeting at Thorny Flower Garden three years ago, but now it was even stronger.

"Hahahaha!" Sect Master Kang suddenly burst into laughter, and his own aura flared up, as if unwilling to be overshadowed.

"This is it! This is the sensation I've longed for—the thrill of battle, of facing a powerful opponent!" he roared, taking a stance as if preparing to unleash a devastating blow. He drew both hands to his waist, his eyes locked on Aldrian with a slightly crazed expression.

Aldrian mirrored the same stance, but this time, he added the power of another domain. With that, he believed it would be enough—one technique to decide it.

Black Dragon Fist, Third Technique: Collapsing Void.

"Ha!"

Sect Master Kang finally unleashed his fist technique, thrusting both fists forward toward Aldrian. The color of reality seemed to fade before his strike. Cracks tore through the space around his fists, revealing the void beyond.

A spatial storm erupted as his fist technique blasted forward, carrying enough power to obliterate everything in its path and surging toward Aldrian at a speed beyond what the naked eye could follow.

But Aldrian had already launched his own technique.

He was duplicating Sect Master Kang's movements, but infused them with his own comprehension, aligning them with the technique rather than merely copying it. As he punched, space shattered around him, and the force surged forward to meet the incoming strike—his power based in his comprehension of space laws.

His punch tore open an even wider spatial crack in front of him, and it surged forward to meet the incoming attack. When the two techniques collided—

Boom!

Rumble! Rumble!

The shockwave swept through the battle area as the spatial storm raged. It was as if a different world had opened before them—the void expanding, growing larger with every passing moment. Yet even the void seemed unstable, its form flickering and trembling from the force of the clash.

Sect Master Kang stood firm, his arms still in the same position as his gaze remained fixed on the result of their technique's clash. However, he was stunned when he sensed his technique faltering, losing in just a second before Aldrian's attack reached him. In that split second, he swiftly raised both forearms, shielding his body and head.

Once Aldrian's punch technique reached Sect Master Kang, the impact sent his body sliding for several hundred meters in an instant, destroying the ground beneath him. He gritted his teeth, desperately trying to resist the force and stop himself, but the power of the punch felt like being pushed by something the weight of an entire mountain, compressed into a single blow.

"Argh!" he roared, attempting to stand his ground, but it was futile. The force continued to push him, making him slide for kilometers. The ground beneath him buckled as his body carved a path, leaving deep depressions along the way.

"ARGH!" Sect Master Kang finally couldn't hold on any longer. His body lost balance after sliding for more than three kilometers. He tumbled, rolling repeatedly, but the residual power of Aldrian's technique kept pushing him. His body continued to spin until he was flung backward like a projectile.

Boom! Thud!

Aldrian's punch technique finally spent its remaining energy and dissipated, and the chaotic spatial storm began to heal itself. Sect Master Kang's body came to a stop after being hurled across the battle area, now a full 14 kilometers away from Aldrian.

Dust and debris filled the air, and the chaotic remnants of the spatial storm obscured any clear view of the scene.

The elders watching from afar could only stare in speechless disbelief. The battle area, spanning 16 square kilometers, had been completely devastated, with the landscape completely altered. However, the most shocking sight was seeing their sect master flung so far away—something none of them had ever witnessed before. It was the first time they had seen their sect master pushed back in such a way, and they couldn't help but turn their gaze toward Aldrian.

"This young man is truly a monster," the elders thought.

Although they already knew his identity, they hadn't seen him draw his sword at all during the battle. He fought Sect Master Kang as if he were a cultivator focused solely on body cultivation, relying on his muscles and raw strength. What kind of cultivation technique could he possibly possess to make him so powerful in every aspect?

The dust and dirt slowly cleared, and the spatial cracks began to close, but Sect Master Kang's body remained motionless in the center of the crater. His form was covered in wounds, blood staining his skin, and a few of his bones were cracked. Yet, he seemed indifferent to his injuries as he stared expressionlessly at the sky.

He had lost.

He couldn't block Aldrian's attack and had been overpowered by it. In that brief moment, he had sensed the sheer power behind Aldrian's strike. He couldn't help but sigh. Aldrian hadn't even drawn his sword or used any elemental techniques. He fought as if he were a cultivator focused solely on body cultivation.

Though Aldrian hadn't gone all out, the feeling of defeat lingered bitterly in his chest.

He had still lost, in a battle fought through the methods of a body cultivator.

His vision was soon blocked by the silhouette of Aldrian, who looked down at him with a smile. Sect Master Kang gazed up at Aldrian, unable to stop himself from sighing.

"I lost."

"Well, that was a good fight," Aldrian said, his smile never fading. "I'm truly enlightened by the experience and have learned so much from it."

"You are too humble, young master. With your strength, how could—"

"I'm not lying," Aldrian interrupted. "This fight really taught me a lot, Sect Master. My strength may be greater, but there's still so much I need to learn in combat. Fighting you truly opened my eyes to how strong and brutal body cultivators are. Even though you didn't unleash your full power, it still gave me quite a hard time. Can you see how bad my wounds were just now?" His tone sincere.

Aldrian's robe was torn in several places, revealing the wounds and bruises, but his golden energy had already healed his body, restoring him swiftly.

Sect Master Kang finally showed a smile. Although he still believed that Aldrian said all of that to make himself humble, he couldn't help but feel positive because of Aldrian's words.

Aldrian then offered his hand to help Sect Master Kang stand up, which he accepted. As soon as their hands touched, Sect Master Kang suddenly felt a warmth spread through his body, and all the wounds started to heal quickly. He was stunned by the sensation, unable to help but marvel at the golden energy's effects and the way it made him feel.

After a few seconds, all of Sect Master Kang's wounds had healed, and he felt completely refreshed, as if they had never fought.

"Amazing," Sect Master Kang said as he looked at his body, noticing that all his wounds, including the internal ones, had already healed.

"Anyway, it looks like we've caused quite a scene here and attracted a lot of attention," Aldrian remarked, surveying the surrounding destruction. The once-flat rocky land was now full of deep craters and ruined terrain. In fact, the area could now be called a mini canyon.

The elders continued to watch from a distance, their gazes filled with amazement.

"Let's go back to the sect first, at least you can change your robe before you leave," Sect Master Kang suggested, glancing at Aldrian's torn robe.

They made their way back to the sect, and Aldrian didn't stay long after returning. He had a brief discussion with Sect Master Kang before finally heading back to Thorny Flower Garden.

For the next three days, news of what happened in the Demon territory spread across the continent. However, this kind of news no longer came as a surprise. Empires like Doria and Vindas had already experienced similar events, with the devils infiltrating in large numbers and causing chaos.

The three great sects had also announced that they would begin purging traitors, gathering those who were not contaminated by the devils' influence. From many people's perspective, it seemed as though another civil war was about to erupt on the continent. It was expected that those who had become traitors would not surrender easily, even if it meant sacrificing their families.

Just as the purging operation was about to begin, Aldrian appeared near one of the families that had already become a target.

Chapter 505: Feigning Ignorance

Aldrian was perched at the top of a tree, where he could see the wall protecting a vast complex of buildings. The place was located far from any city, high on a hill and surrounded by dense forest. From his position, he could see the gate that led into the compound, and above it hung a plaque that read: Tang Family.

This was where the Tang main family resided, a place that, based on Aldrian's observation, was just as he had imagined.

The surrounding forest contained many kinds of dangerous, poisonous vegetation and venomous beasts. Only a single road connected the gate to the nearest city, which was five thousand kilometers away. The forest also served as a natural defense against outside attacks and as a source of supplies, providing the Tang family with a wide variety of poisonous resources.

Aldrian decided to let himself be seen, he stepped down from the tree and walking down the road with a casual manner. The two guards standing at the gate, dressed in the green robes of the Tang family, looked at the approaching figure with wary expressions. When they saw his face, they felt he seemed familiar, and before they could ask anything, Aldrian spoke first.

"Bring me to your patriarch. Tell him Aldrian has something to say."

Hearing the name, the guards finally realized who he was and widened their eyes. This man was the one they referred to as the mysterious swordsman! No wonder he had felt familiar. But inwardly, they were confused. Why was he here? And why did he want to meet the patriarch? They couldn't recall any connection between their family and Aldrian.

But the two guards did not dare to make Aldrian wait or take his request lightly. One of them immediately rushed inside, while the other remained to guard Aldrian. They waited

for several minutes, which made the guard outside increasingly nervous. What was taking them so long? Meanwhile, Aldrian stood calmly, though his senses already aware of everything happening inside the family manor.

He could see many movements, hear their words, and understand their plan. It was quite amusing. Not long after, the gate opened again, and someone stepped out. It was an old man with a white beard, followed by several middle-aged men. The old man cupped his hands as he finally stopped in front of Aldrian.

"Welcome to the Tang family, Your Excellency. I am Grand Elder Tang Rui. Your name is truly famous and has inspired many people. When I first heard that someone like you was coming, I thought it must have been a joke. But to think you're actually here to visit us, this is truly a surprise."

"Well, there's a reason for my visit to the famous Tang family of the Demon Territory. I hope you don't mind my sudden arrival," Aldrian said calmly.

"Of course not, Your Excellency. This way, please. The patriarch needs to prepare himself before meeting you, so we will escort you to the guest room. The patriarch will come to you shortly," Tang Rui said.

Aldrian just nodded, and they walked into the manor complex. There was nothing abnormal when Aldrian entered. Like many noble families in the Demon Territory, their manor complex did not display extravagant wealth like the other empires, except the Ivory Empire. The noble families here showed a sense of serenity, with many gardens and ponds. The buildings followed what they called an eastern style, reflecting the traditional values of the Demon Territory.

While they were walking toward the room, Tang Rui also explained a bit about the Tang family and its history. Aldrian let him speak, as it was a good chance to gain some knowledge. After they arrived, Aldrian was served a cup of tea while Tang Rui excused himself.

The beautiful scenery of the garden and pond made Aldrian nod in appreciation as he sipped his tea. Not long after, another man entered the room. He was a middle-aged man wearing a dark green robe, with long black hair. His aura leaked slightly, as if he wanted to show off that he was at the middle Emperor stage.

Aldrian just smiled at this inwardly as he heard the man greet him with a smile.

"Ah, welcome to the Tang family, Your Excellency. Your visit truly comes as a surprise. I heard you wished to see me. Forgive me for not greeting you earlier—there was a situation that required my attention. I hope you understand," he said, cupping his hands.

Aldrian finally showed a smile to the man. He was the patriarch of the Tang family—Tang Zhen.

"No worries. As the patriarch, I'm sure you have matters that demand your attention. It's understandable that you couldn't greet me right away," Aldrian said as he stood from his seat and returned the gesture.

Upon hearing Aldrian's reply, Patriarch Tang felt that something about his tone seemed off, but he couldn't tell what it was, so he brushed the thought aside. After taking a seat, he looked at Aldrian.

"So, may I ask what business brings Your Excellency to me?" Patriarch Tang said. "I never imagined the famous mysterious swordsman would visit our Tang family. As far as I know, there's nothing that connects you to us."

Aldrian smiled at him.

"Well, it's nothing major. I simply have a few questions that I hope Patriarch Tang can answer," he said, then calmly took another sip of tea.

"If it's something I can answer, I'll gladly do so," Patriarch Tang replied, returning the smile.

"Alright, then I'll be direct. I found something interesting when I visited Thorny Flower Garden and learning about the situation there. Do you know what happened, Patriarch?" Aldrian asked.

Patriarch Tang narrowed his eyes, as if sensing that something was wrong with Thorny Flower Garden.

"What happened to one of the three great sects? Nothing has happened, right? They're one of the behemoths of the Demon Territory—one of the powers that control the largest portion of it," he said with certainty, his tone steady and without any sign of concern.

"Did something happen to them?" he asked, his expression now full of curiosity.

Aldrian continued to smile at him.

"You see, when I visited Thorny Flower Garden a few days ago, I discovered that Sect Master Baek had already been replaced by a grand elder named Kwon Mira. And you know what the interesting part is?" Aldrian looked directly into Patriarch Tang's eyes.

"I found out that Kwon Mira is having an affair with the sect master of the Beggar Sect. But what I learned from them was even more baffling—turns out, they're traitors working with the devils. Do you know how shocked I was when I realized that?"

"You understand what that means, don't you, Patriarch?" Aldrian asked, still wearing his calm smile.

Hearing that, Patriarch Tang widened his eyes, as if in shock. But inside, his heart was filled with a different kind of shock—one mixed with fury. How could they have been caught by this man? He knew something had happened to Kwon Mira that led her to visit the Beggar Sect's base, but she had never returned. And now Aldrian claimed they were having an affair?

The bigger problem was how Aldrian had caught them—and even more concerning, how he knew they were all connected to the devils. How? Patriarch Tang knew well that Joon Suk would never yield, even under threats from this Aldrian. Had Kwon Mira told him everything?

Then, suddenly, something clicked inside Patriarch Tang's mind. His heart tightened, a cold shiver running down his spine. He had been wondering how the locations of the devils across the demon territory had been compromised with such precision. At first, he had thought the issue might lie with the Beggar Sect. The ability to spread detailed information quickly was something they could easily accomplish.

However, he still couldn't wrap his mind around it, as he knew Joon Suk would never betray them—he was too deeply involved in their cooperation with the devils. But it seemed he could finally piece together the picture: the Beggar Sect was indeed the one spreading the rumors, and it might have been because of Aldrian!

If the information about the devils was already known, then it was safe to assume that the families and sects allied with the devils must already be known to this man—or even to the three great sects. No wonder the three great sects had suddenly announced their purging of the traitors and were gathering those who hadn't worked with the devils.

"Is that true, your excellency? That is truly unfortunate! If it's true, then I'm glad Kwon Mira was caught before she could cause further destruction. But what does this have to do with the Tang family, your excellency?" Patriarch Tang asked, his tone feigning ignorance.

"Patriarch Tang," Aldrian said, his expression turning calm. "Do you wish to continue feigning ignorance, or will you confess your sins?" he asked.

Seeing the change in Aldrian's tone and expression, it was clear that he had already been discovered. Despite this, the patriarch didn't panic. He maintained his calm demeanor, meeting Aldrian's gaze with a composed expression.

"So, what do you want me to do? Even if you know about my secret, I don't think you can do anything to me," Patriarch Tang said, locking eyes with Aldrian.

"Is that so?" Aldrian replied, his face still calm. "Do you expect the poison in this tea to take effect?"

Patriarch Tang's eyes widened slightly, a brief tremor flashing across his face.

Chapter 506: Easily Subdued

When Aldrian revealed that he knew about the poison in the tea, Patriarch Tang immediately launched an attack. He struck with a palm coated in a greenish-black energy, laced with poison laws strong enough to kill even a middle Emperor-stage cultivator.

However, Aldrian easily dodged the strike and caught his wrist. Suddenly, with his other hand, Patriarch Tang flung a handful of powder directly into Aldrian's face.

Grinning, Patriarch Tang watched with satisfaction. The palm strike had only been a distraction—the real attack was the powder. Once inhaled, it would activate the poison already in Aldrian's body, leaving him incapacitated and writhing in agony.

However, his grin quickly faded. Even after more than three seconds, Aldrian still held his wrist firmly, his expression calm—as if the entire exchange had been nothing more than a joke. Patriarch Tang's eyes trembled. He finally realized the truth: the poison had no effect on Aldrian.

"Attack!"

Patriarch Tang shouted, and in an instant, rapid movements could be seen outside. Dozens of silhouettes closed in, all aiming to strike Aldrian. In a desperate attempt to free himself, Patriarch Tang lashed out with his other palm, but Aldrian blocked it using a spatial lock and teleported to the roof of the building, evading the incoming attacks with ease.

With both of his hands restrained, Patriarch Tang stared at Aldrian, panic creeping into his eyes.

"How did the poison not affect you?"

This was the most puzzling part. Aldrian had already drunk tea mixed with an odorless poison—one that required time to take effect. At first, Patriarch Tang only intended to observe him. He wanted to confirm Aldrian's purpose for the visit. If Aldrian turned out to be connected to the three great sects or suspected the Tang family's involvement with the devils, then he would simply let the poison run its course.

But if Aldrian had no connection to the recent events in the demon territory, Patriarch Tang would simply give him the antidote. It was a simple plan. However, Aldrian did know about his ties to the devils, and that meant he had to be silenced. To activate the poison already inside Aldrian's body, Patriarch Tang threw another powder—one designed specifically to trigger the delayed toxin.

However, the reality was that Aldrian seemed completely unaffected by the poison. He showed no concern, and the poison had no visible effect on him at all. How was that

possible? The combination of the tea and the powder he had thrown should have been enough to endanger even a high Emperor-stage cultivator.

Unfortunately for Patriarch Tang, he had no idea that Aldrian's body was immune to poison due to the presence of a golden energy within him. This energy could purify any harmful substance that entered his body, making him a natural nemesis to poison-element cultivators.

Aldrian didn't bother answering the patriarch's question. Instead, he sealed his mouth with a spatial lock. Then he turned his attention to the surrounding buildings—he was already encircled by many members of the Tang family, most of them elders and the family's guardians.

Fortunately, Patriarch Tang had prepared a backup plan in case something went wrong, though he had believed it would never be necessary. If the poison failed, then they would resort to brute force.

"Release Patriarch! Or you will never leave this place alive!" shouted Grand Elder Tang Rui.

Aldrian glanced at Tang Rui, causing the elder to flinch slightly. Even though they had him surrounded and held the advantage in numbers, they could not afford to underestimate him. Aldrian's strength—and the stories that followed his name—were enough to make any cultivator on the continent hesitate before facing him.

A man who could be called a one-man army could not be defeated with numbers or force alone. He required a plan.

"Is this your answer?" Aldrian asked, his eyes sweeping over Tang Rui and the other elders. "Do you truly wish to choose violence?"

"To those who don't understand the situation—this man in my grasp, along with several elders of the Tang family, has been working with the devils. If you still choose to stand against me, then I will consider you no different from these traitors—and punish you alongside them," Aldrian declared, his voice echoing across the entire manor.

Everyone within the manor complex froze, turning toward the source of the commotion. Only now did they realize the scale of what was happening.

Aldrian's words sent a shockwave through them as they saw their patriarch already restrained by him. Some of the elders stood frozen, their gazes flicking between the patriarch and their colleagues. Could there really be traitors among them?

"Don't be swayed by his words! He's accusing the patriarch of something he didn't do! His purpose is suspicious, and he wants to divide us!" Tang Rui shouted, his voice

causing confusion among those who were unaware of the devils' involvement. Who were they supposed to trust?

Aldrian calmly met Tang Rui's gaze.

"You have the nerve to speak like that in front of me, even though you're working with the devils alongside the patriarch," Aldrian said. "Even if I hadn't come, the three great sects would have attacked this place because of these traitors. You should be glad it's me visiting you. I'll punish only the traitors and spare the rest of the family."

He paused, his eyes sweeping over the others as he added, "Choose wisely what you'll do next."

The others were filled with confusion and hesitation. Those who knew of the cooperation with the devils now felt panic and anxiety. Tang Rui, seeing their uncertainty, decided to end the discussion before Aldrian could say anything else detrimental.

"Use the Pentagon formation! Attack him with Poison Fog!"

Once he gave the order, the elders set aside their hesitation and channeled their energy to form a connection. Together, they created a pentagon-shaped barrier that trapped Aldrian inside. Despite their lingering doubts, they chose to follow the Grand Elder, trusting their instincts as family members.

Once the pentagon formation was completed, the area inside was quickly filled with a corrosive poison fog. This fog was not only deadly if inhaled, but it also caused severe damage if it touched the victim's skin. The poison formation had an acidic property, capable of corroding the body—a deadly effect even for an Emperor-stage cultivator when created by these elders.

Tang Rui watched the fog with a solemn expression. He wasn't concerned about the patriarch, knowing that the patriarch's body was already immune to this poison. However, what made him uneasy was whether this would be enough to kill Aldrian.

Even after drinking the odorless Black Lotus poison and being triggered by the Black Lotus powder, Aldrian appeared unharmed. Tang Rui, however, didn't want to be too confident in the poison fog. He needed to see for himself that Aldrian was truly affected before he could allow himself any relief.

True to his wariness, a sudden, overwhelming pressure pressed down on the entire manor, forcing Tang Rui to his knees. Yet, he gritted his teeth and managed to stay on his feet, refusing to fall.

The pentagon formation trembled violently before it began to collapse, as the elders struggled to maintain its stability. Every member of the Tang family, aside from the elders, was forced to the ground by the pressure.

Tang Rui gritted his teeth, his gaze fixed on the slowly dissipating fog, which revealed Aldrian's silhouette within.

Suddenly, he felt the surroundings shift, and before he knew it, he was in Aldrian's grasp!

"Kokh!" Tang Rui choked, his body convulsing violently as foreign energy coursed through him.

"You like poison, right? Let me give you a taste of a poison you've never felt," Aldrian's voice echoed through the thinning fog.

Aldrian changed the properties of the golden energy within Tang Rui's body, turning it into poison. His golden energy, which could change its properties to become poison, combined with his deep comprehension of poison laws—gained from Wei Zhi, one of the Seven Devils of Annihilation—formed a terrifying combination.

He could transform his golden energy into various types of poison, all without needing to gather any ingredients.

The bodies of Patriarch Tang and Grand Elder Tang Rui convulsed violently, veins bulging across their bodies as blood poured from their seven orifices.

Suddenly, several elders launched direct attacks at Aldrian, using their poison laws, palm strikes, and even artifacts. Yet, Aldrian didn't even glance at them; he simply created a spatial barrier, and their attacks were deflected effortlessly.

Aldrian then used his gravity laws, forcing some of the attacking elders to crash to the ground. With the power of his domain, he enhanced the gravity, making it difficult for them to rise. Meanwhile, he continued to apply his poisonous golden energy to the two men in his grasp.

Not long after, Patriarch Tang and Tang Rui lost consciousness, and at the same time, the poison fog fully dissipated. Aldrian also retracted his aura, allowing everyone to stand up and look at him once again.

Those who saw that their family's higher-ups had been easily subdued felt a chill and a sense of hopelessness. There was no way they could face Aldrian with just numbers and poison, especially since he seemed immune to it. They began to believe that Aldrian might possess a body constitution similar to the 1000 Demonic Poison Body, making him immune to many kinds of poison.

The other elders, who had been watching helplessly from the sidelines, were now at a loss, as their formation and attacks had been effortlessly thwarted by Aldrian.

Aldrian's gaze swept over the hesitant elders.

"Do you still want to continue?"

Chapter 507: We Will Meet Soon

Once that question leaves Aldrian's mouth, there is only silence. The answer could not be more obvious. Moments later, Aldrian separates those who know about the devils from the innocent ones. He then checks each of the traitors' memories, and after that, he asks the other elders to bring the evidence of the traitors' connection with the devils from the patriarch's chamber.

Patriarch Tang had his own method of communication with the devils, and some of the documents reveal how he made it easier for the devils to infiltrate the family's territory. Aldrian also shows the elders his own proof, which clearly exposes the collusion between the patriarch and a few others with the devils.

The moment Aldrian presents all of this, the other elders finally accept—though with heavy hearts—that their patriarch and several others are indeed traitors and have no defense against their punishment.

The punishment itself does not take long, as Aldrian executes the traitors not long after. There is no need to delay the execution—what he needs now is effectiveness. He needs swift and precise action so that all problems related to the traitors can be resolved as quickly as possible.

This is also to prevent the traitors across the demon territory from having time to gather or do something foolish, such as resisting the three great sects with their families or sects and triggering a civil war.

Once Aldrian finishes executing the traitors within the Tang family, he informs the three great sects that the Tang family has been cleansed, and then moves on to his next target. After receiving that information, the three great sects finally mobilize their forces, consisting of many families and sects that have not been influenced by the devils.

They begin to spread out and attack the families and sects that have already been proven to be traitors. Once again, bloodshed spills across many parts of the demon territory. Those who do not surrender bring destruction upon their families or sects. For those who do surrender, executions of the specific members involved in the betrayal will follow.

Aldrian also visits several other families and sects that have traitors within their ranks. His targets are those with well-known names across the demon territory—prominent

factions with influence and power. This was something already agreed upon during the three great sects' meeting the day before yesterday.

They understood that such families and sects would not be dealt with easily, and handling them would likely involve a great deal of bloodshed.

Their leaders would likely drag their entire families down with them if it meant saving themselves. For situations like that, Aldrian is the most suitable person to take action. He can deal with them quickly and without hesitation.

If it takes too much time to deal with them, there is a real danger that these factions will gather their own forces and provoke a civil war.

Just as predicted, every time Aldrian arrives at one of them, he is forced to put several in their place—for defying him or trying to escape. He has already visited more than twenty locations and executed over a hundred people. They were the leaders and elders of their respective sects or families.

After Aldrian's targets have been dealt with, he returns to the Thorny Flower Garden to hold the fort. Due to a lack of personnel, the sect is short on those who can serve as guardians, as many of the elders and disciples have been dispatched to other territories to fight the traitors.

Even with their limited manpower, the sect must take part in the purge to demonstrate their commitment as one of the three great sects. Outsiders are unaware of the sect's internal issues, so no one knows about Kwon Mira or her betrayal, after all.

With Aldrian's presence, the Thorny Flower Garden is in safe hands during the purging process.

In the devil territory, the devil lord sat on his throne within the dimly lit hall. He appeared to have his eyes closed, as if asleep.

Not far from him, beneath the shadows, stood the burly silhouette of a man. He remained still, as if waiting for something in silence.

Moments later, a figure entered from outside the hall. Clad in a robe that covered their entire body, the figure stopped a short distance from the throne and dropped to one knee.

"My lord," the figure said, "we have lost contact with the Blood Hound we sent to the demon territory. It is safe to assume they are dead."

After a few moments, the devil lord opened his eyes and gave a simple wave of his hand, signaling the figure to leave the hall. Once the figure was gone, the man standing in the shadows looked toward the devil lord.

"With this, we have truly lost all influence in the demon territory. And with that, we have nearly no presence left in any of the major territories on the continent. My lord, are you truly fine with this? Will it not reduce the impact when the time of our god's descent comes?" the man said,

As if unconcerned, the devil lord replied in a slightly lazy tone.

"Well, even though the effect won't be as great as we initially planned, in the end, the main purpose of calling our god will still be fulfilled. The demon territory, along with all of those empires, has already experienced turmoil. That is what matters. The more they kill, the better it is. The requirements for the altar continue to near completion. Once our god descends, this continent will be doomed in the end."

The man gave a nod.

"However, to think that the Beggar Sect turned its back and betrayed our agreement... I wonder what made Joon Suk change his mind. There must be something that happened that we don't know. And there's no way he's been pretending all this time just to lure the devils into the demon territory," he said.

The devil lord didn't answer immediately, but after a few seconds, he parted his lips.

"He must be there," he said.

The figure looked on in wonder, then realized who the devil lord meant. His eyes narrowed as he thought about it.

"Aldrian, huh? How can someone like him suddenly pop up? Where did he come from? He's like a ghost that just appeared. Not only does he have many tricks, but he's also powerful. There's no way someone like him could have been missed by the entire continent all this time. Yet, even after we've tried to investigate his origins, we've found nothing," the figure said.

"Who knows? Maybe he did indeed appear suddenly, like a ghost," the devil lord said mysteriously, which piqued the man's curiosity.

"Anyway, tell Sloth and Gluttony to head to the border of the Doria and Vindas empires, while you can visit the Ivory Empire. Create more chaos, and with this, the minimum requirement for the altar will likely be fulfilled. Then we can begin the summoning process," the devil lord instructed.

Hearing this, the figure's eyes flashed, and a smile spread across his face. He seemed eager for action, and the devil lord's command was music to his ears.

"As you wish, my lord."

After that, the figure disappeared, leaving the devil lord alone. His eyes seemed to gaze into the future, envisioning the destruction and chaos that would follow once the heavens trembled with the descent of his god.

Yet, even as he imagined that, there was still one person who intrigued him—someone whose true identity remained a mystery.

"Aldrian, Aldrian, once the summoning is done, I will know who he is," the devil lord thought. The man who had become a hindrance, thwarting every plan he had made over the years—always a roadblock.

"We will meet soon,"

"Soon."

For the next few days, the three great sects of the demon territory and their forces continued purging the traitors from every corner of the territory. Some families and sects had to be destroyed due to their refusal to surrender the traitors. Those that were destroyed served as examples to the others who remained stubborn.

Many believed this was how it should be, especially the cultivators of the demon territory. The demonic cultivators, or any cultivators living within the demon territory, knew how harsh and cruel the situation was. Once a greater power set its sights on destroying something, there would be no mercy.

It was meant to send a clear message to others—that they should not dare oppose the greater power, and that they must lower their heads in the face of such power. They had to obey its demands to prevent further bloodshed.

The matter of the devils and betrayal was enough to drive any demonic cultivator to ruthlessly kill everyone associated with the traitors. That is why, in the past few days, parts of the demon territory have been drenched in the blood of many.

It was much different from the purging of the devils a few days ago, when the devils were caught off guard by the sudden rumors and attacked by many parties they had even worked with. The casualties were mostly on the devils' side.

However, this time, with the opponents being the families and sects where the traitors resided and led, resistance was inevitable. There was no other option but battle, resulting in much bloodshed.

Thankfully, with Aldrian's help, the bloodshed was "minimized," as he targeted the larger families and sects. They were easily subdued by his overwhelming strength, allowing him to execute only the rotten members.

After more than a week of purging, all the traitors within the demon territory were finally eliminated, resolving the devils' problem in this region.

Chapter 508: Time to Continue Their Journey

At the Thorny Flower Garden, Aldrian sat inside the pavilion, surrounded by the beautiful scenery of the garden. He was enjoying herbal tea served by Sect Master Baek, who had fully recovered and regained her mature beauty. She had even taken part in the purge operation, showcasing her power as the leader of one of the great sects.

Baek Jimin had followed her mother, both to support her and to gain more experience in battle.

After all the chaos and fighting, they finally had a moment of true peace. There were no traitors left—Kwon Mira, her daughter, and everyone who had worked with the devils had already been executed. Some of the elders who had supported Kwon Mira in taking the sect master's seat, without knowing about the devils, had their cultivation crippled and were banished from the sect as punishment.

Besides enacting justice, the punishment also served to avenge some of Sect Master Baek's loyalists who lost their lives when Kwon Mira seized the sect master's seat. One of them was Elder Lee Seoyeon, whom Aldrian had met in Dual Horns Peak City. At the time, she had been one of the envoys sent by the three great sects to meet him after the incident with the city's mayor.

He could only feel pity for her—but that was the nature of a cultivator's life. Though cultivators wield great power, they are also fragile and can be killed with little warning.

After sipping their herbal tea, Sect Master Baek that seated across from Aldrian, looked at him.

"So, you'll return to the Atria Empire?" she asked.

Aldrian nodded.

"Yes. I think I've already stayed too long here. I still have things to do, and I need to continue my journey with the rest of my group," he replied.

Sect Master Baek sighed.

"What a pity. I had hoped you could stay longer. After all that has happened, the three great sects wanted to hold a banquet in your honor—but it seems we'll have to abandon that plan."

Aldrian showed a regretful expression.

"My apologies, Sect Master. Perhaps another time."

"It's all right. I only regret that you won't be staying longer."

Not long after, Baek Jimin joined them in the pavilion and sat beside Aldrian. Sect Master Baek looked at her daughter with a smile. She could finally show her emotions more freely now that the problems within the sect had been resolved. Although there was still an ache in her heart because of her husband's fate, seeing Baek Jimin looking well and happy was enough to soothe her.

"Jimin, do you still want to follow Young Master Aldrian?" she asked.

Baek Jimin looked at her mother with a smile and nodded.

"Of course, Mother. I'll follow him wherever he goes," she said, wrapping her arm around Aldrian's left arm.

Sect Master Baek could only smile at her daughter. She had already heard everything from Jimin about her journey with Aldrian. She had been truly shocked when she learned Aldrian's identity as the mysterious swordsman and all that he had accomplished while she had been in hiding.

Baek Jimin had also shared how she felt about Aldrian, telling her mother that she wanted to be with him. Sect Master Baek had not expected her daughter to already have romantic feelings, let alone willingly accept being the second woman in Aldrian's heart. That alone astonished her, knowing how proud and hard to approach her daughter usually was.

However, considering who her daughter's partner was, she could not bring herself to feel disappointed, even if Jimin was "only" the second. Under normal circumstances, she might have had strong opinions about harems—wanting nothing less than the best for her daughter. But to have someone like Aldrian as her man? There was no better choice. He was the best possible partner for Baek Jimin.

"I see. Take care of yourself, and don't let yourself become a burden to Young Master Aldrian. You must grow even stronger—do not bring shame to the name of the Heavenly Demon or the successor of the Heavenly Demon's Flower Scripture," Sect Master Baek said.

"Of course I will, Mother. There's no way I'll allow myself to become a burden to Aldrian," she replied, tightening her grip around his arm.

Aldrian smiled at her and gently touched her hand, as if to show his support.

"Young Master, please take care of my daughter. If she gets too unruly, feel free to punish her."

"Mother!" Baek Jimin cried out, her face turning red as Aldrian and Sect Master Baek both laughed.

"Of course, Sect Master. I'll take good care of Baek Jimin—you don't have to worry," Aldrian replied.

Sect Master Baek nodded, and they continued talking for a few more hours before it was finally time for Aldrian and Baek Jimin to leave.

"Goodbye, Mother. See you next time," Baek Jimin said, hugging her mother affectionately.

"You too, child. Take care of yourself," Sect Master Baek replied, returning the embrace.

After that, Aldrian and Baek Jimin disappeared from the pavilion. Sect Master Baek remained standing, still smiling as she looked at the spot where her daughter had just stood.

"Dear, if only you were here with me... You would see that our daughter has grown into such a beautiful and powerful woman. She even loves someone now," she thought, imagining her husband. Her eyes dimmed with sadness as she remembered him.

"Where are you now? Are you all right?" She wondered one last time, before quietly sitting in loneliness.

When Aldrian returned to Caritas, Sylphia greeted him and Baek Jimin enthusiastically, immediately pulling them aside to hear about their time in the Demon Territory.

News of his appearance there had already spread and once again causing a sensation. Aldrian truly seemed to be a bane to the devils' presence—wherever he went, devils lost their lives. Everywhere he appeared, they were flushed out of their hiding places, and whatever plans they had for the territories were crushed.

As Aldrian and Baek Jimin recounted their stories from the Demon Territory, Baek Jimin boldly told Sylphia how she felt about Aldrian. It was the first time she had openly admitted that she was in love with him in front of Sylphia.

Sylphia smiled at her, then turned to Aldrian.

"You hear that? You've stolen another woman's heart. You really are a bad boy," she said teasingly, her eyes twinkling with amusement. "What am I supposed to do to stop more women from falling for your charm, hmm?"

"Well, what can I do? With my father's and mother's genes, I can't hide my charm even if I want to. It's too strong, even for me," he replied jokingly, making both women laugh.

"Anyway, I think it's time for us to continue our journey. I'll visit Marchioness Weimar to say goodbye, and tomorrow we can head to the Buddhist sect's territory," Aldrian said.

The two women nodded, and not long after, Aldrian left for Weimar City. Baroness Weimar had already been elevated to the rank of marquess by the emperor, so she was now known as Marchioness Weimar.

When he arrived at her mansion, he was greeted warmly. Marchioness Weimar came out to welcome him personally. In this place, his presence was already seen by many as that of a hero—some even called him a god. His visits were always celebrated, even with exaggeration, but no one ever complained.

After Aldrian and Marchioness Weimar sat inside the special guest room, Aldrian expressed his intent to continue his journey. With that, his role as the leader of Caritas, which was still under the jurisdiction of the Weimar march, would come to an end, and she would need to choose someone to replace him.

Hearing this, a sense of loss filled Marchioness Weimar's heart. She had always known this day would come. Aldrian was never meant to stay; he was only "passing through" the Atria Empire, having coincidentally visited Caritas, the city under her barony in the past.

Because of Aldrian's presence, her territory had become more famous and bustling, as many came to visit him or to stay close to him. The people of Caritas loved and adored him, for he had protected the city and its denizens multiple times. He was the one who upheld the law and maintained order during times when the rest of the empire remained in chaos.

Now that Aldrian was ready to leave, Marchioness Weimar realized she would need to find someone to replace him. She could already imagine how many would feel sorrowful at his departure. She couldn't help but sigh.

"Alright, I understand," she said. "But don't you want to keep your position as the mayor of Caritas? Many truly love you, and they already consider you a part of Caritas. You could keep that role and continue your journey, while I send someone to Caritas to act as mayor in your place."

But Aldrian shook his head.

"No, that would be inconvenient in the long run," Aldrian said. "Psychologically, the acting mayor would end up depending on me for decision-making whenever they face something they believe is too big for them to handle. I don't have the time to always take care of it."

"Also, the people of Caritas need to get used to not having me as their leader. I'm an outsider who happened to arrive in Caritas at the right time and took on the role of city lord. I have my own journey, so I can't always be there with them."

Marchioness Weimar sighed again.

"I see, then it can't be helped," she said.

They spoke for another hour before Aldrian left Weimar City, she looked at the spot where Aldrian had just stood, then bowed her head.

"Thank you for everything."

Chapter 509: Leaving Caritas

The next day, Aldrian was already prepared for his next journey—to the territory of the Buddhist sect. He had completed everything he needed to do in the Atria Empire, having said his goodbyes to the imperial family after visiting Marquess Weimar the day before.

Now, he stood with his group in front of the mansion. Many of the mansion's staff were gathered there to see him off, including guards, butlers, and maids. The thought that Aldrian would no longer be their lord saddened them deeply. They had come to see him as part of Caritas, and even part of their family.

"Have a safe trip, my lord. I hope you succeed in whatever you set out to do on your journey," said an old butler to Aldrian as he bowed.

"Thank you for all your help, Sir Olav," Aldrian replied. Sir Olav was the one who had mainly overseen the mansion's order. He was also one of the people Aldrian had saved from Marquess Parus when he first arrived in Caritas.

Aldrian then looked at the others, who were watching him with teary eyes.

"And to all of you, regardless of your position, thank you for your support and help while I stayed here."

All of these people were the ones Aldrian had saved from Parus, and they felt immense gratitude and loyalty toward him. They had always known that their lord would

eventually have to leave. He was from outside the empire, and he would not be here forever. He had his own business to attend to with his group, and they would not have the time to care for the city.

To think that the time had come so soon left them feeling a sense of sadness they couldn't shake. Many of them shed tears, but all of them wanted to see him and his group off personally. That was why they formed lines that stretched all the way to the mansion gates.

"Thank you, my lord. Have a safe journey."

"My lord, please visit us from time to time."

"My lord, please—"

"My lord—"

Many voices echoed as Aldrian and his group walked out of the mansion's front garden. Their voices could still be heard even as they walked quite far from the mansion. All of them waved their hands as they gathered at the mansion's gate, watching until Aldrian and his group disappeared from sight. They had to face the fact that they would soon be serving the new mayor, who would be chosen by Marchioness Weilmarr.

Once Aldrian was out of sight, they returned to their posts with heavy hearts. They would need to adjust to the new reality—that Aldrian was no longer the master of the mansion.

Aldrian and his group continued walking through the small forest area that separated the mansion from the rest of the city's districts. Suddenly, a few figures appeared not far from them, kneeling before Aldrian.

It was Arson Vuran and the Fingers.

"Master, are you leaving now?" Arson asked.

Aldrian nodded.

"Yes, as of now, your work in this city is done. You can return to your base, or you can stay here and continue as usual. If you want to stay I've already informed Marchioness Weilmarr about your group. She wants to use your group as shadow guardians in Caritas. Your group will become a separate organization from the city's authority, but you'll be expected to help maintain order in Caritas," he said.

"That will be the case unless there's a mission from me. If I call, you'll still be required to answer," he added.

Arson was stunned, but he nodded.

"Then we'll stay in this city. It's better this way. We won't have to rely entirely on assassination missions to operate as an organization. We can take advantage of the city's economy to gain resources more effectively, and it gives us a good base. So, there's nothing bad about it," he answered.

"Alright, you can meet with Marchioness Weimar when she visits Caritas in a few days. She will announce the new mayor of the city at that time," Aldrian said.

"Alright," Arson replied. "Have a safe trip, master."

"Have a safe trip, master!"

Arson said, followed by the other Fingers. Aldrian smiled at them and walked away, waving his hand as a sign of goodbye.

Aldrian and his group had covered themselves in robes that concealed their entire bodies and most of their faces, hiding from the gaze of others. Now that Aldrian was famous, they couldn't afford to act as indifferently as they had in the past. They didn't want to attract any unnecessary attention.

They walked through the bustling streets of Caritas, heading toward the teleportation station. The situation now was vastly different from when they first arrived in the city. There was no longer a gloomy or tense atmosphere. The threat of death and the tyranny of the second prince were gone. The city had regained its vitality, filled once again with the activities and happiness of its people.

They finally arrived at the teleportation station and chose their destination: one of the cities within the Buddhist sect territory, the one nearest to the western side of the Everlasting Silent Forest. From that city, they would need to use another teleportation portal to reach a town located near the border of the Everlasting Silent Forest.

From there, they would travel by conventional means to the Everlasting Silent Forest, where the secret realm of the Xin family was located.

After waiting for some time, their number was finally called. Each of them stepped into the teleportation portal, one by one, with Aldrian being the last to enter. Before stepping through, he took one last look at Caritas, leaving behind a memory of the place as he passed through the portal.

The Buddhist sect is one of the major powers on the continent, having been established at the same time as the other major powers in ancient times. Their territory is vast, and

like the territories of other powers, it is home to many cities and towns where people can live and carry out their activities.

The Buddhist sect's territory is not a place solely for Buddhist monks or those seeking to free themselves from mundane activities. There are still many economic and everyday activities within the territory, as, no matter what, they cannot entirely sever their connection with the other territories.

The difference is that those who manage these places are followers of the Buddhist sect, but not necessarily monks. They are individuals who wish to help spread the enlightenment of Buddha through their service. These followers have spent time within the Buddhist sect, learning from the monks there.

Another obvious difference is that when someone steps into the Buddhist sect's territory, they will encounter many monks. Well, this is not surprising, as it is their territory, but it can still be a new experience for some.

Buddhist monks are rare outside of the Buddhist sect's territory, with only those seeking experience or wishing to spread the teachings and enlightenment of Buddha venturing beyond its borders. The number of these traveling monks is minuscule compared to the population of monks within the main territory.

This was exactly what Aldrian saw the moment he stepped out of the teleportation portal in Dongtian City. Everywhere he looked, he saw monks in kasayas walking among the regular people.

The architectural style of the buildings in this city also resembled that of the demon territory, which intrigued Aldrian, making him wonder why that was the case.

He could also sense the serenity and peaceful atmosphere of the place, as if he had entered a space that relieved him of any weight on his shoulders. It felt as though he could forget all his mundane problems and simply stay here to seek enlightenment.

"Do you want to look around first, or do you want to head straight to the border?" Xin Haotian asked Aldrian and the others.

They had already left the teleportation station and were walking along the bustling streets. Xin Haotian knew that Sylphia and the others usually liked to explore whenever they arrived in a new place, so he asked them first.

Aldrian looked at Sylphia, Baek Jimin and Eleine. He could clearly see the curiosity in their eyes and how eager they were to explore. So, he turned to Xin Haotian.

"Well, I think we can look around first before continuing to the next town. I'm also curious about what this city is like. It feels very different from the other places we've visited," he said.

Xin Haotian nodded.

"Alright."

They then walked around the city without any specific destination, simply strolling wherever their feet took them. Even Xin Haotian, who had lived the longest among them, couldn't confidently say he knew the entire city, as he had only ever used it as a transit point during his travels to and from his family's secret realm.

After walking for more than four hours, they remarked that there were not as many entertainment places as in other cities in different territories. However, Aldrian understood that the Buddhist sect would not allow something like a brothel or anything too excessive within their territory.

After all, this place was a land of enlightenment for Buddha's teachings.

After they decided there was nothing else that interested them, they chose to continue their journey.

However, in the midst of their walk toward the teleportation station, Aldrian saw something that piqued his interest. He noticed a little girl, around six or seven years old, selling flower-shaped handicrafts to the people passing by. Although no one had bought her merchandise, she didn't give up offering her flowers with her delicate hand.

Without much thought, he approached the little girl.

Chapter 510: Flower Handicraft

"Flower handicrafts to beautify your room, to beautify anything! Fragrant flower handicrafts!"

The sweet voice of a little girl rang out as people passed by, offering her merchandise to them. However, no one seemed interested in buying, and they continued walking past her.

She stood there in plain attire, a flower in one hand, while many more filled the wicker container on her back.

Despite the lack of interest from passersby, she did not give up. She kept offering her flowers with a sweet smile. Her eyes then caught sight of someone approaching, and she thought this person might be interested in her merchandise. Hope filled her gaze—maybe this time, she would succeed.

When the robed figure stopped in front of her, she froze. Beneath the robe was a handsome young man. Even so, she didn't falter. She offered her merchandise with her brightest smile, holding out a flower toward him.

"Sir, would you like to buy it? It's just one silver coin," she said.

The figure looked at the flower in the girl's hand and picked it up. The figure, of course, none other than Aldrian.

To be honest, he felt pity for the child—having to do this at her age, when she should be enjoying her childhood. Scenes like this could sometimes be seen in other places as well, a reflection of the harsh realities and circumstances some people faced.

Aldrian looked at the flower for a moment. The handicraft was made from wood and crafted with beautiful detail. He looked at the child with a warm smile.

"Did you make this yourself?"

The child nodded.

"Yes, I made it myself. I like making things like this," she said.

By this time, Sylphia and the others had also approached. They looked at the girl and the merchandise she was trying to sell.

"A flower handicraft?" Sylphia said with curiosity as she looked at the flower in Aldrian's hand. But when she noticed its shape, her eyes widened.

"Isn't this the shape of the Full Moon Lily? The lily that only blossoms for one night under the full moon?" Sylphia then looked at Aldrian.

"And this flower only grows in one part of the Ivory Empire, so how did—" She stopped as her gaze shifted to the child.

Aldrian understood what Sylphia was trying to say. He looked at the child with the same curiosity. How could she know about a flower that only grows in the Ivory Empire? Judging by her age, he doubted she had ever visited the empire herself. That could only mean someone else—perhaps her parents—taught her about it.

He leaned toward the idea that it was her parents who knew.

But for them to recognize a flower that grew in such a specific part of the Ivory Empire, they could not be ordinary people.

Aldrian then took out a peak-level energy stone and handed it to the little girl.

"Well, I don't have any coins, but I think I can give you this. I think it's enough," he said.

The child's eyes widened as she looked at the energy stone in her palm. Her hand trembled slightly. She knew what an energy stone was—she had seen a few before—

and she understood how valuable they could be. But this one was far more beautiful than any she had ever seen. She looked uncertainly at Aldrian.

"Uhm... sir, you could buy all of my flowers with this, but I don't think they're worth that much. What you gave me is too valuable. I'd have to make many more flowers to match its value," she said.

Aldrian smiled gently at her.

"You don't have to make more. This stone is just for the one flower in my hand. But instead, I'd like to know about your parents." he asked.

But then he noticed her eyes turn slightly sad, and he immediately realized he had asked something painful. He felt a pang of guilt and wanted to apologize, but before he could, he heard her soft reply.

"Father is no more... it's just me and Mother."

Aldrian sighed inwardly.

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean to make you sad," he said.

The girl shook her head.

"It's okay, sir. I'm already used to it," she replied.

"If I may... may I meet your mother?" Sylphia suddenly asked. At the same time, she sent a voice transmission to Aldrian.

"I'm really curious about who her parents are. For a little girl to know about the Full Moon Lily—something that only grows in the eastern side of the Ivory Empire—is unusual. That lily grows inside the territory of a noble family known for being quite conservative. I don't think many humans even travel there, let alone have business with them. So I'm really curious about her identity. I doubt any humans would know about this flower at all."

Aldrian nodded. He was curious as well, and after Sylphia's explanation, his interest had only grown. But then they noticed the girl looking at Sylphia with an apologetic expression.

"Uhm... you can, Miss. But the problem is... Mother is really sick, and I don't know if she can receive you right now."

Aldrian raised his eyebrows but kept a warm smile.

"How fortunate. I'm a physician myself. Maybe I can help heal your mother," he said, which made the girl's eyes widen.

"Really?"

"Of course. So, could you take us to her? I'll check your mother's condition," Aldrian replied.

The girl's face lit up with joy.

"Of course! Let's go—I'll take you to her now."

She carefully stored the peak-level energy stone in the pouch at her waist and began walking, with Aldrian and the others following behind.

"What is your name?" Aldrian asked the little girl as they walked.

"My name is Evin Vicanton."

Aldrian nodded.

"All right, Evin. Is your family from around here?"

"No, we're from the Atria Empire. Because of the war, Mother and I escaped to this place."

Aldrian and the others were stunned. She was actually one of the refugees who had escaped from the Atria Empire because of the civil war.

"I see," he replied softly.

They continued walking until they reached a more secluded area of the city, where there were fewer people. The houses here seemed less maintained. It resembled a slum area, though it wasn't as chaotic as the slums in other places, where there was no order at all. Despite being a slum, the wooden houses were still neatly arranged side by side.

There was no garbage or anything to disturb the visual appearance, as if someone regularly cleaned the streets.

Evin led Aldrian and the others to one of the houses.

"Mother is inside," Evin said as she opened the door. Once Aldrian and the others stepped inside, they were greeted by a simple interior, exactly what they had expected. Evin then opened another door, which seemed to lead to a bedroom. When Aldrian and the others saw the room, they saw a blonde haired woman.

"Mother!" Evin exclaimed as she ran toward her mother and hugged her.

"Evin, my dear, what—?" At first, the woman smiled when she saw Evin, but then she froze when she realized there were other people in the house. Her gaze landed on Aldrian and the others, who were looking at her in astonishment.

She sat on her bed, a blanket covering half of her body. Her complexion was slightly pale, but it did not diminish the beauty of her face. However, there was something else that made Aldrian and the others widen their eyes when they saw her.

That was the pointy ears she had, a feature that revealed she was not human. Aldrian and the others were truly astonished—this woman was actually an elf.

They realized they were witnessing a rare case of a human and elf union. If Evin was the daughter of an elf mother but lacked any elf traits, it was safe to assume her father was human. In other words, Evin was mixed blood.

Sylphia, who had been staring at the elf in astonishment, suddenly felt that she recognized her face. She tried to recall where she had seen her before, but before she could remember, the elf spoke, smiling at them.

"My apologies, but it seems Evin brought you here due to her mischief. If you need to go, please feel free to do so," the woman said.

"No, mother! That sir said he is a physician, and I think he can cure you. Let him help you," Evin replied.

Her mother stared at Evin in surprise, then sighed.

"Evin, we don't have—"

"It's okay, miss," Aldrian interrupted. "I don't require any payment. I'm simply curious about Evin's parents. There's something that caught my interest—the flower handicraft she was trying to sell. My lover here noticed that Evin was selling flowers shaped like the Full Moon Lily, which only grows in the Ivory Empire. That piqued my curiosity, so I wanted to learn more about her parents and how they might know of it."

"I also heard that you are unwell. While I'm here, I can also check your condition. I'm offering my services freely, so you don't need to worry."

The elf was stunned. She looked at Evin, her expression strange, as if she had just heard something for the first time. Then, she turned to look at Aldrian.

Aldrian, confused by her reaction, paused for a moment before finally realizing the reason.

"Ah, she didn't know that Evin was selling those flower handicrafts," he thought.

Before the elf could say anything, Sylphia's voice suddenly rang out.

"I finally remember you."