

The Shining Star Above The Heaven - Chapter 581: Surprise! [1,604 words]

Chapter 581: Surprise!

The large group of devils moved toward the south. From the scale of their movement, it was clear they numbered in the tens of thousands. All of them were mobilized in an orderly manner, forming lines that stretched for tens of kilometres.

Leading these troops was a high emperor-stage devil, clad in a body armor.

He was a black-haired middle-aged man with sharp eyes. At that moment, his gaze was fixed on the movement of the giant tree heading in his direction. With how enormous the tree was, there was no way he, or anyone else could have failed to notice it earlier. Even now, the ground was still trembling slightly, and the rumbling continued as the tree drew closer.

He narrowed his eyes when he saw thousands of beasts following the giant tree, forming a spectacle that could intimidate anyone who saw it. Yet he showed no sign of concern and turned his attention back to his troops.

"Move to your positions! Prepare for battle! The enemy has come!" he shouted.

The devils behind him did not waste any time. All of them moved swiftly into position, forming a battle formation ready to face the incoming army or in this case, the approaching giant tree.

The devil troops also seemed to have something hidden up their sleeves. Behind their front lines, a separate group of devils began forming a large-scale formation. They worked quickly and with precision, ensuring that there was nothing wrong with the formation.

The leader from earlier then approached this formation. Reaching into his storage ring, he take out a red crystal the size of his thumb. Despite its small size, it emitted an otherworldly aura that made him and any devil nearby feel a deep reverence and an overwhelming urge to prostrate before it.

"Our lord only has a few of these. Most were used in the ritual for the Devil God, and one is actually being wasted on this formation. That alone shows how serious the threat of that tree is, enough that even our lord would use one just to accelerate this summoning and call forth a more powerful being," the devil commander thought.

He then placed the crystal at the center of the formation and stepped out. With a signal, the summoning process began. The formation suddenly lit up with an ominous red glow. The aura it released was terrifying, even causing some of the devils activating it to break into goosebumps.

The commander nodded in satisfaction as he observed it. They still had time before the tree reached their position. According to their plan, the summoned being would face the tree, clearly the strongest being among the approaching army.

As for the thousands of beasts, those could be dealt with later. Their main target was the World Tree.

He then returned to the front line to observe the incoming tree, but what he saw left him confused. The large group advancing with the World Tree had suddenly stopped moving. He narrowed his eyes, and shortly after, he noticed something rapidly approaching his direction.

It was the silhouette of a man, teleporting forward in bursts, each time reappearing a quite distance ahead, until he was dangerously close to their line. The devil commander narrowed his eyes again, and at last, from this distance, he could clearly see the man's face.

The man's eyes were closed, but the commander didn't care about that. He was in shock, he never expected to see *that* man here. This man was the one his lord had warned him about. The most dangerous figure on the continent. The only person capable of interfering with their plan.

"That's Aldrian! Damn it, he's with the tree?!"

This wasn't part of their plan. There was no scenario prepared for Aldrian appearing alongside the World Tree.

"Shit, the summoning still takes time! Then there's only one thing left to do," he thought before shouting to his entire army.

"All troops, attac—"

BOOM!

Rumble!

His words were cut off mid-sentence as the giant tree suddenly appeared right in front of him, tearing through the land and throwing everything into chaos. The battle lines

collapsed instantly, the troops couldn't even stay on their feet. The violent tremor caused by the tree's abrupt arrival triggered a catastrophic earthquake across the area.

The commander, who was floating above the ground, wasn't affected by the collapsing land, but he was blasted back by the violent wind stirred up by the tree's sudden appearance. He didn't even have time to be shocked, it was as if the tree had teleported from a distance and appeared right there in an instant.

Worst of all, many beasts had appeared as well, making the situation even more incomprehensible.

Only after a few seconds did he finally show his shock, as the giant tree's roots began their rampage, blasting apart everything in the vicinity.

"Everyone!—"

Whack!

Before he could even give his order, a massive root struck him with full force, instantly destroying his head in a single blow. He had no chance to react, the roots moved too fast, and they were already too close.

What followed was pure carnage. The devil troops were helpless against the sudden onslaught. The summoning process was still incomplete when the roots reached the formation and tore it apart. The roots, moving like whips and serpents, destroyed everything they touched.

The beasts that most of them at king stage, with many at emperor stage, also began their rampage the moment they appeared, slaughtering the devil troops who were caught off guard by the sudden teleportation. There was no way these devils, most of whom had cultivation levels below king stage, could defend themselves against such powerful enemies.

With the added element of surprise, the devils had no chance to retaliate. They were butchered without mercy.

Aldrian, the figure who had made this entire attack possible, looked toward a certain direction behind the devil troops' line and clicked his tongue.

"I'm sure I sensed him there a moment ago. He must have escaped the instant he snapped out of his shock," he thought, a regretful expression on his face.

"Truly decisive. No hesitation at all."

Earlier, there was a presence he recognized from the memories of devils he had seen in the past, which made him familiar with it.

One of the Seven Deadly Sins—Wrath.

He hadn't expected the Wrath Devil to be part of this devil army. From the looks of it, this force had been assembled specifically to confront the appearance of the World Tree.

However, he smiled at the thought that these devils believed their plan would unfold as intended.

When he saw the large devil troops approaching in the distance, he knew they had already spotted the World Tree from afar. They must have prepared something for it, judging by the size of the army and the way the Devil Lord's mind worked.

Aldrian was certain the Devil Lord would never leave an existence like Vireline out of his calculations. This massive army was likely one of his methods to deal with the World Tree.

But would he let the Devil Lord's plans succeed?

Of course not.

What he had in mind was a surprise attack that would end the battle before the devil army even realized what had happened.

Did this army intend to stop the World Tree? Then he would bring the World Tree directly in front of them.

Earlier, he had ordered Vireline and the beasts to stop, then explained that he would teleport the World Tree along with a few hundred beasts right in front of the devil troops. The beasts, having already seen the enemy lines and eager to fight, quickly agreed to Aldrian's plan. This way, they could start the battle immediately.

He had then created his domain in place. After that, he teleported forward to approach the devil troops and built another domain here. Using his domain ability, he teleported every being within the earlier domain, including the World Tree and the beasts into the new one, placing them right in front of the devil army.

This was also the first time he had teleported something as large as the World Tree using his domain ability. With this, he confirmed that he *could* teleport something as massive as the World Tree through his domain.

The battle did not last long. Their surprise attack was a complete success, and shortly after the teleportation, the tens of thousands of devil troops were completely wiped out. There were not even any casualties among the beasts, which was not surprising, given the advantage of surprise and the difference in power.

Aldrian nodded in satisfaction. The power of the World Tree was truly terrifying. Nothing could withstand the might of a peak emperor stage World Tree. Each strike of her roots was enough to kill even high emperor stage devils in a single blow. Each of her roots was capable of wiping out hundreds of devils in one sweep.

These devils never stood a chance from the beginning.

His gaze shifted to the shattered ground where the summoning formation had been. He had sensed a powerful aura when the devils attempted to summon something earlier, and now he could feel a lingering presence beneath the rubble, one that stirred deep anger within him.

He teleported to the spot where he sensed the disturbance, then cleared away part of the broken ground until he uncovered the object that ignited his fury.

He picked up a red crystal radiating a strong aura, and as he focused on it, his frown deepened.

"This..."

The Shining Star Above The Heaven - Chapter 582: No Matter How Much Sacrifice...[1,616 words]

Chapter 582: No Matter How Much Sacrifice...

The red crystal actually contained strong negative energy of the devil, but its quality was vastly different from normal devil energy. What he sensed was similar to what he had felt when he saw *that thing* during his meeting with the heavenly demon.

"Is this Tarius' energy?" Aldrian thought.

Even just looking at it, fury stirred in his heart. He had known since that meeting with the heavenly demon that a special hatred for devils or anything related to Tarius had taken root inside him.

After learning what had happened to this universe and the fate of his many followers, his fury only deepened. That Tarius and those invaders had already become his targets for the future. Now that he held one of the invaders' energy in his hand, he couldn't help but feel that rage rising again.

He then looked at the information of the crystal to understand what this thing was.

Tarius' Crystal of Divinity

Description: The crystal that contained the dense accumulation of Tarius's energy. Containing his pure divine energy and aura, this crystal has many uses.

True to his guess, the energy inside the crystal actually belonged to Tarius. He frowned more deeply. If Tarius's divine energy could slip into this continent, then what did that mean? It meant that the devils not only had summoning beasts from the higher heavens, they might also possess items from there.

"This is much worse than I thought. Does that mean the devil lord has actually had a supply from the higher heavens all this time?" Aldrian thought.

"Did he already have this kind of item for a long time, or did he get it only recently?"

If the second guess was true, then the problem was actually far more dire. That would mean the devil lord and a higher being from the heavens could somehow communicate and even send items from the higher heavens!

This crystal of divinity that contained Tarius' energy was a clear example.

"I have to be quick."

He then stored Tarius's Crystal of Divinity inside his storage ring and looked toward Vireline and the beasts. By this time, the rest of the beasts that were not included in his earlier teleportation had also reached them.

"Vireline, I have a task for you," he said to Vireline, who appeared to be observing the horizon. Once she heard Aldrian's voice, she instantly moved closer and answered him.

"What is your task, my lord?"

"I want you to take the beast army and move west from here for a thousand kilometres before continuing your advance to the black pillar. Help the alliance forces by weakening the devils' troops or clearing their path," Aldrian said.

"It seems I have to go alone this time, as I need to be quick," he added, pausing slightly as he remembered something.

"However, be careful when you advance toward the black pillar. I can imagine the devil lord has something prepared as a plan B in case his troops fail to stop you. Be cautious with every terrain you pass through."

"I will not disappoint you in my task, and I will be careful, my lord," answered Vireline.

Aldrian nodded and looked at the beasts.

"You all, don't stray too far from the tree. Don't underestimate the devils from the devil lord's side. Once your arrogance consumes you, you'll die because of your own stupidity and carelessness. Is that clear?!" he shouted.

"Yes, my lord!" the beasts answered in unison.

Aldrian nodded once more and disappeared. After he vanished, Vireline looked at the beasts, including those that had just arrived at the location.

"Let's go! Don't waste any more time. We have a task to do," she said, as the rumbling and trembling ground continued beneath their march westward, just as Aldrian had instructed.

Ten thousand kilometres away, a tall, burly figure stood alone in the middle of a quiet desert environment. His short red hair looked like a flickering flame, and the large axe strapped to his back was truly intimidating. However, the usual fierceness on his face was nowhere to be seen, replaced by a wary expression as he scanned his surroundings.

Only after he confirmed that nothing seemed out of place did he let out a sigh of relief.

"It's safe here, right? I don't think that man will follow me here," he thought.

He was actually the Wrath Devil, the one who had escaped from the devil troops that were annihilated by the World Tree. He hadn't expected something that massive to suddenly teleport right in front of their lines. He didn't even have time to react, he had chosen to

escape, knowing it would be too dangerous to face both the World Tree and Aldrian at the same time.

No matter how strong he was right now, there was no way he could face the two of them at the same time. He hadn't hesitated to use an escape talisman, and even now, he had to keep moving to make sure Aldrian wasn't following him.

He already knew how strong Aldrian was and had prepared himself to fight him if the chance ever came, but the situation just now was different. He truly hadn't expected Aldrian to be capable of teleporting something as massive as the World Tree.

He believed it had to be Aldrian's technique, that was the only explanation that made sense for such a sudden teleportation.

He took out a communication artifact and began establishing a connection with someone.

"My apologies, my lord, but Plan B2 has failed. There was an unexpected factor, my lord..." he said, then proceeded to explain what had happened to the devil troops assigned to confront the World Tree. After he finished, there was a brief pause.

"You may return to your original post. Just send the underlings to face the incoming armies until they reach the line of fog. Those formations will be enough to hold them until the portal is fully open," said the voice, which actually belonged to the devil lord.

"Understood, my lord."

The Wrath Devil then cut off the communication and immediately moved toward the area near the black pillar.

"It looks like our lord will be sacrificing many of our underlings. There's no way they can hold off Aldrian or that tree," he thought.

However, he knew this was something they needed to do—they had to use whatever they could to slow down the advance of the tree or Aldrian, even if it meant sacrificing thousands or even millions of troops.

"I hope there's a chance to battle him in the near future. I'm truly curious how he'll fare against my axe technique," he thought one last time as he flew at full speed toward his designated position.

The devil lord, having just received the report, stored his communication artifact and considered the situation.

"Well, that was quite unexpected, the tree is actually in the same place as that Aldrian. What did he do to make the tree finally move?" he thought, his gaze still fixed on the giant altar.

"Whatever. If those two are together, then in the worst case, I'll have to summon the rest of the Seven Deadly Sins to face them. There will come a time when Aldrian is overwhelmed and runs out his hidden cards."

He set aside those thoughts and continued to smile as he looked at the black pillar.

Aldrian, who had already separated from the World Tree's group, had teleported far away and was steadily approaching the horizon where the black pillar stood. As he continued teleporting, he encountered another group, thousands of devils who appeared to be setting up a large camp.

Wasting no time, he appeared near the devils' camp, swiftly created his domain, and unleashed his power upon them.

The ground around the camp began to tremble. A massive chunk of land suddenly rose into the air. The devils, some of them already at the king and emperor stage, flew up in shock as the land beneath their camp started floating.

They turned toward the figure that had suddenly appeared nearby.

"That's Aldrian!"

"Attack with everything you've got! He's in the middle of executing his technique, he can't defend himself!"

They did not hesitate to attack, unleashing elemental strikes and activating their artifacts. But before their attacks could reach Aldrian, a spatial crack appeared and swallowed everything.

The devils, not expecting Aldrian to still be capable of defense, were stunned, only for heavenly lightning to burst forth from behind the spatial crack, carrying the power to obliterate everything in its path.

"Evade!" shouted one of the low emperor-stage devils.

But it was too late. The heavenly lightning, charged with power equivalent to the high emperor stage, struck their bodies before they could react.

In an instant, the lightning scorched the king- and emperor-stage devils to ash, while Aldrian continued lifting the entire devil camp into the air using his gravity laws.

The devils trapped on the floating land couldn't escape, as they had already been lifted high into the sky and most of them couldn't fly, except for a few desperate duke and grand duke stage devils. Those who managed to flee from the floating land were instantly struck by heavenly lightning, their bodies reduced to ashes.

Once the floating land rose to a height of about a kilometre, Aldrian ignited it with flames and let it free fall.

A thunderous crash followed as the massive chunk of land slammed into the earth, shaking the ground with a deafening roar. But by then, Aldrian had already vanished, continuing his journey, leaving only destruction in his wake.

The Shining Star Above The Heaven - Chapter 583: Time Keeps Ticking[1,570 words]

Chapter 583: Time Keeps Ticking

Aldrian kept teleporting without pause toward his destination. With his cultivation now at the middle grand duke stage, he had far more energy and endurance than in the past. He could teleport much farther and hold out longer before needing rest. Every time he rested, he would create his domain and immediately continue his journey.

He maintained this pace for almost a week. Along the way, he encountered many devil troops, and each time, he annihilated them without exception. Occasionally, he glanced at the black pillar to observe the portal opening, and with each passing day, the portal appeared to open faster. This was truly concerning, and it pushed him to avoid wasting any time as he pressed forward toward the black pillar.

Aldrian was not the only one increasing his pace. The rest of the alliance forces also moved faster toward the black pillar. They had already encountered millions of devils over the past week and had engaged in several battles. Many troops had been lost, but they kept advancing. Fortunately, even now, reinforcements continued to arrive from the rear lines in the form of volunteers.

There were still many who wanted to join the alliance. If not for the fact that they had to start the invasion much earlier than planned, they would have had far more troops by

now. After each battle, the alliance forces had little time to rest before continuing their journey.

The leaders of each major territory had already been warned by Aldrian that the portal was opening at a faster rate each day, which caused concern. That was why they did not waste time and even pushed many beast mounts to work harder than usual.

They knew this method would cause the troops' fatigue to accumulate quickly and affect their performance in the war, but they had no choice. They were being chased by time.

Battle, rest for a few hours, continue the journey. Battle, rest, continue again. That was their routine every day, and it had already become a normal activity. Time passed, and another week went by. At this point, Aldrian was the closest among the alliance forces to the black pillar.

The portal had grown enormous, its size now far greater than the sky above the entire devil territory. Even the skies over the Doria and Vindas Empires had begun to be swallowed by it. It was as if another world, hidden behind the darkness of the void, had opened for the entire continent to see.

In fact, this phenomenon could be seen across the world, not just on the Barisan continent.

The portal had even begun to block out the sun in some parts of the continent, casting those regions into darkness. That void in the sky, radiated a terrifying aura that could be felt in many places throughout the land.

Everyone who saw it felt a chill, thinking that the devil god might descend at any moment, given the sheer size of the portal.

In a moment like this, many could only pray and hope for the best for the alliance troops still struggling in devil territory. However, many had also begun to fall into despair, believing there was no way to stop whatever might emerge from that portal.

Some of those who fell into despair started causing a ruckus, which only worsened the already tense situation. Fortunately, enforcers were still present in each territory to deal with such problems, so things had not yet spiraled out of control. But many of these enforcers knew the situation was far from optimistic, and that the unrest might grow worse as time went on.

Those who harbored dark desires in their hearts could be pushed to act if they fell into despair. All the enforcers from each territory could do was offer the people hope and optimism, even though they themselves didn't know if they were already too late.

However, only the leaders knew that the portal wasn't yet fully complete. According to what they had seen from Aldrian's illusion, it still needed to open much wider.

There was still time to stop this!

At this moment, the troops led by Patriarch Xin of the Xin family were still advancing toward their destination. In this group marched the Xin family, the Rivas family, the Thorny Flower Garden Sect, and many noble houses and volunteer groups.

They kept advancing when Patriarch Xin spotted another large group of devils. Because the devil territory was mostly flat and lacked obstructions like tall trees, he could easily see far across the horizon. Moreover, as the cultivator with the highest level in the group, he possessed the sharpest senses and clearest sight.

Even sometimes, before the scouts positioned far ahead of the main force could return with their reports, he had already seen what lay ahead.

The sight of devil troops lining the horizon made Patriarch Xin sigh quietly.

"Those devils... they're like cockroaches. Endless." he thought.

He turned to look at the troops following behind him.

"Prepare for battle! There's a large group of devils!" he shouted, prompting the troops to ready themselves for the incoming fight. They quickly formed into an orderly formation, but suddenly—

Rumble!

A tremor shook the ground, as if an earthquake had struck the area. The alliance troops, caught off guard, dropped to the ground, unable to keep their balance. Those at the emperor and king stage instantly lifted themselves into the air, floating. Patriarch Xin, too, floated, but in the same moment, he unsheathed his sword and unleashed a technique just ahead of the front lines.

With his light laws infused into the slash, the sword strike tore through the land, creating a massive crater that stretched for six kilometers. The ground shattered, and began to split apart, when suddenly, a loud shrieking voice echoed from beneath the earth.

Shieek!

A painful shriek echoed through the air, and suddenly, the giant body of a snake burst out from underground. The black snake emerged, but its head had already been severely wounded by a sword slash, nearly splitting it in two.

Patriarch Xin didn't hesitate. He unleashed another attack, and the second strike decapitated the beast, killing it instantly.

The troops stared in shock and awe. They immediately understood that this snake had been the cause of the earthquake just moments ago.

"What is that?"

"That's a black rock snake. Its head gave it away."

"Did that thing bury itself underground to ambush us? Damn... truly terrifying. If we'd moved a little closer, we would've been dead before we even knew what hit us."

Voices of alarm and disbelief echoed among the troops, but Patriarch Xin kept his eyes on the corpse of the black rock snake. It had high emperor stage cultivation. If he hadn't sensed something was wrong beneath the ground and acted instantly, it could have caused the deaths of thousands.

"Good job, Commander. Luckily, you sensed it quickly and didn't hesitate," said one of the middle emperor stage cultivators from the Doria Imperial Family.

"Don't get too happy. The devil troops are still out there," Patriarch Xin replied, narrowing his eyes at the distant enemy line.

"This is the first time we've encountered a beast laying an ambush like that. The devils might have more traps hidden around here. We have to stay alert."

Just as Patriarch Xin finished speaking, a group of five wyverns appeared in the distance. Before long, the wyverns landed in front of him and five black robed figures jumped down from their backs. They were scouts assigned to reconnaissance, and all of them dropped to their knees as their leader began to report.

"Reporting! The devils seem to be summoning a beast behind their lines. There are noticeable figures among them. We suspect that—"

Before the man could finish his report, Patriarch Xin drew his sword and, in a flash, decapitated him, along with the entire recon team.

Gasps erupted from the troops. The higher ups of each battalion stared wide eyed, stunned. No one had expected their commander to kill his own men.

"Commander, why are you—"

"They were already dead." Before one of the battalion commanders could finish protesting, a middle emperor stage cultivator in front of him cut him off.

Hearing the interruption and the blunt explanation, the commander grew furious.

"Of course they were already dead! They just—"

"They were already dead since earlier."

He was cut off again, but this time, his eyes widened at the words.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"This group of recon scouts is actually undead. Do you understand?"

Hearing the answer, he and the others near him widened their eyes in shock, they hadn't expected that the recon group just now was undead. They truly thought the men were alive and reporting the situation as usual, but this emperor stage cultivator was saying they had already become undead?

They turned to look at the corpses of the recon team and couldn't help but be stunned. When Patriarch Xin tore part of the robes from each of the bodies, they saw fatal wounds in their chests. At that moment, they finally understood, these men had already been dead because of those wounds.

They truly hadn't been able to tell the difference between the undead and the living just now!

Which meant only one thing: there was a highly skilled necromancer among the devil troops this time.

The Shining Star Above The Heaven - Chapter 584: One Person Army[1,664 words]

Chapter 584: One Person Army

Patriarch Xin observed the corpses, then shifted his gaze to the devil troops in the distance. This would be the first time his troops faced a necromancer, and it seemed to be a powerful one. He had already noticed something was wrong with the recon team for several reasons.

The most obvious was their attire. The recon team wore robes that covered their entire bodies, something they had never done since the war began. While some might argue the change in clothing was a decision made by the recon group themselves, Patriarch Xin saw it as a red flag that immediately raised his suspicion.

The second reason, one that could also be detected by other emperor-stage cultivators with keen senses was the strange aura emanating from the bodies of the undead. The undead naturally exude a kind of aura that feels cold to the living, though the intensity of it depends on the condition of the undead themselves.

The aura could be extremely subtle, detectable only by emperor stage cultivators or it could be sensed even by those at lower cultivation levels. For the aura to be faint enough that only emperor stage cultivators could detect it, the corpse must have been recently deceased, and the necromancer controlling it must be highly skilled.

Patriarch Xin had already heard of a necromancer, who was also a summoner, from the devil's side who needed to be watched closely during this invasion. One of the Seven Deadly Sins—Sloth.

If there was even a chance that she was among this devil troop, then—

Roar!

A beast's roar suddenly echoed from beside the devil troops. A massive creature appeared out of nowhere, and it was immediately clear that it had been summoned through a formation or some kind of technique. But then, all the alliance troops felt a chill. The aura radiating from the beast had reached the peak emperor stage!

Also, the beast that appeared could not be underestimated, as it was a four headed hydra.

Shriek!

But the shock did not end there. Suddenly, behind the hydra, another beast appeared, and this one instantly soared into the sky. It had the strength of a high emperor stage, and being an avian-type beast, the alliance troops immediately recognized it as a roc.

The alliance troops who witnessed the appearance of these beasts felt a chill. These were not ordinary creatures, they were powerful beasts whose legends had long been known.

The fact that the devils had summoned them now meant that this battle would become the toughest they had faced since the beginning of the invasion.

Patriarch Xin narrowed his eyes and looked to his side, toward a middle emperor-stage cultivator from the Doria Imperial Family.

"Bring four middle emperor-stage cultivators and hold off that roc. I'll take care of the hydra," he said, his gaze returning to the towering figure of the hydra.

"I might also end up facing the necromancer myself."

Hearing that, the cultivator from the Imperial Family opened his mouth, wanting to persuade him, but stopped himself and simply replied,

"Yes, Commander."

Without delay, he carried out the order, quickly selecting four other middle emperor-stage cultivators.

"Uwooo!"

Rumble!

Suddenly, a war cry erupted from the devil troops as they began their charge toward the alliance forces. The hydra and the roc also surged forward, and with every movement of the hydra, the ground trembled beneath its massive steps.

As the devil troops drew closer, the higher ups in the alliance caught sight of something in the enemy lineup, and they couldn't hide their shock.

"Those are... those are all undead!"

"What? That many?! How many is that? It must be tens of thousands!"

Gasps and cries of disbelief spread among the alliance ranks as they realized that the incoming wave was made up entirely of undead. Their pale skin was unmistakable, and many bore a gruesome appearance, bloodied, dirt covered, and clearly reanimated from the battlefield.

Patriarch Xin also clearly saw that the incoming army was made up of undead, charging at them at high speed. However, his expression did not change. He had prepared for the worst from the start, and from the looks of it, he would have to fight seriously now to ensure their troops did not suffer heavy losses.

He might even need to use his full strength, as it was likely he would face the necromancer, who was also the summoner, possibly the Sloth devil herself.

An undead force of this scale, combined with the summoned beasts, was something only she could accomplish.

Despite the chill that gripped their hearts, the alliance troops quickly readied themselves. The five middle emperor stage cultivators immediately flew forward to intercept the roc, while Patriarch Xin stood far ahead of the frontline, preparing to meet the hydra head on.

The four headed hydra reared back, preparing to attack as black flames gathered in each of its mouths. A moment later, it unleashed a torrent of flame, its breath attack sweeping toward the alliance troops. This flame could annihilate even high emperor-stage cultivators, burning them like ants caught in a blaze.

The alliance forces knew well the despair carried within the hydra's breath. But just before the attack could reach them—

Swhoosh!

A sword slash filled with radiant light cut through the air, illuminating the battlefield for a brief moment. The energy of the slash split the flames in two and continued forward, striking the hydra's massive body.

Slash!

The hydra's flesh was cut, but only slightly, leaving behind a shallow wound. Even so, the beast let out a furious roar.

Roar!

"Ant! How dare you hurt me!" one of the hydra's heads roared, glaring at Patriarch Xin, who stood firm after unleashing his sword strike.

Patriarch Xin showed little expression. Without a word, he slashed again, this time with even more power. But the hydra was ready. All four heads breathed black flame toward the incoming sword energy.

The two attacks collided, causing a violent explosion. The flames spread across the ground, and the undead were the ones who suffered the most. Many were instantly engulfed and reduced to ashes, but the rest showed no reaction. They continued charging at the alliance troops without hesitation.

Moments later, the two armies finally clashed.

The ground split. Winds howled. Flames raged. Waves surged. Every element erupted as cultivators unleashed their techniques all at once. The battlefield descended into chaos, a storm of power and destruction on all sides.

The roc, which had been aiming to strike the alliance troops, was already intercepted by the five middle emperor stage cultivators. Although they were far weaker than the beast, their coordination and teamwork allowed them to disrupt its attack and movements. With enough effort and a luck, they might even find an opening to kill it.

While they worked together to contain the roc, Patriarch Xin continued facing the hydra alone. Even as he fought, he swept his gaze across the battlefield, searching for the summoner. He had not yet unleashed his full strength, what he needed now was to hold the hydra in place until he could locate the summoner.

And it did not take long.

At the far rear of the devil forces, far from the the front lines, he spotted her. A transparent carriage stood there, detached from the chaos. Inside, he saw a woman lounging lazily, watching the battle unfold as if it were nothing more than a spectacle.

Upon finding his target, Patriarch Xin finally unleashed a far greater power. His body suddenly radiated with brilliant light, illuminating the battlefield. The energy pouring from him was terrifying, enough to make even the hydra regard him with solemn caution.

In the next instant, slashes of light shot out in every direction, like a rain of blades.

Every undead struck by the light was instantly cut down. One beam even severed one of the hydra's heads, forcing the beast to scream in agony. No one could stop the light, it moved with a speed that none of them could follow.

The barrage continued toward the distant carriage. But just before the light could reach it—

Boom!

A shield shaped like a turtle shell suddenly appeared, intercepting the strike. The impact blew wind in every direction, tearing apart the ground beneath it.

"You're truly rude, to attack so suddenly like that." A woman's voice echoed as the turtle shell shaped shield vanished.

Patriarch Xin frowned slightly but quickly composed himself. He realized she had used a defensive artifact to block his strike.

The wind from the impact had blown away the carriage's curtain, finally revealing the figure inside. A beautiful woman with long purple hair lay lazily on a sofa within the carriage, her head resting on the armrest.

Her voluptuous figure was barely concealed by her scant attire, enough to stir desire in any man who looked her way. But Patriarch Xin showed no reaction. He looked at her calmly.

This was the woman so many had described as a one person army—one of the Seven Deadly Sins.

The Sloth Devil.

"You seem awfully relaxed for someone with death approaching," Patriarch Xin said, his voice filled with confidence.

But the Sloth Devil didn't seem to take his words to heart. She slowly floated out of the carriage and gently touched the ground. Suddenly, a circle of red light appeared around her.

Patriarch Xin attempted to strike to stop her, but once again, the turtle shell barrier blocked his attack. At the same moment, another beast emerged from the very spot where she touched the ground.

It was a chimera, radiating the power of a high emperor stage beast, causing Patriarch Xin's brows to knit into a frown.

"We don't know that just yet," the Sloth Devil's voice echoed casually, as the chimera lunged at him.

From behind, the hydra also attack with its flame. Now, Patriarch Xin was surrounded, caught between the attacks of two powerful spiritual beasts.

Boom!

The Shining Star Above The Heaven - Chapter 585: I'm Sorry, Good Bye[1,762 words]

In another part of the battlefield, the battle had broken out fiercely. In this area, a group from the Thorny Flower Garden could be seen fighting with their unique techniques. Baek Jimin was also showcasing her prowess, proving why she was called a genius of the Thorny Flower Garden.

The icy flame froze the undead the moment it touched them, shattering some into pieces. Her white flame raged across the battlefield, but since many of the undead were far stronger than her, several elders from her sect stepped in to protect her.

As a middle Earl stage cultivator, she was strong enough to face peak Earl stage opponents. However, in this battle, many of the undead were at the Marquess stage or even higher.

Moreover, some of the undead were actually figures that once known as powerful and brilliant cultivators during their lifetimes, which shocked many on the battlefield. No one had expected that these famous figures, once believed to be lost to time, would reappear as undead.

"He was Andrey Asimov, the young master of the Asimov family! Be careful with his spear technique—he was a genius with the spear!"

"That's Alex Goldensky! He was famous for his fast sword. Don't try to follow his speed it unless you want to die!"

"She was..."

Many who recognized the identities of the undead quickly shouted warnings to those who tried to fight them. Earlier, when the armies clashed, these undead figures immediately claimed the lives of many alliance soldiers with their overwhelming strength.

Baek Jimin did her best, striking down the undead to prevent them from overwhelming the alliance's defensive line. She used her palm, which exuded white icy flame, to unleash bursts of fire toward the incoming undead. Any undead at the Earl stage could not withstand it once touched.

Looking at the mass of enemies, she unleashed one of her techniques—a tornado that erupted from her palm.

The white icy tornado caused the temperature to plummet in the area. It tore through the undead formation, and freezing ice spread across nearly three kilometers. Any undead not strong enough were instantly frozen and shattered by the storm.

While she was still battling, she suddenly heard a commotion nearby and saw an undead being attacked from all sides. This undead was at the low Emperor stage and had already

been surrounded by several low Emperor stage cultivators from their side. However, he seemed far too strong. Despite being alone in the midst of many enemies, he held his ground with ease.

The undead was on the ground, and all the Emperor stage cultivators kept their distance, wary of his strength. He was using demonic energy, and his techniques were powerful, so much so that he had already killed two King stage cultivators and a low Emperor stage cultivator from the alliance.

Baek Jimin looked toward the battle and narrowed her eyes. She couldn't help but feel that something about this undead was strangely familiar. The release of demonic energy itself didn't surprise her, the necromancer could easily turn any corpse, including a demonic cultivator, into an undead.

But the thing was, the demonic energy radiating from this man felt familiar.

She struck down an incoming undead that charged at her, freezing and shattering it without even sparing a glance, then began moving toward the battlefield where that undead was fighting.

She didn't know why, but her heart began to beat faster as she approached the battle site. A few moments later, when she got close enough to see the face of the undead surrounded by many people, her eyes widened and began to tremble.

Suddenly, a wave of memories from her past surged through her mind like a tidal wave. There was a time when her family was whole, when they could show their love for one another freely. A time when her life felt filled with happiness, untouched by misery or burden. A time when she believed nothing would change, that they would live together, happily, forever.

All of that changed when her father disappeared, his fate unknown. Her life, and her mother's, had never been the same since. Though the signs of life still suggested he was somewhere out there, she and her mother had long prepared themselves for the worst.

And now, standing here, she could no longer hold back her tears. She covered her mouth with one hand as they welled up and streamed down her cheeks.

Because the undead surrounded by so many people, the one holding his ground alone was the very man who made all those memories possible.

"Father," she murmured.

A handsome man wielding a sword stood steadily, his calm eyes fixed on his opponents. His long black hair was swept by the wind, and though his robes were dirty, they still bore the symbol of the Thorny Flower Garden.

"Father!"

Baek Jimin could no longer hold herself back. She leapt toward her father, but before she could reach him, a hand grabbed her, stopping her from getting too close.

"Young Miss, that is no longer Lord Donghyun. He doesn't remember any of us, don't let his appearance make you reckless!" said one of the elders holding her back.

Hearing the elder's words, her tears flowed even harder, and she couldn't help but grit her teeth. She wanted to call out to her father, but then, he looked in her direction.

She froze, stunned, hoping, believing, that he might recognize her.

But instead, he turned his gaze elsewhere, as if she meant nothing to him.

And in that moment, her heart ached more than ever.

She wanted to shout, but stopped herself when she saw another figure making an entrance. The figure landed not far in front of her father.

Her beautiful face showed little expression, but her trembling eyes betrayed the truth. Tears threatened to fall, but she held them back with all her strength as she looked at the man standing before her, the man she had loved in the past and still loved to this day.

Baek Jimin watched the scene unfold, and her heart crumbled. Her mother had finally come face to face with the man she loved most, yet not in the way they had ever wished.

The man who once smiled so brightly whenever he saw his wife... was gone.

Now, even when his eyes met Sect Master Baek's, his expression remained blank.

And in that moment, Baek Jimin knew.

The man standing before them was no longer the father she had once known.

"Sect Master, be careful! That is not Lord Donghyun from the past! He doesn't remember anyone, he'll attack and kill without hesitation!" shouted one of the elders who was also helping to besiege Lord Donghyun.

Sect Master Baek didn't respond. She simply looked at the man she had loved so deeply. Lord Donghyun stared back at her with an expressionless face.

The two of them stood still, unmoving in the chaos of the battlefield. But then, without warning, Lord Donghyun made his move. In a sudden burst of speed, he charged and swung his sword at Sect Master Baek.

She stood her ground, unmoving, even as the blade neared her neck.

And just before it could touch her—

Stab!

Sect Master Baek's hand pierced straight into Donghyun's shoulder, her arm buried deep into the wound. With her other hand, she grabbed his wrist, stopping the sword mid swing. Her eyes remained locked on his, never wavering.

For her, a High Emperor stage cultivator, following the movements of her husband, who only at the Low Emperor stage was effortless.

Although Donghyun tried to push himself with all his strength, he couldn't overpower Sect Master Baek. She held him firmly in place, and after a few moments of silence, she finally opened her lips.

"You know, since you disappeared, my life has been like hell," she said in a sad tone. Her gaze finally showed emotion as her eyes began to water.

"I felt like I lost half of my soul... and I lost myself. I'm not who I used to be."

"There was a time when I wished for everything to end. I wanted to escape this nightmare, and I could wake up with you by my side." Her voice grew more melancholic as she spoke.

"But reality has been truly cruel to me. I had to accept that I must live on without knowing your fate... without ever feeling your touch again."

She then turned to look in Baek Jimin's direction. Baek Jimin blinked, slightly stunned by her mother's sudden glance.

Sect Master Baek finally showed a smile as she continued.

"Then I knew I couldn't drown in despair forever. I still had the fruit of our love to protect, our pride, who will carry on our legacy." Her lips trembled slightly as she fought to hold back her tears.

"Now she's already grown into a beautiful woman, and she even has someone she loves. He's actually the most outstanding young man... truly worthy of our daughter. You would have liked him if you had the chance to meet him."

Baek Jimin's figure suddenly appeared near her father. The elder who had been holding her seemed to let go, now watching them with a sorrowful expression.

Baek Jimin looked at her father, her eyes filled with tears. She bit her lip, then, without hesitation, embraced him tightly.

"Father," she said in a trembling voice, choked with sobs.

Her daughter's voice finally caused Sect Master Baek's tears to fall, the pain in her heart becoming unbearable. They had reunited, but not in the way they had ever hoped for.

Her gaze returned to Donghyun, and her expression grew firm. Without hesitation, she pulled his body closer and gently pressed her forehead against his.

For a brief moment, the three family members were together again, just like in the past, when their lives were filled with happiness.

Sect Master Baek smiled at him, even as tears continued to stream from her eyes. At last, she could speak the feelings that had been locked in her heart for so long.

"Rest well, dear. You are free now," she said softly.

But then, she froze for a moment, as she saw Donghyun's lips curve into a faint smile.

"I'm sorry. Goodbye," he said in a very soft voice, which made her tears flow even more.

Still, her expression shifted to one of resolve. And then, without hesitation—

Slash!

In one clean motion, his head was severed from his body by her hand.

The Shining Star Above The Heaven - Chapter 586: Patriarch Xin's Strength[1,747 words]

Chapter 586: Patriarch Xin's Strength

After killing her own husband with her own hand, Sect Master Baek looked at her daughter, who was still hugging her headless father. There was only sadness in her eyes as she remembered the slight smile her husband made the moment before she decapitated him.

Seeing her daughter still clinging to his now-limp body truly pained her. She pulled Baek Jimin away, even forcing her to separate from her father as she held his body tightly. The moment Baek Jimin and Donghyun were separated, his body instantly fell to the ground, but Sect Master Baek had already wrapped her daughter in a tight embrace to keep her from seeing her father's corpse.

In her mother's arms, Baek Jimin could no longer hold back. Her cries finally escaped, echoing clearly through the surrounding area. Though the battle still raged nearby, the death of the undead Donghyun had made this part of the battlefield far safer.

Sect Master Baek also shed tears without stopping, though she made no sound like her daughter. Instead, she only tightened her embrace. In that moment, they sought comfort in each other amid the chaos of the battle. A few elders of the Thorny Flower Garden understood this and stood guard around them, ensuring no undead disturbed the family's moment.

After a while, Baek Jimin finally stopped crying and wiped her eyes. Her face remained still for a few seconds, without any clear expression, until she clenched her teeth and her eyes burned with fury.

"It must be the Sloth Devil. She must be here," she said, her voice filled with rage.

"That bitch... She did this to Father. She'll pay for what she's done!" she added, glancing around at her surroundings.

Sect Master Baek nodded.

"Yes, I thought so. And I believe we know exactly where she is," she said, glancing toward the Hydra and the sudden appearance of the Chimera. The two beasts had just launched attacks that collided with each other.

She knew that the commander of this army, Patriarch Xin was fighting the leader of the undead and beast forces.

Just as she had guessed, Patriarch Xin was besieged by the two powerful beasts, and attacked simultaneously by them. The Chimera unleashed its red flame, while the four-headed Hydra—well now reduced to three heads after losing one to Patriarch Xin, spewed black flame.

Being attacked at such close range by both beasts would have been nearly impossible to avoid. But Patriarch Xin had mastered the light laws and a movement technique based on them, allowing him to evade even the fastest strikes.

Just as their attacks were about to reach him, he vanished, using his movement technique to reappear elsewhere a split second later. The flames collided in his absence, producing a deafening explosion as fire surged across the surrounding battlefield.

Fortunately, their battle was at the rear of the devil's lines, where no other fighting was taking place, only Patriarch Xin and the Sloth Devil were there.

After using his movement technique, he closed in on the Sloth Devil at a speed even she struggled to follow. But she was someone who possessed many tricks.

Just as Patriarch Xin was about to reach her and strike, the turtle shell shield appeared again. At the same moment, a beam of light emerged from the ground along his path. Patriarch Xin, seemingly prepared for the reappearance of the turtle shell, shifted his movement to the side and prepared to unleash a sword strike.

However, from the light on the ground, four black chains suddenly erupted, shooting toward him at high speed. Without hesitation, Patriarch Xin canceled his technique and dodged, but the chains pursued him relentlessly, as if they had already locked onto him as their target.

The Hydra and Chimera, having failed to kill him earlier, also launched another attack, both unleashing their flame breath once more. Surrounded from all sides, Patriarch Xin decided to use one of his techniques. In that moment, he suddenly came to a stop.

Once he stopped, the chains instantly caught up to him, wrapping tightly around his legs and other limbs. With the flames from both beasts approaching and his body unable to move, he had no way to defend himself.

The Sloth Devil smiled as she watched.

"Got you," she thought. The chains were summoned by a trapping talisman she had set up long ago, one capable of restraining even a peak Emperor stage cultivator. The talisman had been a gift from her lord, which was why she had been so confident.

But then, she frowned as Patriarch Xin's body suddenly erupted in blinding light. The brilliance was so intense it felt as though it burned her eyes and skin. She instinctively raised her hand to shield her eyes. The light's effect was far beyond anything she had expected, and a sudden sense of danger gripped her heart.

Without hesitation, she activated her defensive artifact. The turtle shell reappeared, shielding her from the radiance.

However, a moment later, the turtle shell suddenly cracked, making the Sloth Devil's eyes widen. In a rare move, she escaped, rising high into the sky in a split second, just before the turtle shell was completely destroyed.

As the blinding light finally receded, she was able to see what had happened.

What she saw made her solemn, and a drop of sweat rolled down her forehead.

At this moment, Patriarch Xin had unleashed one of his techniques which was an avatar technique. A giant avatar of light now enveloped him, its glowing form moving in perfect sync with Patriarch Xin's own. Both the real figure and the silhouette stared at her together.

The translucent avatar held a sword in its hand, and its luminous form bathed the battlefield in light, like a lone illumination crystal glowing in the middle of a dark desert.

The ground around him was scorched, blackened patches spreading in a three kilometer radius around the avatar. The Chimera and Hydra, along with the four chains that had bound Patriarch Xin had all been obliterated by the radiance.

Seeing all of this, the Sloth Devil had to admit that Patriarch Xin was truly powerful. The energy he exuded was far greater than any opponent she had ever faced. It felt heavier, more oppressive, something different from ordinary energy. It carried an intimidating weight that set it apart.

Even his energy could suppress the surrounding negative energy, much like holy energy would. That alone had made her wary of him from the beginning. The fact that he had shattered her defensive artifact and broken the binding chains from her trapping talisman, which was strong enough to restrain a peak Emperor stage cultivator, proved that the power he had just displayed was already beyond the emperor stage.

Powerful, agile, and incredibly fast, Patriarch Xin was the worst kind of opponent for her. He was a natural counter to everything she relied on. Most of her techniques didn't draw from her physical strength, instead depending on external forces like summoned beasts and undead. Against someone like him, her usual advantages meant little.

She then glanced at the battlefield. She could sense and see that her undead were being pushed back and destroyed at a rapid pace. The situation was clearly turning against her, yet she only smiled.

Without a word, she crushed the escape talisman hidden under her sleeve. But a split second before the teleportation activated, she caught sight of a blinding sword slash flying toward her. Her eyes widened in shock, it nearly cut her in half. But her body had already vanished, and the slash sliced through empty air, continuing into the sky.

Patriarch Xin clicked his tongue as he saw the Sloth Devil successfully escape, irritation flashing across his face. He turned toward the battlefield and saw that his troops were nearly finished, most of the undead had already been wiped out.

Then he looked up and saw the roc in the sky, still being held at bay by five Emperor-stage cultivators. Without hesitation, he struck at the beast using the sword wielded by his avatar.

The five cultivators, still locked in combat with the roc, were stunned when the massive creature suddenly split in two, killed instantly. They turned toward the source of the strike and saw the giant light avatar with Patriarch Xin in it. They immediately understood that his battle was over, and he had now come to aid them.

The rest of the battle did not last long. With Patriarch Xin joining the others, the remaining undead were quickly eliminated.

Once the battlefield was cleared, the troops finally had a chance to rest and begin counting their losses. The battle had been chaotic and brutal. The undead had caused them serious trouble, they were difficult to kill, and because of that, they had taken more lives than any other battle in the past two weeks.

Patriarch Xin also needed rest. He had spent a considerable amount of energy fighting the Sloth Devil, especially when using his avatar technique. With a sigh, he sat on the ground, quietly observing his troops as they worked to clear the battlefield.

Not long after, Xin Haotian approached and sat down beside him, casting a glance at his father.

"How is it?" Xin Haotian asked.

"How is what?" Patriarch Xin replied.

"How was it, fighting one of the Seven Deadly Sins?" Haotian clarified, prompting a small smile from the patriarch.

"Not bad. I got to loosen up a bit. Unfortunately, she escaped too quickly. If she'd stayed just a little longer, I would've liked to test more of my techniques on her. She was skilled, no doubt, but not enough to force me to go all out," he answered in a confident tone.

Xin Haotian nodded at the response.

Just then, Patriarch Xin sensed a signal from his communication artifact. He pulled it from the pouch at his waist and brought it closer to his ear.

"Patriarch Xin, this is Emperor Ladwin. I need to ask you something."

Patriarch Xin responded immediately. "What is it your majesty?"

"Did you encounter a member of the Seven Deadly Sins?"

He was slightly taken aback by the question, but still answered, "Yes. I just faced the Sloth Devil. Why do you ask?"

"I see," Emperor Ladwin replied. "Then we can conclude that the Seven Deadly Sins have begun to move."

Hearing that, Patriarch Xin frowned.

The Seven Deadly Sins were making their move?

The Shining Star Above The Heaven - Chapter 587: The Wall of Fog [1,778 words]

Chapter 587: The Wall of Fog

"Are Your Majesty's troops facing the Seven Deadly Sins?" Patriarch Xin asked. If Emperor Ladwin brought up the Seven Deadly Sins, then he must have encountered them or at least known something about their movements.

"Yes. I just faced the Wrath Devil with his troops, although he didn't seem truly intent on fighting to the death. Once his troops were defeated, he escaped," Emperor Ladwin answered.

"I also heard about the appearance of the Gluttony Devil where the troops led by Emperor Herman advanced. The situation was similar."

"As for the troops led by Emperor Raymond, they reportedly faced the Pride Devil. That one truly caused us heavy losses, as the Pride Devil is extremely strong. I heard that the troops under his command have had to halt their advance for now and wait for reinforcements, because they suffered so much against the Pride Devil."

Hearing that, Patriarch Xin frowned. With the movement of the Seven Deadly Sins, it could be seen that the devils were being pushed further into a corner. But with the Seven Deadly Sins making their move, he could imagine that their future advancement would be a bloody one, as the Seven Deadly Sins seemed intent on slowing them down.

"Patriarch Xin, I just discussed it with the others and arranged a strategy in case the Seven Deadly Sins appear again to disrupt our troops' advancement. We cannot let those Seven Deadly Sins continue to cause our forces heavy losses, and we cannot allow them to slow down our progress," Emperor Ladwin continued.

"With the portal already covering more than a quarter of the continent, we can't let the Seven Deadly Sins play us and have their way, so we have come to a decision."

"We must decisively ask Aldrian for help the next time if we encounter them but cannot kill them in one battle. The Seven Deadly Sins who intend to escape are difficult even for us to block. If they keep fleeing, there will be no end to it, so we've decided not to hesitate in calling Aldrian if that happens."

"Although it's quite shameful, it's still much better than having our advancement disturbed by the Seven Deadly Sins and sacrificing many of our troops. With Aldrian's strength and his methods, he can stop the Seven Deadly Sins from escaping."

Patriarch Xin couldn't refute what Emperor Ladwin had suggested, it was true. The Seven Deadly Sins were not foolish. They were clever and powerful. If they intended to escape, it would be difficult to stop them.

Now that they had already made their move and joined the battle, they would learn from it. That would make it even harder for the alliance forces to hold them back in the future.

With Aldrian's ability to teleport directly to their location, it would be a game changer—and it might catch the Seven Deadly Sins by surprise.

Although it was quite shameful and appeared incompetent, they had to do it to minimize their losses. This was not the time to be stuck in their egos, they had a much bigger picture to consider.

"Alright. I also agree and understand this strategy," Patriarch Xin replied.

"Good. Then that's all. We'll continue our advancement after this rest." With that, the communication with Emperor Ladwin was cut off.

Patriarch Xin sighed as he looked toward the black pillar. Because the portal had already covered the sky, the region where they were positioned was as dark as night. Yet he could still see the black pillar on the horizon, and he couldn't help but feel uneasy every time he looked at it.

"I hope that young Aldrian can succeed as planned. If not—" he sighed again.

Xin Haotian, who had heard his father, also looked at the black pillar and the portal that was opening a dark world for them. Even though his eyes remained calm, he couldn't help but feel anxious. The scene before him was truly terrifying and gave him a deep sense of unease.

"Yes, I hope so too," he said.

Together with the other troops, they rested for three hours before continuing their advance. Their journey was still far from over.

Although Aldrian was the closest to the black pillar, he was still quite some distance away from it. However, based on his estimation, he might reach it within the next few days. This estimation came from the fact that he could already sense a different kind of energy, one that closely resembled Tarius's.

He suspected that the black pillar must also contain something like Tarius's crystal of divinity to activate it, especially since he could feel traces of Tarius's energy coming from that direction.

Another thing that made him believe he had entered the region near the black pillar was the presence of something not far ahead. He kept teleporting for a while before finally stopping.

What he saw in front of him was a thick fog that obscured his view of what lay beyond. The fog allowed no gaps, and even his senses were blocked the moment they touched it.

The fog stretched endlessly to both sides of the horizon, forming a massive wall that seemed built to protect whatever lay behind it.

Aldrian then attempted to fly, hoping he could pass over the fog from the sky. From a distance, it appeared that the fog had boundaries and did not reach the sky, so he might be able to get through by flying.

But when he tried to fly to the top of the fog, he realized that it seemed endless. No matter how high he went, the fog wall kept rising with him, as if it were following him. He eventually stopped and nodded in understanding. There was only one explanation for such a phenomenon.

"This fog is part of a formation," he thought, as he once again observed the wall of fog stretching across both horizons.

"A huge one, at that." He wasn't sure whether it had been created by the current Devil Lord or not, but to build a formation of this scale, the creator must possess knowledge far beyond anything this continent had to offer. There was no way such a formation could have been made using only the formation knowledge known on this continent. That level of knowledge simply didn't exist here.

"Well, whatever the case, whoever has the knowledge to build this formation at least have knowledge of higher heavens."

Aldrian then landed again and decided to create his domain here. Once it was created, he spread his senses, and as if the fog were never there, he could clearly scan the entirety of his domain. He sensed the flow of energy, the complexity of the formation, and even the presence of devils hidden within the fog.

Yes, there were many devils, completely unaffected by the fog, waiting in place as if lying in ambush. There were already thousands of them within the area of his domain alone. He guessed there were far more hidden throughout the fog wall.

"If the alliance troops reach this place, it could become a killing ground, and we would suffer heavy losses."

He chose to ignore the devils for now and instead focused on studying the formation. With his comprehension of formations, enhanced further by the insights of some of his followers, his analysis progressed swiftly. After several silent minutes, he couldn't help but let out a sigh.

"I have to admit, this formation is truly complex and powerful. I had already stepped into it earlier without even realizing it, and this fog is actually a strong illusion, triggered the moment I entered the natural terrain formation," he thought as he looked behind him.

He hadn't detected anything unusual about the terrain he had passed. Only after examining the entire area within his domain was he able to see the bigger picture, the fog is just one part of a much larger formation.

The massive formation cleverly made use of the terrain, combining natural features with artificial formations in front of him.

Once someone steps into the terrain based part of the formation, it activates an illusion generated by the artificial formation in front of him.

The illusion is so powerful that even those at the peak of the Emperor Stage would be affected. That was why, without exception, everyone would see the fog wall obstructing them, no matter where they went.

Even he had to create his domain and study every detail within it before he could finally unravel the intricacies of the formation, and he was genuinely impressed. The concept behind this formation might be similar to the one created by Long Shentian and Feng Xuanyan in the Everlasting Silent Forest, though on a smaller scale and with less complexity.

Setting aside his amazement, he turned his attention to the areas where the devils seemed to be lying in ambush. They had undoubtedly already seen or sensed him, but none of them made a move. They simply watched in his direction, as if waiting for him to step into the fog formation.

He couldn't help but smile at their "adorable" attempt to trap and ambush him here. Their faces looked tense, even though he was alone, which only confirmed that these devils already knew who he was.

From what he could guess, these devils must possess something that prevented them from being affected by the formation. What they saw was likely very different from what those under the illusion would perceive.

"Well, nice try, but unfortunately, this formation can't stop me," he thought.

Aldrian then floated into the sky and looked down at the devils hidden within the fog. The devils, who had been keeping a close watch on him, were stunned as they felt his gaze seemingly lock onto them, accompanied by his smile.

"He can't see us, can he?" one of the King stage devils asked uncertainly.

"No way. Our lord said that even those at the peak of the Emperor Stage would be affected by this, so there's no way—"

Bzzt! Rumble! Rumble!

Before the other devil could finish speaking, a deafening thunderclap rang out, and suddenly, bolts of heavenly lightning surged from Aldrian's figure.

The devil, who had been speaking, fell silent as Aldrian's form became reminiscent of a thunder god. Then, moments later—

Boom! Boom! Rumble!

Heavenly lightning rained down like a storm, each bolt striking the ground with terrifying precision and overwhelming power. Every single one hit a devil.

"He can see us!"

BOOM!

The earlier devil shouted in panic, but the moment the heavenly lightning struck him, he was gone, reduced to ashes in an instant.

The Shining Star Above The Heaven - Chapter 588: Preparing for the Last Battle? (1)[1,646 words]

Chapter 588: Preparing for the Last Battle? (1)

The thunderclap, followed by the destruction of the entire area, made the nearby devils realize that Aldrian could indeed see them. They decisively abandoned their places and launched an attack. From behind the fog, countless attacks of different elements came rushing toward him.

However, Aldrian merely blocked them with his spatial technique and reflected the attacks back. The devil troops fell into chaos as nothing they did worked. At that moment, a heavy earthquake shook the ground, causing many of the devils to collapse.

A massive area spanning 25 square kilometres suddenly rose into the sky, with several devils still on it. This was the largest piece of land Aldrian had ever lifted to this day, so

large that even he had to use hand gestures to support the technique. He opened his palm and moved it as if commanding the land to rise and float in the air.

Once it reached the desired height, he lowered his arm.

The land dropped like a meteor.

Boom!

The ground shook violently as the falling land created a powerful earthquake across the surrounding region. The impact and sheer force of the crash were enough to kill many devils, both those on the ground and those caught on the falling land itself.

Aldrian watched this with a calm gaze as he turned his attention to the wall of fog. This act of massive destruction was not just a display of power; he had another purpose. He wanted to disrupt the formation. Given the scale of the formation, only destruction on this level could disturb its flow and affect the structure as a whole.

Just as he planned, the moment the terrain in this section was altered, the formation reacted. For a few seconds, the fog flickered, appearing and disappearing, before it finally began to fade in the area where Aldrian float, clearing a path for him to advance.

The instant the path opened, it was as if the energy sealed behind the wall had been released. Aldrian immediately felt the ominous aura and pressure filling the area. He frowned deeply and looked toward the black pillar on the horizon.

Beyond the wall of fog stretched another vast land of death, but now, from this distance, he could see a structure at the base of the black pillar. The fact that it was visible from where he float meant the structure must be enormous.

The overwhelming energy clearly came from that direction, what else but the black pillar could be radiating such a terrifying aura?

"The aura of Tarius... it's getting stronger." He slightly gritted his teeth. Every time he felt this energy, fury surged within him. This was the power of one of the invaders.

But then he looked to his left and right. The fog in the distance had not fully disappeared. He understood that what he had destroyed was only one part of the formation. With how complex it was, the entire formation did not deactivate at once.

"It looks like this formation operates in separate sections. Destroying one part doesn't disrupt the whole thing," he thought. Once again, he found himself impressed by its intricacy.

He drew the Eternal Spirit Sword and hovered motionless for a moment, gazing at the fog in the distance. Then he pointed the sword toward it, and not long after—

Shing!

A soft sound rang out as the blade of the Eternal Spirit began to shine brightly. A moment later, it unleashed a golden pillar of light that shot straight toward the fog. He had unleashed his technique, the *Pillar of Heaven's Judgement*, this time horizontally.

He then lowered the sword slightly, and in an instant, the pillar of light tore through everything in its path, destroying the land it passed through.

The devils in the distance, hidden within the fog and unprepared for the strike, were instantly caught in the technique and obliterated into nothingness by the pillar of light.

The land along the wall of fog, stretching as far as fifteen thousand kilometers, became a long line of gorge with varied depth as the sword technique tore through the surface.

His purpose was to destroy the artificial formation so that the terrain-based formation would become useless. After unleashing his technique, the fog began to dissipate, clearing all the way to the horizon.

He repeated the same action on the opposite side, and at last, he cleared the wall of fog in this region. He still did not know how far the wall of fog extended, but at the very least, he had helped the alliance forces by clearing it in this area.

He then took out a communication artifact and contacted the leaders of the alliance. He warned them about the fog wall, should they encounter it, and explained the mechanism behind it, advising them not to recklessly enter. He also informed them that he had already opened a large path through this region for the alliance troops to use once they reached the fog wall.

After delivering the information, Aldrian cut off the communication and continued his journey.

The devil lord, still observing the opening of the portal, looked at the horizon as he saw a brilliant light flash across it for a moment before disappearing. He gazed at it with calm eyes, as though it came as no surprise.

"He is coming. To think he already reached this far in such a short time. He is much faster than I predicted. Does he never rest or experience drained energy?" he thought.

Just then, he felt the communication artifact activate, so he picked it up to listen.

"My lord! The line of fog has been breached! From the energy and the power it exuded, it might be Aldrian!" said the voice on the other end, panic clear in his tone.

"He actually destroyed a large part of the formation, creating a vast gap in it. The central region is now open to outsiders, my lord."

The devil lord responded calmly.

"Pull back the troops to the central region. If the line of fog has been opened, then so be it. We will have the great battle here."

"Yes, my lord," answered the voice before the communication was cut off.

The devil lord continued to look at the horizon.

"We will finally meet, huh?" he thought as he pondered Aldrian. He, who had long been curious about Aldrian's true identity, wished to confront him directly as soon as possible. There were still things that he couldn't understand, even now. Although he possessed knowledge beyond this world and had a direct connection to the devil god, Aldrian's existence still raised questions.

"How can someone like that exist on this continent, at this exact time? Is it a coincidence?"

He had believed he was the only one who was special, the chosen one in this world. So how could Aldrian possibly be here?

He did not doubt that Aldrian was someone "special" like himself. With that kind of strength and what seemed like vast knowledge, Aldrian must be someone connected to the gods, or someone from the higher heavens. But the question still lingered: *How could something like this happen? How can Aldrian even exist here?*

As far as he knew, his god, and the other gods had long tried to control this heaven, and they had agreed not to clash with one another.

But Aldrian's appearance made him begin to doubt the unity among them. *Did some gods secretly send their apostle here?* Even when he asked his god about it, there was no clear answer, which only led him to suspect that certain gods were acting behind his god's back and had betrayed him.

Aldrian seemed to be connected to one of those gods, and the one who constantly obstructed his god's ultimate plan.

However, he also remembered the stories of rebellious gods from the past, and he couldn't dismiss the possibility that Aldrian was on their side.

But with the gods allied with his own god said to be watching every movement carefully, it should have been nearly impossible for those rebels to plan anything within this continent. All these possibilities truly left him confused, and he had to admit, it made him slightly anxious.

An unknown existence suddenly popped up on this continent. His god didn't even know about him, and couldn't help him understand Aldrian's appearance. Even if Aldrian was an apostle from an unknown god, at the very least, the devil god should have been able to trace his fate or origin as a mere mortal ant.

But even that couldn't be done, for some reason. That reason alone was enough to leave a knot in his heart. Aldrian's existence was something beyond his comprehension.

However, he didn't let himself become too consumed by the confusion, as he was close to completing the portal's opening process. No matter how powerful Aldrian was, it would all end once the threshold of the portal was reached. Even if the portal didn't fully open, it would still be enough for his god to extend his power and force it wider.

He looked back at the portal in the sky and couldn't help but smile.

"Well, you like to kill so much, right? Then I'll bring it to you. You can kill as much as you want," he thought, then took out his communication artifact.

"To all units, this is your lord speaking. I want all of you to retreat to the final line of defense. There are no exceptions to this order. Every one of you must fall back. I want the full mobilization completed by tomorrow. A great battle awaits—prepare yourselves," he said, before storing the artifact.

He was still smiling as he looked at the portal, which was opening faster and faster.

The last battle was imminent!

The Shining Star Above The Heaven - Chapter 589: Preparing for the Last Battle? (2)[1,663 words]

Chapter 589: Preparing for the Last Battle? (2)

As Aldrian continued approaching the black pillar, the rest of the alliance forces also kept advancing, although one army lagged slightly behind. The forces led by Emperor Raymond had only just resumed their march, as reinforcements from outside the devil territory had now arrived in sufficient numbers.

How were the reinforcements able to reach the front-line troops so much faster? That was because in every region they successfully liberated from the devils, they built a teleportation portal. With the dwarves and formation masters among their ranks, all of this became possible. Thanks to this method, the reinforcements didn't have to travel using traditional means like the main troops. They could simply teleport directly to the front line.

To build these teleportation portals, the dwarves didn't need to construct anything as complex as the ones found in cities, so they could be built more quickly and efficiently. The only requirement was that they function well enough to transport reinforcements and supplies.

Emperor Raymond, who led the troops, was accompanied by his son beside him. However, Prince Ferdinand looked at his father with a worried expression. His eyes kept drifting to his father's right arm, which had been severed from the elbow down. The wound had already been treated by the physicians and wrapped in bandages, but the emperor had been advised to avoid any excessive movement.

There was already someone who could take over if he could no longer lead the army, but the emperor remained adamant. He ignored his injury and continued to command the army despite his condition. Prince Ferdinand was deeply concerned to see his father pushing himself like this.

The battle against the Pride Devil had been truly bloody. That confrontation further cemented the Pride Devil's name as the strongest among the seven deadly sins. Although he accompanied by a small force of ten thousand devils, it was more than enough to inflict heavy losses on the alliance troops.

Out of the two hundred thousand alliance troops under Emperor Raymond's command, more than seventy thousand had been lost. It was a staggering number, especially considering they had only faced ten thousand devils. Among the casualties were some renowned figures. One of the ten great swordmasters of the continent had fallen in this battle.

He was Adel Schwertwächter.

He was part of Prince Wilmar's faction during the civil war and had once attacked the Rosalind family. The Pride Devil showed no regard for identity or reputation, he simply unleashed his sword techniques on anyone in sight. He used his powerful attacks against

all opponents, regardless of their cultivation stage, making the battle unimaginably brutal.

Anyone who stood before him, he would kill, especially when he saw members of the great swordmasters. He had long desired to fight them, and in the army led by Emperor Raymond, he finally encountered two: Adel and Elena.

Even though they were much weaker than him—still only at the King stage—he did not care. He used his sword techniques on them without hesitation. The result? Adel was instantly killed, while Elena had one of her arms and one of her legs severed. She even fell into a coma and had to be brought back outside the devil territory.

It was only thanks to the protection of her defensive artifact that her life was saved, although the artifact was instantly destroyed. The Pride Devil was then attacked from all sides, which prevented him from finishing her off.

The Pride Devil was bombarded from every direction. They even used the cannons from their flying fortress, but none of it was enough to put pressure on him.

The only moment they nearly managed to kill the Pride Devil was when Emperor Raymond used his legacy artifact to strike him. Even then, the Pride Devil managed to partially block the attack with a powerful technique. Although it injured him, it wasn't fatal.

Fortunately, the Pride Devil retreated after his troops were decimated, as he did not seem intent on fighting to the death against their armies. Although the alliance had managed to kill many devils and could technically call it a victory, it still felt like a loss. The casualties they suffered were too great, and most of them were caused by one man.

"Father, based on the decision made with the other leaders, we know we're allowed to call young master Aldrian if we can't kill the Seven Deadly Sins in a single encounter. But I think that if we ever face that man again, we should call Young Master Aldrian immediately. We can't afford to gamble in the future, we've already lost too much," said Prince Ferdinand as they stood atop the moving flying fortress.

Emperor Raymond only nodded. He knew it was the wise decision. This battle had already shown them their limits. They could not defeat the Pride Devil without paying a terrible price. It would be far better to ask for Aldrian's help directly than to wait and hope they could bring the Pride Devil down in the next encounter.

They continued flying as usual for more than six hours, but then they noticed something strange. After all that time, they still hadn't seen any sign of the devils. Their scouts even reported no activity as far as they could see on the distant horizon. This was unusual,

because normally, even just a few hours of their journey through devil territory, they would already have spotted some signs of devil activity, no matter how small.

Sometimes they would catch glimpses of devil scouts observing the alliance's advance. Other times, they would clash with devil troops during those hours, which had always irritated them, as the devils seemed to have an endless supply of forces to throw at them.

The devils also reckless, becoming truly troublesome opponents. They showed no concern for their own lives and fought with the clear intent to take down as many of their enemies as possible. This suicidal nature among the devils couldn't be underestimated, it was one of the reasons the battles had become so brutal.

Now, for the first time in two weeks, something felt off on the devils' side. Emperor Raymond began to wonder if this, too, was part of the devils' scheme.

He then took out his communication artifact and connected to multiple channels.

"This is Raymond. I want to ask about the strangeness of the current situation," he said.

"Are you referring to the complete lack of devil activity at this hour?" a voice replied from the other side, it was Emperor Herman.

Emperor Raymond was slightly stunned but responded.

"Yes. Are you experiencing the same?"

"Yes, it's truly strange. Normally, we would have already engaged in another battle by now, but we haven't seen any devils at all. It's as if they're suddenly letting us advance without resistance. It's confusing, and unsettling. It could very well be part of another devil scheme," Emperor Herman replied.

"I'm experiencing the same. There's no devil activity in my area either," came the voice of Emperor Ladwin.

"The same here," said Emperor Durand.

One by one, the voices of other major territory leaders came through, each reporting the same situation. It became clear to all of them that this was no coincidence.

"Do you think this has something to do with the Alliance Leader opening what he called the fog wall? Could it be that the Devil Lord made a move after it was breached?" Emperor Raymond asked, uncertain.

"That's possible," Emperor Ladwin replied. "If the devils started disappearing right after the Alliance Leader broke through the so called fog wall, then that wall must have been an important defensive line, one that guarded the path to the black pillar. Maybe the Devil Lord pulled back all of his forces to defend it."

"Amitabha... then the Devil Lord has mobilized every devil across the territory just to stop the Alliance Leader? He'll have to face millions of devils—along with all the infamous ones from every rank, including the Seven Deadly Sins," said Venerable Karma Seeker.

"That's a serious problem," Emperor Durand said. "If that's the case, we need to move quickly. We can't let the Alliance Leader face all those devils alone."

"How are we supposed to go any faster? We're still quite far from the Alliance Leader. He's using teleportation techniques, and the distance between us must be at least a week's journey. There's no way we can catch up to him in time at our current speed," said Emperor Raymond.

There was a moment of silence before King Douwin's voice suddenly came through.

"What if we send a few of the fastest wyverns from each of our armies far ahead? Each wyvern group would include a team responsible for building a teleportation portal. They'll have to fly as fast and as far as they can before taking a break. During that rest period, they'll construct a teleportation portal as quickly as possible.

"We can use those portals to mobilize our troops and repeat the process until we reach the Alliance Leader's position. However, there is a drawback, we won't be able to bring heavy equipment or transports like the flying fortresses to the front. We'll have to rely entirely on our individual troops for the fighting."

He paused, and silence followed again before Sect Master Ryu's voice echoed across the channel.

"I agree. It's better than being left out of the battle because we're too slow."

"I agree as well. This is a good suggestion, what we need most right now is speed. Even if we can't bring our heavy support, we can still fight," said Emperor Ladwin.

"I agree too..." One by one, the others voiced their support.

"Then it's settled. We'll use this method to advance. We won't let the Alliance Leader fight alone!" declared Emperor Raymond.

With that, the alliance forces began reorganizing themselves for the new travel strategy. They prepared for the great battle ahead!

The Shining Star Above The Heaven - Chapter 590: All Force Towards Aldrian[1,653 words]

Chapter 590: All Force Towards Aldrian

In another part of the devil territory, the World Tree and the beast army continued advancing according to Aldrian's plan. Despite their great numbers, they could move at a much faster pace than the alliance troops, thanks to the significantly higher cultivation level of each individual.

Since separating from Aldrian, they had also fought several battles, killing many devils along the way. With their high cultivation and the World Tree leading them, they were unstoppable. Unless the Seven Deadly Sins appeared to stop them, their path was guaranteed to remain smooth.

However, amidst the beast army, two new figures had joined the group—the Golden Phoenix and the Great Peng. These two beasts were on a mission of their own, hunting down devil troops to make the alliance's advance easier. If not for them, the alliance troops would have had to face many more devils than they already did in the past two weeks.

They eventually met with the World Tree's group. There was no way the Golden Phoenix and the Great Peng could miss the gigantic tree, as its main body was visible from a great distance. That moment also the first time the World Tree saw the Phoenix and the Great Peng.

At first, both sides were cautious, unsure of each other's affiliation. With a peak Emperor stage Phoenix and a high Emperor stage Great Peng, the World Tree's group did not attack recklessly. They had never seen beasts of this kind before, and they could faintly sense bloodline suppression from them, a clear sign that these beasts held a far higher status.

The World Tree also chose not to attack immediately. She chose to observe them first. In truth, the only reason they didn't clash at first sight was because neither side made a move, opting instead to watch and assess the other.

Although they had already told each other that they were not aligned with the Devil Lord, both sides remained cautious and kept their distance. The Phoenix believed that the World Tree could be a threat to Aldrian's plan, and the World Tree felt the same. Because of that, they did not take their eyes off one another as they traveled.

It was only after witnessing each other kill devils that they realized they shared the same goal and stood on the same side. From that point on, they continued their journey together, adding even more strength to the group.

At present, they were advancing toward the direction of the fog wall, which was already visible in the distance. The ground shook and rumbled with each movement the World Tree took, and that sound was the only one that accompanied the group as they moved in silence.

Then, the Golden Phoenix's voice finally broke the stillness.

"Don't you think something has been strange about the situation since earlier?" she asked the spirit of the World Tree, Vireline.

The Golden Phoenix could speak the spirit language, which had actually confused her at first. It was as if the knowledge had already existed in her memory, simply waiting for a trigger to awaken it. That trigger had come when Vireline spoke to her during their first meeting.

"Yes. We haven't seen any movement from the devils. Normally, I can sense their presence from far away even when they are only observing us, but this time, I can't detect even the faintest trace of them," Vireline answered.

"But I can sense a terrifying kind of energy coming from that direction. I've been feeling it for a few hours now," Vireline added as she pointed toward one direction of the fog wall. Being a World Tree, she was far more sensitive to the changes in natural energy across wide areas, and what she sensed now was unlike anything she had ever felt before.

"Maybe that is the path Lord Aldrian mentioned to you. I don't know if his actions are the cause of the devils' strange behavior, but my instincts tell me they are. If the devils are acting this way because of Lord Aldrian, then we can assume he has done something that forced the Devil Lord to order all of them to retreat," she added.

The Golden Phoenix frowned at this. Like the other alliance troops, she had already been told by Aldrian earlier that he had breached the fog wall.

"Doesn't that mean the Devil Lord won't hesitate to use everything to stop Master from reaching the Black Pillar? Then... Master will have to face all those devils alone?" she asked, which made Vireline fall silent for a moment before she finally spoke.

"That is the most likely possibility. We must hurry. We cannot allow Lord Aldrian to face all of them by himself."

After that, their movement became even faster, causing the trembling ground to shake with greater violence.

At this moment, every force had already turned toward one destination, Aldrian.

While the alliance forces were advancing toward Aldrian in the devil territory, people in other parts of the continent grew increasingly anxious. From time to time, they glanced at the sky, where the spreading darkness was clearly growing wider with each passing minute, and it was accelerating.

This phenomenon made it hard for anyone not to assume the worst.

At this point, the speed of the portal's expansion could be seen with the naked eye, no matter who was watching. Whether they were cultivators or ordinary mortals without any cultivation, all of them could clearly see that the portal was opening faster and faster.

In some regions, the situation had already turned for the worst. Bandits and opportunists took advantage of the chaos, believing the world was approaching its end. That belief drove many to seize whatever they could, hoping to benefit as much as possible before everything collapsed.

They would die anyway, so why not enjoy it while they could? That was what they believed in this moment.

The cultivators who remained behind as enforcers were forced to use extreme measures to contain the unrest and suppress those driven by opportunism. They had to kill to set an example, warning others who still had the mind to commit atrocities in the midst of war.

Although this tactic worked for now, the enforcers knew that if the situation did not improve soon, it would no longer be enough.

In Dual Horns Peak City, the situation remained relatively stable, as the city was under the control of the three great sects of the demon territory. However, stability here did not mean the city was free from the same problems faced by other regions.

From time to time, there were fools who tried to challenge the authority of the sects, but the cultivators quickly dealt with them. Given the more violent nature of demon cultivators, the punishments used to set examples were far more brutal than those carried out by orthodox sects.

This was exactly what happened to a few individuals who attempted to barge into the Yu family's mansion. The Yu family had regained their noble status after the fall of the previous city lord, who was revealed to have been in league with the devils.

Since the truth about the past had become known, the Yu family's name was cleared, and they began to rebuild themselves as a proper noble family once more.

However, despite the exposure of the previous city lord's betrayal, some of his loyalists still remained in the city. These were the ones who believed the former city lord had been framed by the remnants of the Yu family. But because the Yu family was now under the heavy protection of the three great sects, those loyalists could do nothing against them.

This time, driven by a willingness to die for revenge, fueled by the continent's current state, they decided to attack the Yu family and bring down the last two surviving members.

Unfortunately for them, their efforts were in vain. They lacked the strength to break through the protective formation around the mansion, let alone defeat the cultivators stationed within.

The leader of the Yu family at this time, Matriarch Yu, and her son, Yu Fenglian, were the only survivors of the former Yu family. However, since the family had regained its honor and was supported by the three great sects, many people began to join them in rebuilding the Yu family.

From just two people, the family had grown to over a thousand members, with individuals from various backgrounds joining as outer members. These cultivators also helped to rebuild the Yu family into what it was now.

All those who attempted to kill the Yu family ended up as minced meat, their corpses tossed aside like trash on the roadside. Each one bore a sign on their chest that read,

"We tried to kill the Yu family."

This scene was visible to many, and it sent a chill down their spines. It served as a grim reminder not to do anything foolish in the current situation.

While the situation outside was tense and far from optimistic, the atmosphere inside the Yu manor remained relatively calm and serene. A young boy, who still looked around twelve years old, could be seen walking toward one area of the manor.

His face appeared older than it had been when he last met Aldrian a few years ago, although traces of childishness still remained.

Anyone who saw him along the way would offer a slight bow and address him as "*young master*," and he would respond to each one in turn.

Yu Fenglian continued walking until he reached the Hall of Honor, where he found his mother, Yu Ruomei. She was seated on her knees before the altar of the Heavenly Demon, her eyes closed as if she were in meditation.

Yu Fenglian quietly approached and knelt behind her, lowering his upper body slightly in a respectful bow.

"Mother."