

The Shining Star Above The Heaven

Chapter 701 - 701: The Divine Blessing Pond

[1,583 words]

'Zhu Yanling, the phoenix queen of the phoenix race in the Ancient Blue Gate World,' Aldrian thought. Now he was finally seeing a phoenix in this life, but what truly stunned him was something else.

'She is actually a Celestial Golden Phoenix? A phoenix that is supposed to reside in the ninth heaven.'

This was truly a surprise that Aldrian had not expected. If he remembered correctly, there was one phoenix race that shared a close connection with Feng Xuanyan as their ancestor, and that was the Celestial Golden Phoenix. From his memories, Feng Xuanyan's descendant with the purest closeness of bloodline to her was this Celestial Golden Phoenix race.

Because Feng Xuanyan carried some of his golden energy, that "golden features" was passed down to one of her descendants, and thus the Celestial Golden Phoenix was born. The golden here referred to their golden tail feathers.

Although they did not inherit his golden energy, they were still a special phoenix among the other phoenixes that became Feng Xuanyan's descendants.

As time passed, the purity of the bloodline also began to decrease. Because of that, the less pure bloodline of the Celestial Golden Phoenix created another kind of phoenix, but still bore the name Golden Phoenix, but without the title Celestial.

They became a different race from the Celestial Golden Phoenix, with a weaker bloodline, yet they still held a close connection to Feng Xuanyan because of their golden features.

This was something he finally remembered some time ago, when his visions and his memories revealed this part. That was also why he realized Aurelia had unconsciously called him your majesty the first time they met, after sensing his golden energy.

Although she might be just a clone, her root remained the same. The Golden Phoenix had a close connection to the Celestial Golden Phoenix, who in turn had a close connection to Feng Xuanyan, one of his main followers.

He thought that Aurelia might have been cloned from someone who knew him in the past, which made sense if she unconsciously addressed him as your majesty.

'Aurelia is the clone of a Golden Phoenix, and Zhu Yanling is the Celestial Golden Phoenix. What a coincidence—or not,' Aldrian thought amusingly. This woman basically had an even higher status than Aurelia, but then a question rose in his mind.

'How could she have mutated into this kind of phoenix? Who were her parents?'

"Well, Your Excellency, this is the Phoenix Queen," Shen Longwei introduced her after Aldrian seemed to fall into silence for a moment upon seeing her. He wondered if Aldrian was mesmerized by her beauty.

Zhu Yanling, upon seeing Aldrian, instantly sensed her connection to him. She finally confirmed that this was indeed the same man who had fought the immortal that day. His face and the connection she felt now did not lie to her.

Her heart trembled, yet Aldrian's blue eyes, which seemed to be observing her deeply, made her nervous and unsettled. It felt as if his eyes could see everything about her, leaving nothing hidden.

As if realizing that he had already been rude for observing her in silence for too long, Aldrian smiled, stood up, and cupped his hands.

"My apologies if I have made you uncomfortable, Queen Zhu. I was simply stunned when I realized what kind of phoenix you are, which truly shocked me inside," he said.

Hearing Aldrian's words, Zhu Yanling and Shen Longwei were astonished—especially Zhu Yanling. She had lived her life without knowing what kind of phoenix she had become. The abilities that appeared within her mind were already vastly different from her parents' kind. All of them were overwhelming powers her parents never possessed.

Her heartbeat quickened when she heard Aldrian claim he knew what kind of phoenix she was. She longed to know what identity she bore through her mutation.

She bowed slightly as she spoke to Aldrian.

"Your Excellency, I apologize for asking so directly, but what kind of phoenix am I? Since childhood, I have only known that I am not a normal phoenix, not the kind found anywhere, even in other parts of this heaven. I could never discern what kind I am. All this time, I have wanted to know so I could better understand myself."

Aldrian only smiled at her.

"Of course I will tell Queen Zhu about it. Even if I do not tell you, you will eventually understand on your own, as your cultivation grows stronger and your innate memories begin to appear," he said.

"But if you wish to know now, that is also fine. However, before that, I have a question I hope you can answer."

The queen nodded. "Please ask, Your Excellency."

"Very well then. As far as I know, mutation is something triggered by certain circumstances. From what I have learned, Queen Zhu was already mutated when you were born, which means the mutation must have occurred while you were still in the egg phase," Aldrian said. "So here is my question: does Queen Zhu know of any situation that might have caused this mutation during your egg phase? Did your father or mother ever speak to you about it?"

Queen Zhu nodded in understanding.

"Yes, as Your Excellency said, my mutation had already happened while I was still in my egg phase. And the circumstance that caused it... well, this concerns the secret of both our phoenix race and the dragon race..." As she spoke, she glanced at Shen Longwei, but he only nodded.

"Just tell His Excellency the secret. I don't think it will harm us," he said.

Zhu Yanling nodded and turned back to Aldrian. "My parents told me long ago that while I was still in the egg phase, I absorbed energy near the Divine Blessing Pond."

Aldrian's expression turned puzzled. "Divine Blessing Pond?"

Zhu Yanling nodded again. "Yes. It is the most sacred place of the phoenix race and one of the secrets our race and the dragon race have guarded since ancient times. Its origin can be traced back to a time even before the Barisan Continent was called the Untouchable Continent."

"Your Excellency, you yourself are from the Barisan Continent, so you must know a thing or two about certain people there, people whose ancestors came from beyond the continent in ancient times."

Aldrian nodded at her words.

"Then, does Your Excellency know why their ancestors came to the Barisan Continent in the first place? The reason I ask is because the Divine Blessing Pond has a connection with this event," she said.

"From what I know, they came to the Barisan Continent to follow the beings they believed to be divine beings who descended from the heavens. On that day, all of them saw two powerful figures, a dragon and a phoenix, descend from the heavens and fly toward the Barisan Continent," he answered.

This was something Aldrian had only recently learned during his journey outside. His conversations with Emperor Rozwald and Sect Master Han had explained this event from the past, which made him finally understand why there were outside powers within the Barisan Continent.

At that time, those people must have witnessed Long Shentian and Feng Xuanyan escape toward the Barisan Continent and decided to follow them.

As for the Three Great Sects, Aldrian knew their movements were aligned with the plans of the Heavenly Demon. The placement of the Heavenly Demon Scripture along with two other scriptures within the Barisan Continent was an arrangement, had been arranged by the ancestors of those sects at that time. They must have known of the plan in some way, which made it possible for them to carry it out.

As for the others, they must have followed Long Shentian and Feng Xuanyan because of their divine presence.

"Yes, that is correct. From our records, at that time the divine beings whom we instantly recognized as a dragon and a phoenix suddenly descended into the Ancient Blue Gate World. We did not know what had happened, but the two beings seemed injured as they moved," Zhu Yanling continued.

"Why do we know this? Because the Divine Blessing Pond is, in fact, the blood of that divine being, or more specifically, the phoenix. The phoenix's blood fell into a place near the phoenix territory, close to the dragon kingdom, and from that time onward, that place became our most sacred ground."

Hearing this, Aldrian raised his eyebrows, but he continued listening to Zhu Yanling's explanation.

"The only ones who know of this are our phoenix race and the dragons, who also discovered that place at the time. There was almost a war between our races because of the divine blood, but after negotiations, it was decided that since the place was nearer to the phoenix territory and held greater sacredness to us, it would become ours to manage. However, the dragons were also permitted to visit with approval."

"So the Divine Blessing Pond is actually the blood that fell from the divine phoenix who suddenly descended from the heavens," Zhu Yanling said.

Aldrian sighed. At last, he understood why he had sensed a familiar substance, which was Feng Xuanyan's blood, on the Beast Continent when he had swept his domain sense.

To think that the Divine Blessing Pond was the blood of Feng Xuanyan...it was the same as the puddle of golden blood in the core region of the Everlasting Silent Forest, the one he had already absorbed.

But then another fact came to his mind. The fact that when she was in her egg phase, she had already been able to absorb the energy near Feng Xuanyan's blood meant that she was truly lucky, or perhaps even a chosen one.

She could essentially absorb the residual energy from Feng Xuanyan's blood!

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Chapter 702 - 702: She Could Absorb The Energy Near It?

[1,570 words]

Aldrian was astonished inside, as this was truly not a trivial matter. The fact that Zhu Yanling could even absorb some amount of energy near Feng Xuanyan's blood showed that there was something special about her that no other phoenix possessed in the egg phase.

For phoenixes, the time they spend in the egg phase varies, but normally it takes more than two years before they hatch. The environment of the egg also affects its development, as it will greatly influence them in the future after they hatch.

The eggs keep absorbing energy from the surroundings to nurture the phoenix's embryo inside. The richer the surroundings are with heaven and earth energy, the more likely they are to become strong phoenixes. Likewise, the poorer the environment, the more likely they are to become weak phoenixes.

That is why, when a phoenix wants to lay an egg, it will choose the best place possible. That was also why Aldrian was not surprised that Zhu Yanling's parents chose to place her near Feng Xuanyan's blood for her development. They must have believed it was the best environment, even though they surely knew the setback of it.

The problem lay in the remnant energy of the blood itself. Even the remnant energy of Feng Xuanyan's blood was avoided by other beings, just as shown when he found her blood in the core region of the Everlasting Silent Forest in the past. At that time, in the area surrounding the blood, although the place became rich with energy, no plants grew near it.

All of this was because none dared to approach the blood, as it carried traces of the aura of his golden energy. That was nature's innate reaction to his golden energy, and

even though Zhu Yanling had been placed near Feng Xuanyan's blood, here lay the main problem.

There was no one who could absorb energy that had been contaminated by his special golden energy's aura, even if it was only the remnants, and make it their own. There is no other reason other than the uniqueness of the golden energy properties is special for him, Long Shentian and Feng Xuanyan.

But here, Zhu Yanling claimed that when she was in her egg phase, she had absorbed energy near Feng Xuanyan's blood?

"Queen Zhu, if what you said is true, then I also know of a similar place in the Barisan Continent. However, the problem lies in the properties of the blood itself. You must already know this, since that blood has been there for a long time. How could you possibly absorb the energy near that blood?" Aldrian said.

Zhu Yanling and Shen Longwei raised their eyebrows, but they were not too surprised that there was another place similar to the Divine Blessing Pond in the Barisan Continent. After all, those divine beings had flown toward the Barisan Continent at that time.

Understanding what Aldrian meant, Zhu Yanling nodded. "Yes, Your Excellency, there is no one who could absorb the energy near the divine blood. Although the surrounding area is rich with heaven and earth energy, it is actually barren, as if all beings instinctively keep their distance from the pool of blood."

"Even my parents were not the first to try placing their child in the egg phase near that blood, and according to our records, no one was ever able to absorb even the energy around it. Even adults cannot draw anything from that place, as the energy there feels unbearably heavy."

"Many have tried countless methods to force themselves to absorb the energy, but nothing worked. It was as if the energy there refused to respond to our normal cultivation methods, despite it being the densest gathering place of energy on this continent. This left many frustrated, as if a delicious feast were laid out before them, yet they could not take even a single bite to this day."

"I know, Your Excellency must be confused about why I could absorb the energy near the divine blood, right? Well, this is something that perhaps I could call fate, but my parents told me that when they placed my egg near the blood, they discovered it could absorb a minuscule amount of the energy around it."

"To be honest, that was the only time my egg could absorb energy near the pond. After that, it was no longer able to take in any energy until I finally hatched fifty years later," Zhu Yanling said, which surprised Aldrian.

"Your egg phase lasted fifty years?" he asked in astonishment. That was surely an exceptionally long egg phase for this world's standard.

She nodded at Aldrian's question.

"Yes. My father even thought the development had failed because of how long it was taking, but my mother insisted on waiting for me until I finally hatched. So that is my story. Even though I could only absorb a tiny trace of energy near the pond, it still brought me a great change," she explained, leaving Aldrian deep in contemplation.

It still did not explain why this phoenix could absorb the energy in an area contaminated by Feng Xuanyan's divine blood, which also carried traces of his golden energy. This made Aldrian think deeply for a possible reason until something came to mind, causing him to raise his eyebrows.

He then looked at Zhu Yanling.

"Queen Zhu, may I visit the Divine Blessing Pond? I would like to look into something. You don't need to worry about me being interested in the pond itself, but after hearing your history, I suddenly wish to examine it," he said.

Zhu Yanling was stunned, but she still nodded. "Of course, Your Excellency. I would gladly bring you there," she replied as she stood up. A moment later, she made a slashing motion, and a spatial crack opened. It was a passage leading to the pond. She had, in fact, also comprehended space laws.

"Then let's go, Your Excellency," she said before stepping into the crack. Shen Longwei followed after her, and Aldrian entered as well after putting on his mask. The crack then closed behind them.

They had to use several more spatial cracks before finally arriving at the place where the Divine Blessing Pond was located. The location was remote, lying beside the mountains and deep within the forest, far from any sign of civilization.

However, Aldrian could sense several figures there, whom he assumed to be the guards assigned to this place. They were phoenixes, two men and two women in their human form. Their cultivation was impressive, as most of them had reached the Pseudo-Immortal Establishment Stage, and one of them had even reached the Pseudo-Immortal Stage.

All of them were stationed in the four directions of the pond, each positioned a kilometer away from it.

The moment they sensed and saw Zhu Yanling and Shen Longwei, they were stunned. Instantly, they appeared in front of them and bowed.

"Welcome, Your Majesties, to the Divine Blessing Pond. Is there anything Your Majesties wish to do?" asked one of the men, the strongest among them. But as he spoke, his eyes glanced at Aldrian, who followed behind the king and queen. He immediately recognized Aldrian as a human and wondered about his identity, curious why he had been brought here by the two leaders.

"I just want to visit the pond and show it to this esteemed guest. You may return to your post," Zhu Yanling said. The guards responded with another bow.

"Yes, Majesty," the man replied, though inside his mind, his curiosity toward Aldrian grew. This seemed to be the first time a human had ever visited this place, and it was even in the presence of the Dragon King and their Queen.

After that, Aldrian was brought to the pond, which was located beside a mountain cliff. From there, he could see the environment that had been affected by the existence of the divine blood. Just like what he had witnessed in the core region of the Everlasting Silent Forest in the past, the area surrounding the blood was barren.

The golden blood rested in the center of an artificial pool, with several phoenix statues erected around it, creating a sacred atmosphere.

"This is it, Your Excellency, the most sacred place for us phoenixes," Zhu Yanling said as they stood beside the pool.

Even just standing there, Zhu Yanling felt a sense of reverence rising within her. It was as if she were directly in the presence of a god, even though this was only the remnant of divine blood. Shen Longwei felt the same, though not as intensely as Zhu Yanling.

Aldrian observed the blood and its surroundings. Nothing seemed different or unusual to his eyes, except that the quantity of blood here was much smaller compared to what he had seen in the Barisan Continent. This one had only formed a puddle about fifty meters across.

He then looked at Zhu Yanling.

"Queen Zhu, do you know where your egg was placed?"

Zhu Yanling walked about four hundred meters away before stopping at a spot.

"Here. This is the exact place my parents told me my egg was placed."

Aldrian looked at the spot where she stood, then stepped forward as she moved aside to give him space. Standing there, he turned his gaze toward the pond. Focusing his senses on the area, he searched for even the slightest change, anything that might serve as a clue to the theory already forming in his mind.

After more than ten seconds, he finally detected something that caught his interest, and he couldn't help but smile faintly.

'I see... so that's it.'

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Chapter 703 - 703: It's Truly Her Luck

[1,585 words]

What is the fact about Aldrian's golden energy and its properties? That is, this energy and everything about it is special only to him. Although Long Shentian and Feng Xuanyan could bear it, what they have is still under his control, and they could only possess it because Aldrian did something during their creation that allowed them to bear this energy.

Everything about this energy is something that only he can control, with no one else able to make this energy their own. The golden energy is so special that if it spreads to the surroundings and contaminates the nearby energy, no one will be able to absorb that energy as long as his golden energy remains there.

Even the environment where normal heaven and earth energy could still be absorbed together with normal divine energy, once mixed with his golden energy, becomes completely different. This only shows the exclusivity and strictness of his golden energy.

However, his golden energy is still like the normal energy from anyone's dantian, it can disperse as time passes if there is no other factor.

But here, there is a factor that prevents his golden energy's properties from dispersing, which is the divine blessing pond or more precisely, Feng Xuanyan's blood.

Her blood, which also contains the properties of his golden energy because she has a small amount of his energy within her, causes this place to always remain coated with his golden energy's properties. Although it makes the surrounding environment much richer in the density of heaven and earth energy, at the same time, no one is able to absorb it.

Just as Zhu Yanling said, this place is like a feast full of delicious food, but with no one able to eat it.

The only strangeness comes from her, when she was able to absorb a small amount of the energy in this place that had already mixed with his golden energy's properties during her egg phase. That small amount alone was enough to trigger her mutation into the Celestial Golden Phoenix, which truly shows how potent his golden energy is.

Now, why was she able to absorb it?

Aldrian has a guess about the possibility of why she could take in that little amount of energy here, and that is—

Her luck.

Yes, that is the only way he could describe her situation. Why would he call it luck? Because what happened to her is something that had only the smallest chance of ever happening to anyone else.

The possibility he had in mind for how she could absorb the energy in this area was that when her parents placed her egg here, they unknowingly put her in the exact spot where the normal heaven and earth energy and the area of contaminated energy met.

The place where he stands right now is the border area between what can be absorbed and what cannot be absorbed, or at least, most of that part. In fact, this border is not fixed, because of the chaotic flow of energy caused by the divine blood exuding his golden energy's properties, which draws the nearby energy in this direction.

This causes the border of the area to change with each passing second, something Aldrian can sense even now. Every moment, the flow of energy shifts, creating a constant chaotic current, and at certain points, it forms an "opening."

The "opening" here refers to a split moment when the normal energy can be absorbed before the border shifts again. The moment when the area could still be absorbed was exactly when Zhu Yanling's parents placed her egg in this spot. When she greedily absorbed the energy a split second later, the border shifted, and the energy in this area could no longer be absorbed.

However, that split second of change was a fortunate event for her, as she happened to absorb the chaotic fluctuation of the shifting border. She could take in only a minuscule amount, but that was enough for her, and from that moment, her fate was sealed with mutation.

Aldrian nodded to himself. This was the only explanation he felt certain was the most possible—no, he was sure this was the case. Her situation could never be duplicated by others, because to replicate it they would not only have to seek out the exact moment of the opening but also place the egg in that very split-second window.

It would not work if they simply placed the egg in this exact spot and left it there. That is not how it works.

They could not just set the egg here and expect it to continuously absorb the energy, because the egg would not take in anything. For the most part, the area where he was standing lay inside the zone that could not be absorbed. The opening lasted only a split second, when the area briefly turned into one that could be absorbed before it returned to being inaccessible again.

He agreed with what Zhu Yanling said, that her circumstances could only be called fate.

Aldrian took a breath and released it. He could understand all of this because he alone was able to sense the minute fluctuations of energy in this place. With his domain now covering the entire world, his perception was sharper than anyone else's, even those at the peak of the pseudo-Immortal stage could not compare.

"So, how is it, Your Excellency? Did you find what you were looking for?" Zhu Yanling asked after watching Aldrian observe the place for some time.

"Yes, I think I have already seen enough, and I have learned what I needed to know," Aldrian answered. With this finding, he could not help but think about the possibility that his golden energy could be transferred to others, even if only in small amounts.

There were many potentials if his golden energy could be transferred to other beings, for example, to mutate a spiritual beast just like Zhu Yanling. The mutation was not limited to when the beast was still in its embryo, even an adult could still undergo mutation.

What Zhu Yanling needed was only a small portion of his golden energy's properties to mutate into a higher-ranked beast. But what if another being could absorb more? What if a phoenix like her, or Aurelia, could take in much more? Would they become like Feng Xuanyan? Feng Xuanyan was the only one of her kind among the phoenix.

And the dragons, would they end up like Long Shentian? Would they become the same as the Ancient Dragon God, their ancestor?

What about humans? If someone were able to absorb even a small amount of his golden energy, would they gain some kind of power?

For Aldrian, this was worth researching and developing. The reason he thought this way was because of the potential for his loved ones, or anyone he could truly trust, to gain strength quickly. He had already given them everything they needed to grow far stronger in a short time, but for someone as ambitious as him, that was still not enough.

If he could make his trusted ones even more powerful, then he would do so without hesitation.

Zhu Yanling was curious about what Aldrian had discovered in this place, but then Aldrian looked at her.

"Anyway, Queen Zhu, you want to know what kind of phoenix you are, right? Let's go somewhere more private," he said.

Zhu Yanling was stunned for a moment, but she still nodded.

"Alright, please follow me, Your Excellency," she replied before opening another spatial crack and stepping into it. Shen Longwei followed as well, even though she had not invited him. It was as if he simply invited himself and did whatever he wanted.

Aldrian also stepped through, and after passing through several more spatial cracks, they finally arrived near the phoenix palace where Zhu Yanling resided.

Like the dragons, the phoenixes also built their "nests" in the high mountains. This place was a mountainous range filled with towering peaks, and, as usual, the highest peak was reserved for the leader.

Aldrian was then brought to one side of the mountain's slope near the highest peak, already high above the clouds. The moment they arrived, he saw a carved palace built into the mountain, much like the palace of the dragon kingdom. He knew that, like the dragons, the phoenix also built their palaces in such a way as to accommodate human comfort.

As they approached the palace, many royal guards noticed them and were stunned. They had not seen their queen leave since earlier, so they were shocked to see her suddenly appear with the Dragon King and a human.

Even so, they did not ask anything and simply allowed the group to pass through and enter the palace. While Aldrian was still being guided by Queen Zhu to a more private place, a man in a red robe suddenly rushed toward them. He was clearly a phoenix in human form.

Queen Zhu, seeing the man rushing toward her in such a manner, knew at once that he had something important to report.

The man was actually stunned when he noticed Zhu Yanling walking with the Dragon King and a human, but he quickly set that aside and continued approaching.

"Your Majesty, I was just about to look for you when I did not find you in your room. My apologies for disturbing your time, but I have something urgent to report," the man said.

"What is it?" Zhu Yanling asked.

"The Spirit Ancestor... it is said that she has almost arrived at the palace."

Hearing the report, Zhu Yanling's eyes widened in shock. Even Shen Longwei looked astonished, while Aldrian only raised his eyebrows.

The Spirit Ancestor, coming at this very moment?

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Chapter 704 - 704: Spirit Ancestor

[1,600 words]

Aldrian truly wondered if this was just a coincidence that the Spirit Ancestor happened to visit this place at the same time he did. Whatever the case, it seemed he would meet with the Spirit Ancestor face to face after this.

Zhu Yanling spoke to the man after the shock.

"What happened? Why did the Spirit Ancestor come here without prior notice? Where is she right now?"

"We don't know the reason, but the Spirit Ancestor has already entered the mountain range and is near the Flame Valley. From our estimation, she will arrive in about fifteen minutes. From what we saw, the Spirit Ancestor only came with her retainer and guardian," the man answered.

Zhu Yanling narrowed her eyes. She felt this was too sudden, since the Spirit Ancestor rarely went outside, and the last time she had visited the Phoenix Territory was thousands of years ago. Usually, Zhu Yanling was the one invited by the Spirit Ancestor to visit their palace, and each visit always brought something, such as words of wisdom, which was why they always went.

However, this time the Spirit Ancestor had come from the Spirit Territory with only a small group. She thought this visit was not a formal one, and perhaps that was the reason no prior notice had been sent. Coincidentally, the Spirit Ancestor's visit happened at the same time she had invited Aldrian to her palace, which made her wonder if this was truly just coincidence.

She felt in dilemma because she had already invited Aldrian and wanted to talk about many things with him. He was her respected guest, and she did not want to make him wait. But on the other hand, there was the Spirit Ancestor, another respected figure. If the Spirit Ancestor wished to visit, then there was no way she could deny it.

As Zhu Yanling was caught in this dilemma, she suddenly heard Aldrian's voice from the side.

"Queen Zhu, you don't have to be in a dilemma. I can wait for now, and you can receive the Spirit Ancestor first. You don't have to think too much."

Zhu Yanling looked at Aldrian and couldn't help but sigh, showing a sorry expression.

"My apologies, Your Excellency, but this is also surprising for me, for the Spirit Ancestor to visit right now. Truly, I have made Your Excellency uncomfortable with this," she said in a regretful tone.

"No, it's okay. Just like I said, you can do your thing. I can wait," Aldrian answered, and the queen responded with a nod. Zhu Yanling then looked at the man beside her and gave an instruction.

"Bring this esteemed guest to his accommodation. Put him in the best room and serve him as best as you can. If he needs something, just fulfill it."

Zhu Yanling then glanced at the Dragon King.

"How about you?"

Shen Longwei only shrugged.

"I just follow His Excellency. You can meet with the Spirit Ancestor. She might have business with you, since she came to your territory at this time," he said.

Zhu Yanling nodded and looked at her retainer again.

"Please."

The man bowed his head. "Yes, Your Majesty."

He was truly curious about this human's identity. From the way his queen and the Dragon King spoke, they seemed to show the same respect toward the human as they did toward the Spirit Ancestor. From the voice alone, this masked human sounded like a young man.

However, he set that curiosity aside and guided Aldrian to the special room prepared for him, so he could wait while Zhu Yanling handled her business with the Spirit Ancestor.

Zhu Yanling watched the backs of Aldrian and Shen Longwei as they grew distant for a moment, before turning and walking in another direction to prepare for the Spirit Ancestor's arrival.

More than fifteen minutes later, Zhu Yanling, who had been waiting in front of the palace, saw a small cruiser slowly approaching from the lower part of the mountain. The vessel rose higher until it reached a special platform not far from her, prepared for cruisers to land.

Once the cruiser landed, a hatch on its side opened, revealing three figures already standing inside. They were three women wearing white black robes, and their features made it clear they were not human. Their skin was grey, and in the midst of their hair grew a kind of horn.

Seeing them, Zhu Yanling smiled, though at the same time she felt reverence, especially toward the one standing in the middle. The figure in the center was an old woman, and in this case, she was truly like an ancient relic, just from her appearance alone.

Her eyes remained closed, as if even opening them made her feel tired. The wrinkles covering her face and her long white hair showed the countless experiences she had passed through in her life. She leaned on a cane in her right hand to support her hunched body, and it seemed that if a strong wind swept by, she would fall. She truly looked like a being who had almost reached her grave.

Even though she exuded no aura, and her expression seemed soothing enough to make anyone who looked at her think she was a gentle grandmother, those who knew her would never underestimate her or mistake her for an ordinary elder.

Despite her appearance, she was still at the peak of the pseudo-immortal stage and counted among the oldest existences not only on the continent but perhaps in the world. Many who were far younger than her had already ascended to the higher heavens, yet she remained, as if she still wished to stay in this world.

Many did not know why she remained at the peak pseudo-immortal stage instead of ascending. Many knew she could have done so long ago, yet she seemed to choose to stay in this world. With her frail old bones now, many doubted whether she could still ascend.

Still, she was regarded as a grandmotherly figure because of her wisdom, age, and character. She was truly revered by the populace of the Beast Continent.

After the hatch fully opened and the path to the ground extended, the three spirits stepped out of the cruiser and approached Zhu Yanling. The old woman walked slowly with her cane, and the two figures beside her followed her tempo.

The queen herself approached them, and once she drew near, she cupped her hands toward the old spirit.

"Welcome to the Phoenix Territory, Elder Sariel. It is truly an honor for me to have you visit this place at this time," she said.

The old woman smiled warmly at her.

"My apologies for this sudden visit, Queen of the Phoenix. I know my arrival must disturb your time, since I did not tell you in advance," the old woman said, her soft voice like that of a kind grandmother.

"There is no disturbance, Elder. I am even glad that Elder Sariel has come, as it has been so long since you last visited this place," Zhu Yanling answered. "Anyway, let us go inside, Elder. It is not good for you to remain standing outside. Let us move to a more comfortable place."

Zhu Yanling was about to guide them, but she froze and stopped in her tracks when the elder spoke.

"Queen Zhu, could you bring me to the 'light'? The one who spreads the light, I wish to see him myself."

Hearing the elder's words, Zhu Yanling's heart trembled and she instantly turned to look at Elder Sariel. As expected, her visit here was not a coincidence! Zhu Yanling knew that with Elder Sariel's ability, there was little that could be hidden from her. If anyone on this continent could uncover secrets, it was Elder Sariel.

She knew that even something like the Divine Blessing Pond must already be known to Elder Sariel.

Zhu Yanling, of course, understood what Elder Sariel meant by the light. The light could only refer to Aldrian. Elder Sariel was the one who had first described Aldrian as the light that appeared, and what she said at that time had proven true. Aldrian truly appeared like a light that shone, illuminating all and giving hope.

From the elder's aged face and the tone of her voice just now, Zhu Yanling could tell that she truly wished to see Aldrian. Zhu Yanling showed her beautiful smile and nodded.

"Of course, Elder, I will bring you to him."

After that, she guided the three figures into the palace and brought them to the private room where Aldrian was staying. Along the way, they met the queen's retainer, who was confused to see them heading toward Aldrian's room. The queen simply explained that the Spirit Ancestor wished to meet the human first.

Not long after, they finally arrived in front of Aldrian's room, and Zhu Yanling knocked on the door.

"Excuse me, Your Excellency, this is Zhu Yanling. My apologies if I disturb your time," she said.

It did not take long, a second later the door was opened by Aldrian, whose gaze shifted from Zhu Yanling to the old woman. He had already sensed their presence approaching, and he had even been paying attention to this old spirit ever since the moment she stepped out of the cruiser.

For him, this was the first time he had seen a figure as old as this spirit in his life. From the information he had read from the system, he also understood why this spirit was so deeply respected by many.

"Your Excellency, they are—" Zhu Yanling intended to introduce the Spirit Ancestor, but she stopped as the old spirit suddenly stepped forward toward Aldrian. And then—

Thud!

She let her cane fall to the ground and dropped to her knees, saying,

"The light that illuminates all things, I have finally seen you with my own eyes!"

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 705 - 705: The Development at Home

[1,582 words]

Aldrian, already wearing his mask, raised his eyebrows the moment the Spirit Ancestor suddenly dropped to her knees and said something like that. As for the others, they were truly shocked beyond words. Even the Spirit Ancestor's retainer and guardian could not hide their shock. This was the first time the Spirit Ancestor had ever acted like this in front of someone.

"Elder!" Her retainer and guardian stepped forward to touch the Spirit Ancestor to see if there was something wrong with her. Yet they sensed nothing unusual, and the Spirit Ancestor still remained firmly on her knees.

They then turned their heads toward Aldrian, staring at the figure who had made their elder act in such a way. Had he done something to her without their knowledge?

Aldrian stepped forward as well and touched the Spirit Ancestor's shoulder, intending to help her stand. He felt bad seeing an old woman kneeling like this, even though it had been her own choice.

"Stand up, Elder. I truly feel bad if you suddenly act like this toward me as your first greeting," he said as he tried to help her up, but she still seemed intent on remaining that way.

"This is what I am supposed to do in front of the source of light who gives hope, in front of the bearer of the crown whose light illuminates all," the Spirit Ancestor said, which made Aldrian sigh. He then forced her to stand by using his control over the surrounding energy.

The Spirit Ancestor felt her body being forced to rise, and she could not resist it. Her closed eyes opened, and she looked at Aldrian, trembling. Aldrian then picked her cane up from the ground and placed it back in her hand. The others, who did not know what had truly happened, could only remain speechless.

"Alright, Elder, I'm truly intrigued by what you just said. Why do you act like this toward me? What do you see in me? It would be much better if we talked about it inside. It is not good for you to remain outside and watched by passing people," Aldrian said before guiding her with his hand as it touched her hunched back.

"Alright."

The Spirit Ancestor answered as she entered Aldrian's room under the eyes of the others. They were still speechless, but then Aldrian looked at them.

"How about you all? Do you want to come in or what?" he asked, which finally broke their silence. One by one, they followed Aldrian inside. How could they refuse when Aldrian himself had offered for them to enter? Besides, they also wanted to know what had just happened and what Aldrian and the Spirit Ancestor were about to discuss.

In the Barisan Continent, the land was already shrouded in the darkness of night, with the moon shining high in the sky. Yet the night still bustled with activity across the continent, especially in the regions surrounding the core of the Forest of Eternal Sanctuary.

The new cities' development continued even through the night, and by now these places had already begun to take the shape of true large cities, with buildings of many styles. Towering structures made them like any major city across the continent, yet far grander and more regal.

Since they were built zero and Aldrian had already given permission to use the land without payment, many people were free to construct there, as long as they followed the guidance prepared by the kings of each territory that helping to manage the construction. These leaders did not want chaotic, disordered cities that would bring shame before Aldrian once the construction was complete.

What they envisioned were aesthetically organized cities and towns, vast enough to accommodate all beings of the continent, yet still showcasing grandeur. These places would also serve to implement the new technologies that the dwarves had developed in recent months.

With all the improvements and the strict supervision from the nine major territories, these new cities across the Forest of Eternal Sanctuary would be unlike any other major city on the continent. They would be more beautiful and far more advanced.

The glimmering lights of the cities that still under construction, could be seen on the horizon from the floating land, even more so from the upper floors of Aldrian's palace.

Sylphia, already dressed in her nightgown, gazed at the distant scenery. Her face, illuminated by the moonlight, looked like that of a goddess walking the mortal world—flawless and radiant, her beauty at its peak.

She stood on the balcony of her and Aldrian's room, where they usually spent their intimate moments together whenever he was present. In his absence, she could only enjoy the night scenery alone, especially the sky filled with countless glimmering stars that always reminded her of him.

While she was still enjoying the night scenery, the door to her room suddenly opened and another beautiful woman entered. Her white hair and red eyes, faintly glowing under the dim light, gave her a charm of her own. Baek Jimin, already dressed in her nightgown, approached Sylphia from behind, prompting Sylphia to turn and greet her with a smile.

"Sister Sylphia, enjoying the night sky alone?" Baek Jimin asked with a smile as she came to stand beside her. Sylphia nodded.

"Well, it always reminds me of him," Sylphia said, her gaze turning to the glimmering lights on the horizon before shifting to the starry sky. "Even though it hasn't been a month yet, I already miss him."

"Me too," Baek Jimin said with a sigh. "I wonder how long he will be gone." Her words only deepened Sylphia's smile.

"We are truly infatuated with him, missing him already. I'm tempted to contact him, but I'm afraid of disturbing him in his business. I believe he would instantly come the moment I said that I miss him," Sylphia said with a sigh.

"Well, it's his fault for making us like this, so he should take responsibility for it," Baek Jimin replied.

"I'm afraid the way he'll take responsibility is by making us unable to walk the next day," Sylphia said in a joking tone, which made Baek Jimin blush slightly before both of them burst into laughter. After a brief moment of joy, silence returned as they both gazed at the night sky together.

After a while, Baek Jimin parted her lips.

"Sister Sylphia, are you certain about the plan of the kings of the major territories for the large-scale tournament that will gather all talents across the continent? Don't you think this kind of decision is something Aldrian should also know of and decide himself? We don't even know when he will return."

Earlier that day, King Ladwin, acting as the representative of the other major leaders, came to the palace and informed them about the plan for all territories to hold a large-scale tournament that would gather talents from across the continent. Everyone would be allowed to participate, and the winner would receive a generous gift personally granted by Aldrian himself.

Why did they plan such a thing? It was to push the younger generation to grow much faster, especially with the future of the continent soon to be connected to the outside world, where competition would be far greater.

With Aldrian personally presenting the reward, the contestants would have even greater spirit to strive. They knew that the youth would do anything to gain Aldrian's recognition and gain fame.

The plan was for this tournament to be held every five years, in a massive arena currently under construction in one of the cities near the core region. The arena would be able to hold millions of spectators eager to watch the battles, and it could also serve other functions if needed.

Sylphia, acting as the interim leader while Aldrian was away, agreed with the plan, the tournament would be held once Aldrian returned. Initially, they had planned to hold it as soon as the cities were completed, which was estimated to be within two weeks.

The tournament was also intended to celebrate the completion of the new cities and serve as grand entertainment for the populace across the continent, allowing everyone to witness it.

However, since Aldrian had gone outside, they had to adjust their plan and wait for his return.

Still gazing at the sky, Sylphia answered, "Sister Jimin, this kind of thing is not something Aldrian has to decide himself. He doesn't need to be bothered by it. It's still within our ability to decide anyway. In fact, with his character, he would agree with this plan regardless, don't you think?" She then turned to look at Baek Jimin.

Baek Jimin sighed as she nodded. "You are truly decisive, Sister Sylphia. I don't think I could bring myself to decide something as big as that without consulting Aldrian first if I were in your position. It really does suit him to entrust the role of leader to you while he is gone."

"Sister Jimin, this is something you must also learn. If Aldrian ever decides to place the weight of decision-making on you in the future when he is not here, then you should be able to make decisions yourself without burdening him. As long as it is something we can resolve on our own without his intervention, we should take care of it."

"We, as his women, must share his burden and know how to ease it," Sylphia said.

Baek Jimin nodded with a smile. "I'll keep that in mind."

They continued their conversation under the beautiful night sky glimmering with stars, unaware that beyond those shining lights, a dangerous force had already begun to move toward the Ancient Blue Gate world.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 706 - 706: The Arrogant Decision

[1,625 words]

In the Fallen Star Cluster, a large fleet of interstellar vessels was leaving the atmosphere of the greatest star there, the Red Mist Star. The group consisted of thirty vessels of varied sizes, with the largest, the lead vessel capable of carrying a hundred thousand people, pushing into open space.

Such a sight was rare, appearing only in times of war with other stars, when great mobilizations occurred and millions of troops were dispatched. The scene was truly intimidating, for at this moment millions of devil troops stood ready to unleash destruction upon anything that blocked their path.

Within the foremost and largest vessel, the son of the Vampire King, Rulleus, sat in his most respected seat with command in his hands. Behind him stood three of his guards.

Two of them were at the middle pseudo-immortal stage, while the other was at the peak of the pseudo-immortal stage. They stood like guardian statues.

The leader of the devils from the Red Mist Star, Xarz, also stood beside them, following the orders of this prince. To be honest, Xarz at this moment cursed Rulleus thousands of times in his heart, resenting the prince's decision-making and arrogant attitude. He hated Rulleus for underestimating his adversaries, for to Xarz that was the sign of inevitable destruction.

Xarz was the type of leader who would think comprehensively before making a decision. Although he was a devil cultivator, he was not a fool who relied only on brawn without brain. He could make the best decisions, the kind that brought him benefits or led him to success.

That was why he hated arrogant young masters like Rulleus the most. Rulleus acted only on feelings without much thought, always confined within the norm and the box. As the son of the Vampire King, he simply did whatever he pleased, knowing he was the most likely to become his father's successor.

Now, Rulleus had recklessly ordered Xarz and his main troops to follow his forces toward the Ancient Blue Gate World to "greet" the one said to have foiled their plan. Xarz could only bury his rage, for he knew that if he disobeyed this arrogant man, he would be killed.

Still, to think that Rulleus would so arrogantly order him to guide both the prince and his troops to the Ancient Blue Gate World. In truth, Xarz knew that he and his main forces from the Red Mist Star had also been dragged along, with the intent of forcing them to confront the powers of the Ancient Blue Gate World.

However, Xarz knew that this order was no different from declaring war. With their current movements, they would likely be spotted by devils from other stars, who would in turn want to follow the armada. He knew that his past decision to cancel the attack on the Ancient Blue Gate World had not been popular, causing much dissatisfaction among his men and other powers from different stars.

He was the leader of the invasion, after all, and for him to suddenly cancel the plan simply because he felt deterred by someone's strength was not acceptable. Although Aldrian's story had already spread wide and far, many still desired war for the simplest of reasons, they wanted to wreak havoc and taste the battlefield again, something they had been deprived of for far too long.

If they saw an armada of thirty interstellar vessels departing from the greatest star not long after Rulleus's arrival, they would inevitably follow, believing that the prince intended to wage war against the Ancient Blue Gate World or even the Central Star Cluster.

True to his guess, the devils from the nearby star who had been observing Rulleus's armada as the highest-ranking force now decided to follow it. Many other vessels from different stars began moving in the same direction as Rulleus, hoping to join his journey.

Xarz thought that this was likely what Rulleus intended. He took advantage of others' eagerness for chaos, all he needed to do was trigger it, and others would follow.

With their growing movement, even the observers from the Central Star Cluster watching the scene would instantly assume a war was underway. The war was imminent if he did not stop Rulleus. But how could he halt the prince's reckless decision? There was nothing he could do, and it made him inwardly anxious.

He felt as though they were walking straight down the path of doom, and there was nothing he could do to prevent it.

"Xarz, are you unsatisfied with my decision?" Rulleus suddenly asked, pulling Xarz out of his thoughts. He responded instantly.

"Of course not, Your Highness. You are the highest command here, and I would follow any of your orders."

Rulleus merely smiled at Xarz's obvious lie. He knew it perfectly well but chose to ignore it entirely. He still could not believe that, with the strong troops he had brought from the central region of Heaven, combined with the massive forces of devils from all the nearby stars, the Ancient Blue Gate World would stand a chance.

Even if he had to face the entire Central Star Cluster, he remained confident in his troops. These were forces experienced in wars between stars, with influence spreading across many regions of the First Heaven.

He did not believe that a mortal could defeat a god, so he decided to take matters into his own hands. Although he did not understand why the Devil God seemed to have given up on plans to descend, he refused to believe that a mortal could defeat a god without seeing it with his own eyes.

That news was truly information he found too difficult to comprehend and swallow. To discover what had really happened, war was the only answer for him. He wanted to see this mysterious man and how he would face his own mighty troops.

Rulleus simply smiled as he leaned back in his seat.

"You should be more decisive, Xarz. Nothing good will come to you if you keep hesitating. I know you have your own opinions, but I have my confidence, and my confidence lies in my troops," he said, turning to one of his guards.

"Vertiz, eliminate those rats. We will strike the Ancient Blue Gate World with a surprise, so do not let them know too early."

"Yes, Your Highness," answered a vampire at the middle pseudo-immortal stage, before suddenly disappearing into the Red Mist.

Xarz, seeing this, could guess what the man intended and sighed inwardly.

'There is truly nothing I can do,' he thought.

Five thousand kilometers away from the armada, a cluster of asteroids floated between the two moons of the Red Mist Star. The sizes of the asteroids varied, with the largest comparable to the entire Barisan Continent.

With countless asteroids gathered here, it was an ideal place to hide, just like a lone interstellar vessel concealed behind the largest asteroid. The vessel was neither too big nor too small, but large enough to accommodate thousands of people.

This interstellar vessel was actually a surveillance ship, representing the powers of the Orian Continent, tasked with observing the movements of the devils from the Fallen Star Cluster.

At this moment, the leader of the vessel was a member of the Avilandis Imperial Family. The other powers aboard were under his command. He was a white-haired old man with a scar on his cheek, a testament to his harsh past experiences. He had reached peak pseudo immortal establishment stage, a level sufficient for a mission of this nature.

His daily activity while waiting for any movement or change of shift from the main world was cultivation, as was the habit of many others. At this moment, he was still in the middle of his cultivation when suddenly the door to his cabin signaled that someone was standing outside.

He opened his eyes and stopped his cultivation before standing up to open the door. A middle-aged man bowed to him.

"My apologies, Commander, but the observers have returned, and they seem to be in a rush to report something. I think they have spotted significant movement from the Fallen Star Cluster," the man said.

The commander narrowed his eyes and nodded.

"Alright." Without waiting any longer, he followed the man to one of the larger cabins, where he saw three men who looked exhausted from their hurried journey to the vessel. All of them were already being treated by others with drinks or pills to restore their energy, as it seemed they had spent much in reaching this place.

They were the forefront observers stationed at the side of the asteroid, tasked with monitoring movements from the Fallen Star Cluster, particularly those from the Red Mist Star.

If they noticed anything unusual, they would report it to him before he relayed the information to the headquarters at the Ancient Blue Gate World.

He narrowed his eyes at the men, who seemed to have rushed here with all their strength. Had something significant happened in the Fallen Star Cluster?

"Speak. What did you see to make you come like this?" he asked.

One of them hurriedly replied.

"My lord, we observed two things," he said, gasping briefly to catch his breath before continuing.

"The first is from the Red Mist Star, a group of thirty interstellar vessels has departed, and it seems their destination is the Ancient Blue Gate World."

Hearing the report, the commander and those nearby widened their eyes in shock. Thirty interstellar vessels?! There was no doubt that this armada alone was enough to start a war, and it had happened not long after the unknown devils from outside the cluster had visited the Red Mist Star.

"What about the second?" the commander asked, his expression grim.

"The second is—" The man's lips suddenly curved into a slight grin. "Your own doom."

The commander and the others were stunned, but their shock deepened when the three bodies of the observers suddenly began to glow with a red light before—

BOOM!

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Chapter 707 - 707: Cutting the Information Network

[1,486 words]

BOOM!

The three bodies of observers suddenly exploded, tearing apart an entire section of the vessel. Many were instantly killed in the blast, as no one had been prepared for such a sudden explosion. At the same time, more explosions erupted in other parts of the asteroid cluster.

These were vessels belonging to other powers from the Ancient Blue Gate World and even from other stars. All of them were destroyed in the same manner, as the observers inside suddenly detonated.

"Fuck! What the hell was that?!"

"Are the devils attacking us?! Why was there no warning?!"

"Prepare for battle! Wait for the commander's order!"

On the vessel carrying the powers of the Orian Continent, the crew fell into panic at the unexpected blasts. However, being trained personnel, they quickly assumed they were under attack by the devils and immediately took their positions, preparing for battle.

Despite the front side of the vessel being badly damaged, and the ship drifting on its own from the force of the explosion that pushed it aside, the people inside did not fall into chaos for too long. Many quickly rushed toward the damaged section, only to be shocked by the sheer scale of destruction.

The blast had truly blown apart a massive chunk of the vessel's front, and in this state, they knew that using warp was out of the question. With the ship so heavily damaged, they could only rely on normal flight to move.

"Where is the commander?! Didn't he just come here a moment ago?" shouted one of them as he inspected the blast site. Suddenly, he sensed something near the wrecked section of the vessel. A moment later, a figure appeared, as if materializing from the ruins.

The sight of him made many widen their eyes, and they quickly approached.

"My lord!" they shouted, to which the commander only responded with a nod. His face was grim as he looked at the space now exposed before him. Fortunately, he has a protective talisman, which activated the moment he realized something was wrong with the observers. That was the only reason he was still alive and breathing.

The destruction had left the vessel crippled, turning it into a sitting duck. He gritted his teeth, frustrated that he had not realized earlier that the observers had fallen under a hypnotic technique.

A technique he could not detect could only mean that the one who cast it was far stronger than him. Combined with the red light he saw before the explosion, and the fact it used living bodies as its medium, he recognized it instantly.

'The vampire's blood laws... the Explosive Blood Puppet,' the commander thought.

This meant their position had already been compromised, and the devils of the vampire race were now attacking them.

While he was still frustrated by his late realization that had cost so many lives, he suddenly sensed something approaching from space. The others felt it as well, and all of them instantly turned toward the same direction. A few moments later, the shapes came into view, and what they saw made him frown.

"What is that?" one of the men asked in confusion.

After another moment, they finally saw the details clearly, and their eyes widened in shock. What approached was a massive swarm of flying beings, so numerous that from a distance they looked like a red mist spreading through space.

"Those are Red Fur Bats! The bloodsucker bats of the vampire race!" the commander shouted. Then his voice rose with urgency, "Kill them before they bite you! If you're bitten, you'll be paralyzed and drained of blood until you're dead!"

At once, many began unleashing elemental attacks against the incoming swarm. Countless blasts struck the bats, yet the red tide seemed endless, surging toward the crippled vessel like a wave.

The commander drew his artifact, a spear from his storage ring, and swept it toward the incoming wave of bats. With a single swing, he split the swarm apart, the strike even shattering part of a massive asteroid nearby.

His pseudo-immortal establishment stage cultivation's aura flared, as he continued his relentless assault. Each strike not only tore through thousands bats but even ripped open spatial cracks in the void.

Yet the swarm seemed endless, as if more appeared from nowhere to replace those just slain.

If the vessel were intact, they could have raised its barrier. But with the ship crippled, they had no choice but to fight in the open.

After several moments of struggle, the tide of bats finally reached them. Just as the commander had warned, many people were bitten. The instant their fangs sank in, paralysis spread through the victims' bodies. They collapsed to the floor, unable to circulate their inner energy, unable to move at all.

The bats injected paralyzing venom with each bite before sinking their fangs deeper, draining their victims dry of blood.

"Aghh!"

"Noo!"

"Fall back! Fall back to the deeper part of the vessel! Stay away from those monsters!"

Panic spread instantly as the swarm grew more brutal. In barely fifteen seconds, countless people had already fallen as victims. Their bodies shriveled within moments, drained dry by thousands upon thousands of bats.

The commander and a handful of others at the pseudo-immortal establishment stage still managed to hold the line, their powerful techniques barely keeping the swarm from overwhelming them. But even they were starting to be forced back. For every one they killed, five more appeared. The wave showed no sign of ending.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

The commander swung his spear in rapid succession. Each strike annihilated thousands of bats in an instant, yet it was never enough. He knew the swarm had already rampaging through the vessel's interior. The screams of his men reached his ears, screams filled with terror and death. But he could do nothing. His own life was hanging by a thread as the endless tide pressed ever closer.

'Fuck, did those bastard devils at the pseudo-immortal stage come here directly? How could they know our position when I was certain we were hidden from their senses all this time?' he thought.

Even as he attacked, his mind racing, but he suddenly sensed something amidst the endless swarm. His head turned to another direction, still striking down bats as he looked. His body trembled when he saw a figure standing among the swarm, menacing red eyes fixed on him. The commander instantly knew, this had to be the master of the bats!

Abandoning his defensive stance, he dashed forward and unleashed his most powerful strike. His spear glowed with a blinding light as he thrust it toward the figure, who simply stood there, watching him calmly.

But then, a chill ran down his spine. He sensed something at his side. Goosebumps shot across his body as he realized the figure before him was nothing but an illusion woven from the bats. The real one was already at his side!

Before he could react, the figure grabbed his arm in a crushing grip, halting his spear. No matter how he struggled, he couldn't push the attack forward.

The commander's eyes locked on the black-haired vampire beside him. He tried to strike with a desperate kick but—

Grab!

The vampire grabbed his head with his free hand and lifted him effortlessly. The commander's kick struck the vampire's head, but it had no effect. The vampire didn't even flinch, its crimson gaze fixed coldly on him while its grip tightened around his skull.

"Weaklings that exist only as my nourishment. Cattle that have no right to resist me," the vampire said, voice dripping with disdain.

Suddenly, the commander felt his body wither.

"No... no!" he tried to scream, but the words barely left his lips as every drop of blood, every ounce of life, was drained from him. In less than ten seconds, only bones remained. His death was swift and merciless.

When the vampire was finished, he flung the corpse aside. The swarm of bats descended immediately, tearing into the remains with ravenous hunger.

The vampire, one of Rulleus's guardians named Vertiz, looked over his pets as they wreaked havoc everywhere. The vessel was already engulfed by his swarm of bats, and the other vessels scattered throughout the asteroid cluster had met the same fate. He had dealt with them swiftly, this ship was the last.

Now there were no eyes or ears left to report back to the Central Star Cluster. It was a basic strategy, silence the enemy's intelligence network. When the Central Star Cluster realized what had happened, it would already be too late. They would only discover the truth when the vast armada of devils appeared in their own territory.

With his task complete, Vertiz dissolved into a red mist, vanishing along with his countless bats, leaving behind nothing but a destroyed interstellar vessels and the stains of blood that testified to the carnage.

Back aboard Rulleus's vessel, Vertiz reformed and gave a slight bow.

"It's done, your Highness," he said.

Rulleus smiled.

"Good. Now we can catch them off guard. There will be a surprise waiting for them."

Xarz, hearing this, sighed inwardly.

'Well, I hope that's the case... and not that we are the ones surprised.'

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Chapter 708 - 708: The Conversation With Spirit Ancestor 1

[1,633 words]

Aldrian at this moment already sat on his sofa while the Spirit Ancestor sat across from him. As for the others, they also sat not far from them. The Spirit Ancestor's retainer and guardian stood behind her sofa where she sat, while the others kept a slight respectful distance, although what they did seemed disrespectful.

Well, they were truly curious about Aldrian and the Spirit Ancestor's conversation, and Aldrian seemed not to mind that their conversation was being heard.

Aldrian kept observing the Spirit Ancestor, who had lived for almost a million years! This was the oldest being he had ever directly seen in this life. The Spirit Ancestor was a spirit called the Celestial Night Spirit, a spirit race that legends said was born from the night not long after the first heaven was created.

Many said that this was one of the oldest spirit races and one of the rarest, which also explained why their population was so sparse compared to other spirit races. Their specialty?

Looking into the secrets of heaven.

It was different from the clairvoyance techniques or visions that some cultivators had, or someone like Angelica or the Spirit of the World Tree, to whom the heavens had given a special privilege to see the possibilities of future events. All of them had to wait passively for the heavens to give them a sign. Even if they tried to force it, those who wished to see the signs would have to pay a price to look into the secrets of heaven.

It was like, "Oh, you want to see the heaven's secret? Then you have to pay for it."

That price could be their fate, their luck, their karma, or even their life, depending on how great the secret they sought to uncover was.

However, the Celestial Night Spirit was said to be a special spirit race capable of looking into the secrets of heaven without suffering major setbacks, no matter how great the secret was.

As a spirit race, they were already adored by both the heavens and nature, as they were first born from the very nature of the universe itself.

Without suffering major setbacks, they were a truly valuable race, revered by many for their ability. Yet because this ability was so precious to all beings, it seemed the heavens had also placed a balance upon them, limiting their birth rate so that it was never too high.

Their race was known to exist only in the Ancient Blue Gate World and nowhere else. Within this world, there were no more than fifty members of the race, and even in a span of a thousand years, not a single new member might appear.

But unfortunately, not all beings shared the same respect that the beasts of the Beast Continent had toward this spirit race. Because of their innate ability to communicate with the heavens so easily, many regarded them as a great threat that had to be eliminated.

There was a time when this race nearly became extinct because they were hunted by humans while they still resided on another continent. That was also the reason this spirit race migrated to the Beast Continent. The beasts here were far more visionary, for they saw that this spirit race would bring them great value, so they decided to protect them.

With the Celestial Night Spirit successfully relocating to the Beast Continent, their pursuers did not dare to enter recklessly. How could they simply barge into a territory where dragons, phoenixes, and other powerful spiritual beasts resided? Doing so would invite their own destruction, forcing them to leave the Celestial Night Spirit alone.

Even so, to this day, there are still those among the human race who see them as a threat.

'Elder Sariel, the most powerful and the oldest Celestial Night Spirit. Her ability to look into the secrets of heaven is undoubtedly the strongest compared to the others because of her powerful cultivation,' Aldrian thought.

'Many stories and legends about her have spread, but one question always lingers—why has she not ascended to the higher heavens yet? Normally, a being would strive for greater power and immortality, but she still chooses to remain in this heaven.'

After a moment of silence, Aldrian finally opened his lips, trying to appear as warm as possible before this grandmotherly figure.

"So, Elder Sariel, I know that you must have your own reason for acting that way in front of me. It truly surprised me when you suddenly knelt, which makes me very curious. What did you see in me, Elder? Why did you act that way?"

The others were also wondering what had happened, their eyes fixed on the Spirit Ancestor as they waited for her answer. Elder Sariel, still gripping her cane with both hands even though she was already seated, finally spoke.

"How could I not do that before the light that will spread across the universe, erasing the evil and the outsiders' influence that encroaches upon it? How could I not do that before the true bearer of the crown, sovereign over all beings of the universe?"

Hearing the Spirit Ancestor's words, the others were utterly astonished and turned to look at Aldrian again in shock.

The Spirit Ancestor placed Aldrian on such a high pedestal? Wasn't that too high, as if he were some kind of god who ruled this universe alone? They knew there were surely many gods beyond their knowledge, but to claim that this human was the true ruler of all?

Just what kind of existence was the man before them?

Aldrian raised his eyebrows. From the way the Spirit Ancestor spoke, it seemed she already knew about the invasion of the universe, the truth and the hidden danger of those invaders. This was the first time he had met someone who already realized that most of the universe was under occupation, and who more or less understood his role in this journey.

Aldrian nodded in understanding, finding it no surprise given her innate ability and the heavens' favor upon her. He then raised his hand to his mask and removed it from his face, revealing his true appearance to those who had not yet seen it here.

The Spirit Ancestor's two companions slightly widened their eyes, especially the guard. She was one of the beings who had directly witnessed Aldrian fight Tarius at that time. Under the Spirit Ancestor's orders, she and several others had gone to the Barisan Continent then.

Of course she recognized his face, it was the same as that giant avatar who had unleashed the most powerful strike she had ever witnessed.

She knew the Spirit Ancestor insisted on visiting this place now because she had seen something in her visions, though she herself could not understand it. Although they were both Celestial Night Spirits, her ability was nowhere near that of the Spirit Ancestor.

The only thing she knew was that the Spirit Ancestor had explained she saw a light would visit the phoenix territory, but the guard did not know which light it was. It could have been Aldrian, but she was not certain—there might have been another light in the Spirit Ancestor's vision.

Now it was confirmed. The light she had seen was this man, the one who had fought an immortal and saved the day.

The Spirit Ancestor's half-closed eyes, already wet with tears. As the tears began to fall, she moved as if to drop to her knees again, but Aldrian sighed and held her in place with the surrounding energy.

"Elder, please... this makes me uncomfortable. Don't fall to your knees every time you see me, Elder. I truly feel bad to make you act that way," he said, which made the Spirit Ancestor stop what she intended and remain seated.

"My apologies, Your Majesty. I was simply overwhelmed that I could finally see your glorious face directly. To live until this day and behold Your Majesty is truly my greatest blessing," the Spirit Ancestor said.

Aldrian only nodded.

"So, Elder, I suppose you know about the universe already being invaded by outside entities?" Aldrian asked.

The Spirit Ancestor nodded. "Yes, I know. And that is also why I chose not to ascend. If I ascend, I will encounter many of them. I fear I may be forced to act against my will, and even worse, I may end up betraying this universe."

Aldrian nodded again, while the others, hearing this for the first time, finally understood the reason she had chosen not to ascend. Even her own retainer and personal guard were surprised. They had already asked her in the past why she postponed her ascension, but she had only answered, "It's not the right time," leaving them no choice but to accept it.

But it seemed there was something deeper than that, and another question rose in their minds. Who were these invaders mentioned by this young man, and also known to the Spirit Ancestor? The universe being invaded? This was truly shocking news.

Aldrian knew the others here would not fully understand what he and the Spirit Ancestor were about to discuss if he did not explain it first. Now that the Spirit Ancestor had brought this topic into the open, he thought it was time for them to learn about the threat looming over the First Heaven and about these invaders.

Aldrian turned his gaze to the others in the room.

"I believe you must be curious about these invaders we mentioned, so I will tell you about them..." He began to explain how their universe was being invaded by beings from another universe, also revealing this to be the true source of the devils.

He did not go into too much detail, only laying out the general facts of the invasion, yet even that was enough to leave them utterly astonished.

When Aldrian finished, Shen Longwei's aura suddenly started to leak, his eyes turning cold.

"I see... so that's how it is, everything connects now," he said through clenched teeth.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 709 - 709: The Conversation With Spirit Ancestor 2

[1,553 words]

Shen Longwei's eyes turned truly cold as he thought about something. His aura even started to leak, and that alone was enough to make the space around him tremble. Zhu Yanling felt the same, but she did not show a reaction like Shen Longwei.

"Calm yourselves, Dragon King and Phoenix Queen," Aldrian said as he tried to ease them.

"Your Excellency, if the records about the Divine Dragon and Phoenix at that time are correct, then I assume they were hurt by those invaders, right?" Shen Longwei suddenly asked, to which Aldrian responded with a nod.

Aldrian knew that the Dragon King could connect the dots himself. He was not stupid, and Aldrian knew that was what made him angry. Although they did not know if that Divine Dragon was actually their one and true Ancient Dragon God, for them, that dragon was still a Divine Dragon. Shen Longwei felt anger that a being as divine as a dragon had to suffer wounds caused by the invaders.

Aldrian knew that the dragons had high pride, and Shen Longwei did not believe that a Divine Dragon would ever escape like a coward. Whatever the reason for the Divine Dragon being hurt and forced to move toward the Barisan Continent, he did not believe, even for a moment, that the Divine Dragon had left the battlefield out of fear.

Instead, he thought about the purpose behind why the Divine Dragon had to escape to the Barisan Continent, and that too with a Divine Phoenix. Zhu Yanling also thought the same, yet they both still felt rage toward those invaders who had caused divine beings of their races to suffer.

"Your Excellency, what are you going to do in the future? Are you going to face those invaders? Are you going to face those enemies from many universes?" Shen Longwei asked as his expression turned solemn.

Aldrian showed a smile. "Well, that is something I intend to do. This is already my personal business, and I will not stop until my purpose is achieved. One of them is to bring judgment upon those invaders," he said.

"Then please let me join you in your journey, Your Excellency. I would like to help you in your endeavor to cleanse the universe of those invaders!" Shen Longwei said.

"Me too, Your Excellency. Please allow me to join as well," Zhu Yanling added.

"Well, you are welcome to join me, but you must not rush or act recklessly. For now, there is still something I need to do in this star cluster before I begin my journey outward. Be patient. I know you are angry and your spirit for battle is ignited, but there will be a time for that in the future," Aldrian said.

Shen Longwei and Zhu Yanling released a deep breath and nodded. Aldrian nodded in appreciation. It was good that they were able to keep their heads cool, as reckless actions driven by emotions would only bring their own destruction.

Still, Aldrian was glad that they would join his future plans. In fact, he was already thinking about gathering power from everywhere to help him purge the invaders. He thought that with how wide the First Heaven was, he would need much help to deal with the many invaders who might have already entered this heaven.

Even though he could make the entire heaven his domain, he still needed many hands to help him carry out the purging more effectively.

"For now, King Shen and Queen Zhu, just act as usual and do not let this news spread outside. We do not want to cause unnecessary trouble by releasing this information prematurely. It will be better to reveal it only after I open the Barisan Continent to the world," Aldrian said.

Shen Longwei and Zhu Yanling nodded their heads. It was no wonder that the Elder did not spread this kind of vision to other powers and had only recently told the Dragon King and Phoenix Queen about Aldrian. If she had revealed such visions long ago, it would have only caused unrest, and many might even have chosen to join the devils.

"Your Majesty, although I look old, I can still help you in many ways. So I would also like to join you," Spirit Ancestor said.

"Elder," her retainer spoke in a worried tone, but Spirit Ancestor raised her hand as a sign that she had already made her decision. The retainer could only sigh and glance at Aldrian once more. She had never seen Spirit Ancestor this active before. The one who

had lived a secluded life was now voluntarily stepping onto what seemed to be a bloody path in the future.

"That would be good, Elder, but I hope you do not push yourself too far. But are your innate ability really does not bring huge setbacks? When I heard about the Celestial Night Spirit, I thought the heavens truly favored your spirit kind. To see heaven's secrets without facing backlash or paying a price feels almost too good to be true to me," Aldrian said.

Spirit Ancestor nodded.

"That's true, Your Majesty. There is really no setback for us when we try to look into heaven's secrets. However, the process of uncovering those secrets depends on how great the secret we wish to unravel is. The process requires us to continually recite a certain mantra until we receive what we seek. If the secret is greater, then we must recite it for a much longer time," she said.

"So, Elder, how long did you recite before receiving your visions regarding me?" Aldrian asked.

"I had to recite the mantra for a thousand years in the past when I asked heaven about the future of the world. Only then did I receive a sign that someone would appear like a light in the future, when the world fell into its greatest crisis. Then, seventeen years ago, the phenomenon of the manifestation of the Divine Dragon and Phoenix appeared in the sky. Recently, the devils' plan was also revealed. From all of this, I knew that the time of the prophecy had come, and at last, Your Majesty successfully thwarted the devils' plan."

Hearing that, Shen Longwei and Zhu Yanling nodded in understanding. Although this spirit kind did not face any consequences, they still had to put in effort to look into heaven's secrets. A thousand years in seclusion and continuously reciting a mantra? They could not imagine how Spirit Ancestor managed to endure it and remain consistent.

"Then how about Elder knowing that the universe is under invasion from the outsiders? I thought at first Elder must not have known if something strange was happening in the universe, right? So how could Elder know about the invasion?" Aldrian asked again.

"This is because, at one point in time, I wanted to know the truth about the origin of the devils. After a hundred years of seclusion, I finally received my answer, and it left me in distress," Spirit Ancestor answered.

"That was what also led me to ask heaven about the fate of this world, which made me learn about Your Majesty."

The others felt enlightened by this new information, as Spirit Ancestor had never told them about it before.

"I see. Well, it seems like I have been the only one asking questions since earlier. I feel as if I have been interrogating Elder. Does Elder have something you wish to ask me?" Aldrian said.

There was silence for a moment. For the others, there were many things they wanted to ask, because Aldrian's existence was still new to them. They wanted to know what kind of person Aldrian was, and also many things about him and the Barisan Continent.

"Then, Your Majesty, my apologies if this question touches upon your secrets or anything hidden, but... are you a god currently residing in the body of a mortal?" Spirit Ancestor asked, which made the others widen their eyes and turn to Aldrian, waiting to hear his answer.

Aldrian smiled as he looked at the Spirit Ancestor.

"Well, am I a god right now? No, I am not," he answered. But his words carried a certain ambiguity that the people here tried to interpret.

"Right now" was the key. What did he mean by that? Did Aldrian imply that he would become a god in the future? Or that he had once been a god in the past? This answer only deepened their desire to know more details from him.

"I see... so that is how it is. This is truly fate," Spirit Ancestor suddenly said, which made the others turn to look at her. Did she understand something? Could you please tell us what you know elder? We too wanted to know!

"You as well, if you have questions, I will answer them, as long as I feel they are questions I can answer," Aldrian said while looking at Shen Longwei and Zhu Yanling.

Hearing that, they did not hesitate to ask questions about him and the Barisan Continent. They also asked about Long Shentian and Feng Xuanyan, to which he only gave partial information.

This question and answer session gradually shifted into a normal conversation and discussion that lasted for hours. With the most prominent figures of the Beast Continent and Aldrian gathered in one place, there were many things to be shared and learned from one another.

The discussion continued until morning and only came to a stop when Aldrian received an interesting report from Vars.

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Chapter 710 - 710: The Strange Move From Barevisk Family?

[1,524 words]

While in the middle of his conversation with the spirit ancestor and others, Vars suddenly sent him a voice transmission that made him stop speaking.

'Master, I received an order from the patriarch. Our mission here seems to be shortened, and we are asked to prepare to leave within the next three weeks. We were ordered to gather as much information as possible about you during that time.'

Aldrian raised his eyebrows. This kind of order seemed strange, and for the Barevisk family to pull back their spies from the Barisan continent even though they had not been there for long was something that required his attention. Was there some change in the Barevisk family that made the patriarch recall the spies?

'Do you know anything, or have any guess why they would pull your team out, and even set a limit of three weeks?' Aldrian asked.

As of this moment, the others knew that Aldrian seemed to be communicating with someone through voice transmission, since he suddenly turned silent in the middle of their conversation. They did not know who he was contacting, but they still waited for him to finish.

'I don't know, Master. I'm also surprised by this development. Initially, we had an indefinite amount of time here, but for the patriarch to suddenly call us back, it seems something must have happened for him to recall us. And with it being three weeks, if I have to guess, maybe something will happen after that time,' Vars answered.

Aldrian thought for a moment before he replied.

'Alright, just continue what you are doing. Let me know if there is any new development.'

'Yes, Master.' After that, he cut off the communication. But Aldrian could not help thinking about what Vars had told him. What was the Barevisk—no, more specifically, the Valroy family planning? For the Barevisk family to order their spies to return after three weeks, the Valroy family must have told them something.

Did they achieve something that made them pull the spies? No, he doubted that, since the information that came in every report so far did not contain anything important, at

least in his eyes. Then what other reason could have made the Barevisk family recall their spies?

"Is everything alright, Your Majesty?"

Aldrian's thoughts were interrupted by Zhu Yanling's question. Now that she, and everyone else here, already knew his status in the Barisan continent, the way she addressed him had also changed. He smiled and nodded.

"Everything is fine. I just received some information from one of my men, and it seems I have to return to the Barisan continent," he said, which made the others here sigh.

Hearing that Aldrian wanted to go back, they felt regretful, as there were still many things they wished to discuss with him.

"I see. It's truly unfortunate, but I hope Your Majesty could visit this place again in the future. We will greet you more properly than we did this time," Zhu Yanling said.

"Alright. Or perhaps you could visit the Barisan continent in the near future, as I have decided to open it no later than a month from now," Aldrian said, which surprised the others.

He could not help but think that whatever the Valroy family planned, it would be better if he opened the Barisan continent to the world as soon as possible. He wondered if they would come to him directly once the continent was opened, since it would be much easier to gather information from them that way.

Although he felt the opening was somewhat too early, he thought it was still acceptable. With the connections he had already built with other powers during his short journey outside the Barisan continent, it would be enough for early support.

So, besides his own existence as the leader of the Barisan continent, there were also many powers that stood beside him, which in the end would raise the Barisan continent's position despite its weakness.

"Is that so? Then we will surely come to the Barisan continent once you open it, Your Majesty. I am truly curious to see the continent for myself," Shen Longwei said in an eager tone.

Aldrian nodded, then stood up.

"Anyway, this is it. To be honest, I would like to stay longer, but unfortunately something came up that requires me to return first. I will be waiting for your visit in the future."

"It's okay, Your Majesty. You can finish your business, and my territory will always be open to you. You may visit us anytime, and I would gladly visit the Barisan continent once Your Majesty announces its opening," Zhu Yanling said.

"The dragons will also welcome Your Majesty anytime you visit us in the future," Shen Longwei said.

"It seems this will be the first time I make a journey outside the Beast Continent. It has been so long since I last traveled outside," the spirit ancestor said, which made her retainer and guard look at her with concern.

"Elder, what about those who would try to harm you if you decided to leave?" her guard asked.

Shen Longwei suddenly snorted when he heard that. "You don't have to worry about anyone who wants to harm Elder Sariel. I want to see who dares to touch her in my presence. I will be the one to protect her," he said.

"You don't have to worry Lady Marvil. I will also protect Elder Sariel, so with our protection, no one would dare to touch her," Zhu Yanling said.

However, the Spirit Ancestor's personal guard still looked worried.

"I am truly thankful that the Dragon King and the Phoenix Queen will personally protect Elder Sariel, but humans can be cunning. They could still do something without us knowing. With many of them seeing Elder as a threat that must be eliminated, I worry that a few may still recklessly take action, since Elder will be leaving the Beast Continent for the first time in such a long time," she said.

"You don't have to worry about the humans, Lady Marvil. Believe me, no harm will come to Elder Sariel if she visits the Barisan continent. I personally guarantee that no one would dare to make a reckless move there—no, I dare say, not anywhere in the Ancient Blue Gate World," Aldrian suddenly said, his words filled with assurance.

The others who heard it felt that the statement was truly arrogant, but this was Aldrian they were talking about. He had the power to back it up. If he was confident enough to guarantee Elder Sariel's protection across the entire world, then perhaps he truly had the strength to do so.

The Spirit Ancestor's personal guard sighed and nodded.

"Alright, if Your Majesty Aldrian has already said that, then I have nothing more to worry about. I am truly thankful for Your Majesties' support in the future."

Aldrian nodded, while the Dragon King and Phoenix Queen smiled.

"I am truly sorry for troubling all of you, people of esteemed status, to concern yourselves with me simply because I wish to make a journey outside. I truly feel ashamed," the Spirit Ancestor suddenly said, which made Aldrian smile.

"No, Elder, really it is nothing. You do not have to feel ashamed or troubled. King Shen, Queen Zhu, and I voluntarily assure your safety, it is nothing close to a burden. As for me, although it may sound arrogant, believe me when I say you are safe across the entire Ancient Blue Gate World. As long as you are in this world, I can assure your safety from anyone, no matter who they are," he said.

The others, once again hearing Aldrian's strong and seemingly arrogant assurance, were reminded of how absurd his existence as a human truly was. After their discussion, they understood why the Spirit Ancestor had asked if Aldrian was a god in a mortal body. They simply could not comprehend how someone like him could exist.

If an existence like the Celestial Night Spirit, said to be adored by the heavens, was enough to stir jealousy, and if beings such as the Dragon King and Phoenix Queen could make others envious, then what about Aldrian? Their uniqueness and power were truly like nothing in front of him, and he was still only in the low pseudo-immortal establishment stage!

He could already do many things with his current cultivation, which was incomprehensible. What would happen if he reached the peak pseudo-immortal stage? Would he be able to fight against many immortals with ease? The thought alone made them shudder.

The Spirit Ancestor sighed and nodded. "Thank you for the assurance, Your Majesty. I truly appreciate it."

Aldrian nodded.

"Your Majesty, if it's alright, would you like to use one of our cruisers for your journey back? You could rest while some of my men control the cruiser to the Barisan continent," Shen Longwei said.

Aldrian smiled and shook his head. "Thank you, but that won't be necessary. I can teleport directly from here to the Barisan continent," he said, which left the others astonished.

"Well then, thank you for all of your hospitality. I will be waiting for your arrival in the near future." After saying that, Aldrian disappeared, shocking the others.

They truly could not sense anything from Aldrian's teleportation, and they remained speechless. Could he really teleport directly to the Barisan continent from here?

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Chapter 711 - 711: Catching Up What He missed, Plan for Tournament

[1,733 words]

Aldrian appeared in the sky above the Barisan continent and looked down. Although he had not been away for too long, it felt as though he had been gone for ages. Truly, there was nothing better than his home.

He focused his domain's sense on his palace to check on his family and instantly located his loved ones. Sylphia seemed to be in the middle of a discussion with her father, King Ladwin. He wondered why his future father-in-law had come to the palace, but he set that thought aside for now.

Baek Jimin was in another place, cultivating in one of the special training rooms. She was working hard to sharpen her instincts as both a fighter and a cultivator. Her cultivation was stable and slowly rising from the low Marquess stage. Since her meeting with the wife of the Heavenly Demon, Baek Jimin had also been undergoing a transformation.

They had not yet dual cultivated and had only normal sex, but even so, her cultivation had already improved greatly and become much firmer because of the wife of the Heavenly Demon. He was truly thankful to her for helping Baek Jimin and hoped to meet her again in the future.

Then came Zander. He seemed to be in the middle of his daily training, and what Aldrian sensed from him once again reminded him of how unfair such an existence was from the perspective of a normal cultivator. Aldrian was truly amazed by the quick development of his disciple, as at this moment Zander's cultivation had already reached the middle Earl stage.

Zander had achieved this in no more than a month since breaking through to the low Earl stage. Such cultivation speed was truly insane, supported by an excellent environment. Aldrian nodded in satisfaction and looked for the others. His father was in the middle of his sword training, while his mother was engaged in conversation with Eleine and Angelica.

In another part of the palace, Aurelia and Reiss were in the midst of their cultivation. They practiced diligently, eager to become stronger. Moreover, after receiving their new cultivation technique from him, their spirits had risen even higher.

All in all, there were no problems here, so he decided to teleport in front of the guest room where Sylphia and King Ladwin were having their discussion. He put on a smile before opening the doors. Sylphia and King Ladwin were stunned as the doors suddenly opened while they were still in the middle of their conversation.

However, the moment they saw who had entered, Sylphia was shocked before she stood up and ran toward Aldrian.

"You are already back!" she said enthusiastically as she instantly hugged him, and Aldrian let her embrace him as he also wrapped his arms around her warm body. King Ladwin also stood up and walked toward him with a smile.

"I heard that Your Majesty went outside the continent and might be gone for a long time, but you have already come back?" he asked.

"Father-in-law, please, it's only us here. Don't call me that, it makes us feel distanced," Aldrian said as he continued holding Sylphia.

"Ahahaha, it's just a habit, young Aldrian. Anyway, how was it outside? Although you weren't gone for too long, I believe you must have many stories to share with this father-in-law of yours, right?" King Ladwin asked teasingly, which Aldrian responded to with a nod.

"Of course, Father-in-law. I have many interesting stories from outside," Aldrian answered before lowering his head to look at Sylphia, who seemed unwilling to let go of him.

"Dear, would you like to hear it too?" Upon hearing his question, Sylphia instantly raised her head and looked directly at his face.

"Of course, but before that, I really thought you would be gone for a long time. Yet you are already back after a little more than two weeks. Did you already find what you were looking for?" she asked, to which Aldrian responded with a nod.

"Yes, I have. Luckily, I had great fortune with me, so my journey this time was truly an easy one, and I found my destination without much difficulty," he answered. "Anyway, I am also curious about what I missed while I was gone for more than two weeks."

They then began a storytelling session, with Sylphia also reporting what had happened during his absence.

Both Sylphia and King Ladwin showed amazed expressions throughout Aldrian's story as he recounted his experiences on the journey. His tale truly broadened their knowledge about the world beyond the Barisan continent.

Still, as expected from Aldrian, hearing that he had met with many people of the highest status in such a short time was not really surprising. If Aldrian wanted something to happen, then it would surely happen according to his will and plan.

They were also curious about the dragons and the phoenix, as they had never seen them in their lives. Both dragons and phoenixes had gone extinct on their continent a long time ago, and hearing that these beings wished to visit their land made them eager to witness them directly.

"Did you not meet any elves, young Aldrian?" King Ladwin asked.

"I only saw a few of them on the streets, but I never spoke to them. The elves have their own continent, and all of them live there. I have not visited their land yet, but those elves will come to this continent anyway, as I plan to open the continent next week."

Hearing that, King Ladwin raised his eyebrows.

"Opening the continent? Are you sure, young Aldrian? Isn't that too fast?"

"Well, certain circumstances made me decide to open it much sooner, but I will make sure there are no problems after the continent is opened," Aldrian replied.

"What kind of problem? Is it serious enough for you to open the continent as soon as possible?" Sylphia asked.

"Well, for me it's not really a big problem, but it would become a bother if left unattended. I just feel that solving it will be much easier if I open the continent sooner. Besides, our continent's development will progress much faster once we are connected to the outside world, so it's not all bad."

Sylphia simply nodded. If he said it would be fine and that the problem could be solved this way, then she trusted him. King Ladwin felt the same, as he already believed that Aldrian's plan would work and that he could solve any problem.

"If you say so," King Ladwin said.

"Anyway, I like the idea of a grand tournament. It will attract many people from various backgrounds to participate, and I am truly looking forward to it," Aldrian commented. "As for the details of its implementation, Father-in-law could arrange a tournament for each cultivation category, and all of them will receive rewards from me."

King Ladwin nodded. "Alright."

After that, they conversed for another hour before King Ladwin left the palace. Once he was gone, Aldrian and Sylphia continued their lovey-dovey act, with Sylphia clinging to

his body as she leaned her head against his chest with her eyes closed. It was as if she wanted to hear his heartbeat, which was calming for her.

"Thank you for your work while I was gone, love," Aldrian said.

"It's nothing. As long as I can help you, then I will do so," Sylphia answered. She then opened her eyes and lifted her head to look at him. "However, are you sure you want to reward each category of cultivation in the tournament yourself? Isn't that too extravagant? Wouldn't it be better if you just rewarded one or two categories and let the royal families handle the rest?"

"That's alright. I have enough treasures to give as rewards even for many years to come. It is better to use them for this purpose than let them gather dust inside the vault. This will also make the participants more eager to do their best, even pushing past their limits, even if they are only at the beginner stage," Aldrian replied with a smile.

What he said was true. He had so many treasures at this moment that if he used them only for his own family or his descendants in the future, they would not run out for many years to come. In fact, he even doubted that his treasures would ever be exhausted, even if he used them solely for himself or his family.

It would be better to spread them among others, such as by giving them as rewards for the tournament. This would also strengthen the continent's power and push the younger generation to do their best.

Sylphia nodded, but then she suddenly felt Aldrian's hand on her waist tighten, which made her raise her eyebrows as she looked at him. Aldrian smiled naughtily and leaned closer to her ear.

"Because you have already become my replacement, doing the work in my stead while I was gone, I think it's only right that I give you a reward, isn't it?" he whispered, tightening his hand on her waist. His hot breath brushing against her sensitive ear made Sylphia's body tremble.

Her face flushed red as she understood what Aldrian meant, and she couldn't help but turn her face away.

"What are you talking about? This is still broad daylight. You could wait until later, or ask Sister Jimin," she said in a small, embarrassed voice, though she did not resist his embrace.

"No, this is a special reward for you. Why would you bring Jimin into this? She will have her own later. Besides, I think your body is eager as well," he replied, sniffing her neck, which almost drew a moan from her lips.

She really couldn't resist his advances at this moment.

"Then let's—"

"No, we will do it here." Aldrian's words cut off Sylphia, making her widen her eyes before she felt both of her hands grabbed by one of his as he pressed her down onto the sofa.

"Dear~?" her voice trembled.

"We will try something new today, my love, and this place is perfect for it." At that moment, Sylphia was like a rabbit before a great wolf, completely at his mercy.

Soon after, the sound of clapping flesh and moans filled with ecstasy echoed inside the guest room, continuing for many hours.

While Aldrian and Sylphia indulged in their carnal desire, elsewhere the young master of the Valroy family sipped a glass of wine while gazing at the scenery outside his mansion. Just as he seemed to be enjoying the moment alone, a voice called from outside his room.

"Young master, a report has come."

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Chapter 712 - 712: His Believers As a God

[1,526 words]

"Young master, a report has come," a butler's voice resounded from outside.

Randolf replied without turning his head, "Come in."

A moment later, his butler came in and stood behind him.

"Young master, our observer in the Fallen Star Cluster has not reported their observation for this morning," the butler said, which made Randolph slightly smile.

"Good. That means those devils are already making their move," he said. "Now what's left is for us to watch the show, let them fight each other." He swirled the wine in his glass as he looked at his own reflection on the glass's surface.

"Young master, if I may ask, what if all of those devils are still not enough to even weaken that person? What if the devils instead suffer a huge loss? Wouldn't that only make the reputation of Aldrian soar even more? Many are already wary of him because of his reputation for fighting an immortal. If he somehow wins against an entire invasion force, that would only strengthen his position in this star cluster," the butler asked.

"Well, that's true. But whoever wins in this case, we still gain benefits. If the devils somehow win this battle, then we have taken care of a truly troublesome opponent using someone else's hand. If Aldrian wins, then the devils' influence in this part of heaven will be greatly reduced. If Aldrian gains more fame, then so be it. Let him enjoy his fame, and we can slowly take advantage of it while spreading our influence in the void left by the devils."

"In the end, our god will gain the most from it." Randolph's reflection in the glass showed his slight smile.

"Then what about the Avilandis imperial family, young master? We truly did not expect them to keep ignoring us until today. Their actions seem too strange and too extreme. What they have done all this time is already outside of the norms they should normally follow."

Randolf slightly lowered his glass.

"Just let them be. Although I am also surprised, it does not disturb the bigger picture in my mind. We can still move forward without their connection."

The butler nodded his head, but he still felt that something could be wrong. He couldn't help but say,

"Young master, if I have to guess, the Avilandis imperial family must think they no longer need us because of Aldrian's existence. His presence has truly changed their stance and the way they act toward us. But I can't help thinking about that man, young master."

"What if somehow Aldrian knows that we are the ones trying to mess with him behind the scenes all this time? I believe he would not let us go, and I doubt we could stop him directly if he decided to come for us."

Randolf turned silent, though he still wore a small smile. He walked to the nearest sofa and sat down.

"If that happens, then let him come. He will be surprised to find that he will face his own doom here."

Hearing his young master's confidence, the butler said no more and only nodded. He believed in his young master's plans and intuition. To the Valroy family, this young man

was their son of miracles—a youth full of talent, cleverness, and tricks, skilled in intrigue. From rising from almost nothing to where he stood now, he had already brought great pride to the family.

It was no wonder the patriarch made him the successor of the family without hesitation, pushing his older brother aside.

"Anyway, for now just keep doing everything as usual. We don't want to make anything seem suspicious until those devils arrive. The people in the Ancient Blue Gate World—no, the entire central star cluster, will be surprised when they suddenly receive uninvited guests they were not prepared for," Randolph said with a smile.

"They will think that the loss of communication from the Fallen Star Cluster was caused by some kind of space disturbance that normally occurs. By the time they realize what it truly is, it will already be too late, and those devils will be standing at their front door." He then sipped his wine and placed the glass on the table in front of him before standing up.

"Whatever happens, we are the winners. And when we reach a certain number of followers, our god will be able to descend in the future," he said before walking away.

After Aldrian finished giving Sylphia her reward, he then met with Baek Jimin who, as expected, was surprised that he had already returned. She had thought he would be gone for a long time, so of course she was truly happy. Not long after, Aldrian also gave her his burning passion. She did not refuse his advances and could only surrender to his mercy, her erotic moans echoing in the training room for hours.

Today was different from a normal day, as Aldrian chose a place he did not normally use to make love with his women.

After satisfying Baek Jimin with his mighty little brother, night had already fallen. But because he had something in mind, he decided to seclude himself in his own training room. Having satisfied his two women, he was free tonight to do what he had wanted to try for quite some time.

He closed his eyes and spread his domain's sense across the Barisan Continent. In an instant, he picked up many figures who were different from others, or more specifically, whose karma threads with him stood apart. These people carried strong karma threads that revealed their total devotion to him, regarding him as their god.

These were the people who had built their own religion based on his existence. The Religion that gaining popularity ever since his identity became known after the battle with Cardinal Carsius. This group, who chose to regard him as a god, came from

various professions, yet all of them shared one thing in common, they came from humble backgrounds.

Some of them were mere mortals without cultivation, while some were low-level cultivators who saw him as their savior to the extreme. Among them were also people marginalized by society because of their weakness, and many others with pitiful fates.

In conclusion, they were truly pathetic beings in the cultivation world, most of them at the very bottom of the pyramid.

Aldrian could understand it. With their backgrounds, his actions must have seemed like the deeds of a god bringing judgment to the mortal world. To them, Aldrian's very existence was the manifestation of a divine being who had arrived at the right time. Moreover, after he saved the entire continent from an immortal, that image became even more deeply embedded in him.

Now this group of people truly acted as if they belonged to a real religion with the god they worshiped, showing their devotion in various ways. For example, some preached to others to join this religion, while others worked together to build shrines or temples with Aldrian's statue as the place of worship. They prayed and sang praises to his divinity, seeking his blessing so their lives could prosper.

These people with strong karma connections to him were the ones who gave him the strongest faith energy. Despite being full of weakness, they were the ones who provided him with the greatest boost, their faith energy far stronger than those who did not regard him as a god.

These insignificant people, worthless in the eyes of most, were the very ones helping him grow stronger.

Aldrian, seeing their devotion and loyalty, naturally felt touched, although he also thought some of them were far too exaggerated, which left him feeling genuinely embarrassed as he watched how they acted.

When he observed his believers, many of them behaved as if every single thing they did required his blessing, down to the smallest details. They always carried a small statue of him that could fit into their pockets, bringing it wherever they went.

Before they took a shower, they asked for his blessing. Before they gambled, they asked for his blessing. Before deciding what to buy, they asked for his blessing. He even discovered that some of them prayed for his blessing before having sex.

He wanted to facepalm at all of this, but in the end he simply let them be. However, for some time now, he felt that he needed to reward at least some of these people for their devotion. Although he had never asked to be considered a god, since they had

voluntarily chosen to worship him, he felt it would be wrong not to respond to their sincerity.

First, he focused his sense on the nearest presence of this group, which was in the near core region. Many of them had also migrated close to his palace for obvious reasons, and many were trying to help with the development of the cities.

In one city still under construction, there stood a fairly large shrine in one part of the district. Although it too was unfinished, a great statue of Aldrian had already been erected within it.

At this moment, several figures could be seen praying before the statue. It was sculpted in a standing posture, yet even so, it exuded a heroic aura.

As Aldrian focused his sense upon them, he could hear each of their prayers.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 713 - 713: Truly Like a God

[1,545 words]

'My god, Your Majesty Aldrian, I hope that you bless me so I can have the power to protect myself and my loved ones.'

'My god, Your Majesty Aldrian, please heal my mother so she can smile again and accompany me for a long time.'

'My god, Your Majesty Aldrian, please bless me so I can enter the Vanguard Academy. Although I have weak talent, I never give up and always do my best in cultivation.'

'My god, Your Majesty Aldrian, please...'

Aldrian could hear all of their prayers. Some prayed for trivial matters, like growing the hair on their heads, while others asked for serious things, such as the blessing he had just heard. Hearing their prayers, filled with faith and the hope that he would listen, stirred something inside of him. At this moment, he truly felt like a god, with many people faithfully saying his name in their prayers.

He also couldn't help but feel bad if he did not fulfill their prayers. These people had strong faith, even among his believers, and they seemed desperate, which made them

pray to him at this moment. Although he was not a divine being right now, when he heard these people's prayers, he thought he could fulfill some of them, as they were within his ability.

Aldrian thought for a moment before he got an idea of how to deliver "his reward and blessing" to them. With their strong karmic connection to him, he could do many tricks for them.

After more than fifteen minutes, some of them left the shrine and returned to the places where they resided. One of them was the woman who had prayed for her mother to be healed. She was a cultivator at the middle Disciple stage and came from the Vindas Kingdom. She had decided to come to this city, which was still under construction, and help build it, hoping that she could also stay here.

The news had already spread that those who helped with the construction would be given a place to reside. With her intent to find a better place for herself and her mother, she decided to move here together. As a follower of the new religion that regarded Aldrian as a god, this was also the best place for her, since she could be close to her god.

After walking for some time, she arrived at the house provided by the higher-ups for anyone helping with the construction. The house was more decent for living compared to her old one in the Vindas Kingdom, and it was located on the outskirts of the city. With such a comfortable place, she hoped it could ease her mother's pain.

Her mother's sickness seemed to worsen each week, and she was afraid of losing her. She did not have enough wealth to invite a physician, so the only thing she could do was pray to the figure she saw as the manifestation of the divine being.

After she entered the house, the first thing she did was check on her mother in one of the bedrooms. She was already used to the usual sight whenever she opened her mother's door, the sight of her mother bedridden with a pale face.

But the moment she stepped into the room, what she saw truly shocked her, for the sight that normally greeted her did not appear. What she saw was nothing short of a miracle. Her mother was standing on her own two feet, gazing out the window where the moon shone beautifully.

Her mother's countenance was no longer pale, and she looked just like any other healthy person enjoying the scenery outside.

Hearing the door open, her mother turned her head and saw her daughter standing there in shock. Still, she showed a gentle smile as she spoke.

"Avri, is your work done?"

Her mother's soft voice, full of affection, pulled the woman named Avri out of her shock, and unconsciously a tear slipped from one of her eyes.

"Mother." Her voice trembled as she rushed toward her mother, who opened her arms as if she already knew what was coming. Avri instantly embraced her tightly, feeling the warmth of her body. All this time, what she had felt from her mother was a burning heat, as if fire raged inside her.

She sobbed in her mother's embrace, truly hoping this was not just a dream.

"Forgive this mother of yours. You have had to take care of me all this time and work so hard because of my condition. If only I had not fallen sick back then..."

"No, please don't say that, Mother. I truly do not want you to leave me. I would gladly do anything to see you healed. Now I'm glad that you can stand and even seem in much better condition compared to the sickly sight I had to see every day."

Avri knew that her mother's touch and calming voice made her realize this was not a dream. This was reality. This was a miracle.

A miracle that must have been given to her mother by her god.

Her god had heard her prayers and granted them.

After hugging for a few moments, Avri released herself from her mother and looked at her.

"Mother, this must be a miracle from His Majesty the Emperor. He is a divine being, and he must be the one who healed you after hearing my prayers every day."

Without hesitation, she instantly prostrated in the direction of Aldrian's palace.

"Thank you, Your Majesty, for hearing my prayers. Thank you... truly, thank you." Her voice was filled with piety.

Her mother, seeing her daughter prostrate like that, couldn't help but follow. Although she had been sickly for so long, she still knew the news from outside because her daughter always told her what was happening.

She knew there was a figure many regarded as a divine being, and now she also believed, for what had just happened to her was truly like a miracle. When she had still been bedridden with the pain she had long grown used to, she suddenly felt a warm current flow through her body.

It was a warmth so comforting, one she had not felt for a long time. It was as if she were being embraced by her own mother during a cold winter, her mother's warmth flowing into her.

Before she realized it, her body had become healthy and light. It was as if she had returned to her youthful, healthy days.

She knew that this kind of thing was not something that appeared from nowhere. This might have been the work of the newly enthroned emperor, whom many regarded as a god, a manifestation of the divine in this mortal world.

Unbeknown to them, the miracle this night was not limited to Avri. Many such events occurred across different parts of the continent. By the next day, stories of miracles experienced by those who prayed to the great emperor had spread far and wide. It was said that the followers of the new religion, who regarded Aldrian as a god, had all experienced miracle the night before.

Their prayers were heard by their god, the great emperor himself, and he granted them what they had prayed for.

Some prayed for the recovery of a loved one, and those people were healed of their sickness. Some prayed for rain, as their territory had suffered drought for too long, and suddenly the rain fell, saving their crops.

There were some who prayed for power to protect themselves and their loved ones, and that very night they received a dream that bestowed upon them a high-level cultivation technique. Even those with weak talent gained techniques through their dreams.

When they tried cultivating with these techniques, they were shocked by their effectiveness. More importantly, the cultivation methods did not destroy the foundation built from their previous techniques. This kind of cultivation method was beyond their common knowledge and comprehension, something that could revolutionize the entire cultivation world.

All of these stories caused an uproar in many places, and people's view of this religious group or more specifically, the way they saw Aldrian began to change once again. Many still did not believe Aldrian had reached the level of the divine, especially high-level cultivators or those from established backgrounds.

However, these stories, with proof clearly visible, made many wonder if Aldrian truly was a divine being. Because if he was not, how could the events of last night have happened? These miracles also only occurred among the people of the religious group that regarded him as a god.

Did that mean his senses truly covered the entire continent, allowing him to hear all of those prayers?

Because of this, many were tempted to join the religious group. The group that many thought was only a band of fanatics devoted to the great emperor now seemed the real deal, with many miracles having happened the night before, all of them seems to come from Aldrian the Great's power.

While many people across the continent were still in an uproar over the miracles of the previous night, the one whom many already regarded as a god was calmly carrying out his own activities. He had just finished visiting his parents, since he did not have the time the day before, and at this moment he was observing Zander's training.

After Zander unleashed his sword technique, Aldrian nodded in approval.

"Good. It's much better than the last time."

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 714 - 714: You Are Much Greater Than You Could Imagine

[1,612 words]

Zander, hearing his master's praise, smiled and felt satisfied. Since his spar with his master, he had truly taken Aldrian's advice to heart and tried to improve from it. The spar that day had truly given him immense benefit, deepening his comprehension and battle instinct.

"Your sword movements are much more refined compared to the last time, and the number of mistakes has greatly reduced. Although there are still some parts that need more training, in these two weeks your growth did not disappoint me, Zander," Aldrian said.

"However, your weakness now is in battle experience. Although you can train your battle instinct with me, that will still not be enough, because psychologically you will always have the feeling that I would not greatly harm you. No matter how much we spar, that feeling will not disappear. That is why I have a task for you."

"A task?" Zander asked curiously.

Aldrian nodded. "There will be a grand tournament two weeks from now. This tournament will gather the talents of the entire continent, and it will be held in the grand

stadium near the core region. It will be separated into each cultivation category, and what I want is for you to win in the Earl stage category."

Zander's eyes widened. The grand tournament that gathered the entire talent across the continent? He had to win in the Earl stage category?

"Master, but...but I'm only at the middle Earl stage. If the entire talent of the continent gathers, I can already imagine that those who register must be at least at the peak of each realm to feel secure. There is no reason for anyone below that to register, as they would face peak realm opponents. Also, if they are geniuses, they could battle across levels, I—"

"Zander."

Zander fell silent as Aldrian cut off his words. He did not dare to continue when he saw his master's calm expression. The mood had changed, and Zander could not help but bow his body.

"I'm sorry, Master, if I have made a mistake... if I said too much."

There was a silence for a moment before Aldrian opened his lips.

"Zander, are you doubting me, your master?" His flat tone made Zander's heart tremble, and he could not help but shout while still bowing.

"No, Master! How could I doubt you or your knowledge? How could I doubt the one who brought me out of the misery I once experienced? How could I doubt the one who saw my worth even when I could not see it myself?"

"Then do you think I gave this task to you without considering your potential and your strength? Do you think I would just blabber about an impossible task simply for the sake of experience?" Aldrian said.

"I gave you this task because I trust you. You can win it if you put your heart into it. You are special, Zander. Your special physique is not for nothing, and to unleash your potential, you must push yourself to the limit.

"However, it seems I was too optimistic. Even if you have a special physique, it is futile if you already doubt yourself. With that kind of mentality, one day in the future you will be stuck and unable to move forward."

Aldrian's tone did not change, but Zander knew that his master was disappointed in him.

Thud!

Suddenly, he prostrated himself before Aldrian.

"Please forgive me, Master! I have already disappointed you with my pathetic mindset! I truly feel that I have sinned by doubting myself, which in the end is like doubting you. Please give me a chance to atone for my mistake by completing the task you have given me. I will make sure to win the tournament, Master!"

There was silence again, and Zander remained in that position even though Aldrian said nothing. Only after a minute did he finally feel Aldrian's hand touch his arm and lift him from the ground. His gaze then rose to meet Aldrian's blue eyes, which looked at him deeply.

"Zander, remember this. Don't belittle yourself. Don't doubt yourself. Don't always be pessimistic. I know you have trauma and painful experiences from the past that shaped your character, but you are the possessor of a rare, special physique. You are my disciple. You are special. Don't let the negative thoughts from your past affect you now."

Aldrian finally showed a slight smile.

"You must destroy your doubt and believe in yourself more, so that you can soar much higher. Show yourself worthy of that special physique, and worthy of being my disciple."

"You are much greater than you could imagine, Zander. And I want you to engrave that deep within your mind. Do you understand, Zander—the one destined for greatness?"

Hearing Aldrian's high evaluation of him, Zander's heart trembled. He wanted to cry, but he held it back and bowed deeply to Aldrian.

"I will always engrave what you said to me inside my deepest heart. I will not disappoint you, Master!"

Aldrian nodded. "Good. Now you can continue your training," he said with a smile.

"Yes, Master!"

After that, Aldrian moved to another part of the palace. He walked toward the palace garden, and as if enjoying the scenery, he walked at a relaxed pace. While he was still enjoying his time, he suddenly saw Sylphia coming his way. Without a word, she suddenly hugged him. This made him raise his eyebrows, but he still hugged her back.

"What is it?" he asked.

"The kings of each territory contacted me and asked the same thing about you. Are you really the one who did all of that last night? Do you know the uproar outside at this moment because of what many are calling last night's miracle?" she asked, looking at his face with a smile.

"What do you think?" he asked back.

"For me, there is no doubt that last night was your doing. But I'm truly curious, love... how did you do it? What you did last night was truly mind-blowing. I don't understand how you did it—you never even left the palace, right?"

What Aldrian had done last night was different from his usual displays of overwhelming strength, such as when he fought powerful opponents. What he did for the many people who believed in him as a god was truly as if he were an omnipresent being—he heard all their prayers and helped his believers.

Sylphia already knew that Aldrian had been something like a divine being in his past life, but this was the first time he clearly revealed an aspect of omnipresence. Until now, he had shown his omnipotence through his power, and his omniscience through the knowledge she believed came from his past life.

Although she did not know exactly what he had been like in that past life, she thought that this might have been what he used to do. But still, her curious nature made her want to know how he had done it, which was why she had come to him now.

Hearing her question, Aldrian shook his head. Yet he understood her amazement, which made him answer her.

"Well, the only thing I can say is that I can do it. What else is there to ask? But since I know you're curious about the details, I'll tell you."

They then walked together side by side, holding hands.

Aldrian explained some of his tricks, though he did not mention his domain. He told her that his senses could now cover the entire continent. With such a reach, it was easy for him to identify those who believed in him as a god. Through the karmic laws and his own techniques, he could recognize them and hear all of their prayers.

From there, he would choose which prayers to answer—those within his ability, and those from people who were truly desperate. At the same time, he avoided granting requests from people who might misuse what he gave. For example, he would never bestow his self-created cultivation techniques upon someone whose heart was filled with ill intent.

With the strong karmic threads, he could easily perform many things for these people. For instance, if someone prayed for a loved one to be healed from an illness, he could follow the karmic thread back to that person's family, identify the sick relative, and pinpoint exactly who they wished to cure. With his senses covering the entire continent, he could then send his golden energy remotely to the target and heal them.

For those who received dreams from him, it was simply his use of illusion laws, which he cast upon them so their consciousness could meet with him in their mindscape.

There, he gave them his self-created cultivation technique, allowing them to grow stronger.

Why his cultivation technique? Because he wanted to begin distributing it across the continent. With his cultivation technique, the average cultivation level of the continent would rise. Moreover, those who practiced it would naturally deepen both their karma and their faith in him.

As for controlling the weather, that was merely him manipulating water laws, which was easy for him with his senses covering the entire continent.

Just last night, he had already answered the prayers of more than ten thousand people. With his strong mind and soul, he was able to handle it all in one night. Besides, most of his believers had low cultivation, or were mortals entirely, which made things much easier.

In conclusion, as long as it was within his senses, he could do any of that, or anything he wished.

Hearing his explanation, Sylphia was truly in awe, and once again she could not help but feel proud to have him as her man.

Aldrian smiled as he looked at her expression of awe.

"Well, you will also be able to do that in the future, once you reach a certain cultivation level. Then you'll feel it for yourself."

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Chapter 715 - 715: Opening to the World

[1,539 words]

What Aldrian said was true, as what he did could also be done by cultivators who reached a certain cultivation stage. To accomplish it on the same scale as him, they would have to step into the divine realm, since it involved faith energy, which already belongs to the scope of divinity.

Only Aldrian is special, as he can sense faith energy even at his current stage.

"Is that so? But I don't think there is anyone who would regard me as their goddess," Sylphia said.

"Well, not yet, love. Not yet. Who knows? You may gain many believers in the future," Aldrian replied, which made Sylphia smile.

They continued their conversation, and while they were at it, they also met with Angelica, who had just finished her daily training. Since she could walk and see for the first time, her character had become much more open and cheerful, her smile now sincere. The first time Aldrian saw her, although she smiled, that smile still carried her own sadness and regret.

"Angelica, congratulations on your advancement to High Duke stage," Aldrian said, which made Angelica's smile brighten.

"Thank you, young master. But all of this is because of the good environment. This place is truly the best I could ask for, with its huge concentration of energy."

Aldrian nodded. "Anyway, I heard that you have new activity now. You like to venture out by yourself, disguising as a vagabond physician, healing anyone who needs your service for free. Rumors about you have spread in the southern region of the Vindas Kingdom."

Sylphia had already told him about Angelica's new activities when she explained what he had missed while he was gone. Angelica, the saintess of the church, disguised herself and started her own adventure. The first time Angelica wanted to do that, Sylphia intended to send some of the assassins from the Thunderous Shadow Pavilion to accompany her, but Angelica refused.

She said that she wanted to enjoy her journey without anyone following her, as she wished to see the world on her own. In the end, Sylphia could only let her go, since Angelica truly seemed determined. The guards were meant only as assurance for her safety, but Sylphia thought it was fine to allow Angelica to roam by herself.

She was still a Duke stage cultivator after all, and that was considered a high level on the Barisan continent. Not many would dare to offend someone of that cultivation. Moreover, ever since Aldrian took the reins, troublemakers such as bandits either stayed in hiding or stopped their activities altogether out of fear of Aldrian's judgment.

"Yes, young master, I decided to venture outside because I want to see more of the world. I can't just stay here and do nothing besides cultivating. I also want to pursue something that has long been my aspiration, something that would bring benefit to many people. Now that the time has come when no great problem threatens the continent, I wish to take an adventure by myself," Angelica said.

Aldrian nodded. "Still, be careful. Although I believe nothing will harm you with the continent's peaceful atmosphere, there is no harm in being cautious of the unknown factors."

Angelica nodded. "Alright, young master. Anyway, I heard that you ventured outside the continent. I'm truly curious about your stories and would like to hear them. Would you mind telling this humble lady some of young master's experiences beyond the continent?"

Aldrian smiled. "Of course. Let's move to a better place, this will be a long story. I also want to hear your story about venturing out as a vagabond physician."

The three of them then sat in one part of the palace's garden and listened to Aldrian's stories. Although Sylphia had already heard them yesterday, she did not mind hearing them again. Their conversation went on for hours, as they paid no attention to time and simply enjoyed each other's stories and presence.

A week later, an announcement was made that caused an uproar across the continent. The major territories would hold a grand tournament in a city near the core region of the Eternal Sanctuary Forest. The tournament was meant to celebrate the opening of the new cities, as well as mark the beginning of a new era. It would also be the very first grand tournament of the Aster Empire.

The grand tournament was open to talents from all across the continent, regardless of their background, with only one restriction, a maximum age limit. There would be categories for cultivators ranging from the beginner stage up to the marquess stage, and participants would have to compete through several phases of the tournament before the winners of each category were chosen.

The most exciting part was that the tournament would be overseen directly by the emperor himself, and the winners would receive rewards personally granted by him. With such an opportunity, there was no one who would not be tempted to register. It was the perfect chance to display their abilities and gain fame, especially before the emperor.

The emperor's rewards were certain to be generous, as they came directly from his own treasure vault. No one could afford to miss it!

After the announcement was made, as expected, many people began registering at the designated places spread across the cities and towns of the continent. The registration sites instantly became crowded with eager participants, and the officials in charge of the process were quickly overwhelmed by the people's enthusiasm.

However, later that day, another shocking event occurred, one that caused an uproar not only in the Barisan continent, but across the entire Ancient Blue Gate World.

Suddenly, the voice of Aldrian the Great resounded throughout the world, shocking its populace. The voice echoed everywhere, and all could hear it clearly, as if it descended directly from the heavens.

"To the people of the Ancient Blue Gate World, I, Aldrian Aster, ruler of the Aster Empire and sovereign of the Barisan continent, make this announcement so that all of you may hear it clearly."

"Starting today, I declare that the Barisan continent is open to the world. The Barisan continent will establish normal connections with the outside world. All of you from beyond the Barisan continent may visit freely, but I must warn you of a few rules."

"The first rule is this, everyone arriving by interstellar vessel must land and station their vessels at the coastline of the continent, where we have already prepared special areas for this purpose. I will not allow any interstellar vessel to fly deeper into the Barisan continent. If you wish to continue your journey inland, you may use smaller cruisers, or you may use the teleportation portals we have already prepared."

"Second, you must respect the people of the Barisan continent. I will not allow outsiders to enter and cause disorder. At the very least, you are expected to act with proper behavior and courtesy. If any of you harm my people without justification, or attempt to flaunt your power, family, or status, believe me, such things will not work here."

"If any of you do so, I will punish you according to your crime, and you may share the same fate as those who tried to infiltrate the Barisan continent before this day, which is death. I do not care about your background, your power, or your influence. If anyone feels my words are arrogant and dislikes them, then feel free to come and challenge me. And do not think you can hide anything from me. I will know everything you do, even if I am not standing beside you."

"However, I will not punish you for harming one of my people if there is a justified reason. As I said, I will know everything, and I am not so rigid as to ignore what is right and what is wrong."

"Third, do not try to bring your influence here. If you intend to exploit my people for your own benefit and cause disharmony in the Barisan continent, I will punish you as well. Once again, I will know everything you do. But if your purpose is to do business or pursue cooperation, then that will be permitted."

"Fourth, I hope you will enjoy your stay in the Barisan continent. We hope to build good relationships with you all. Since we have only just opened ourselves to the world, my people know little about the outside, and there is much for them to learn. We want to live among you without being treated differently from the other continents of this world."

"That is all for my announcement. Have a good day."

After that, the world fell silent once more.

Not long after Aldrian's announcement, as expected, it caused an uproar across the world. The news also spread to other stars on the very same day. Many people thought that Aldrian's words were truly arrogant, as if he believed he could do whatever he wanted without facing any consequences.

However, given his reputation, many also felt that what Aldrian said made sense, and that his words were backed by his strength. If someone wished to challenge Aldrian, they would be glad to see it, for they wanted to know whether his declaration was true.

For the next few days, people across the Ancient Blue Gate World spoke of nothing but Aldrian, and several powers began to move in its direction.

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Chapter 716 - 716: Organize His Imperial Family

[1,656 words]

For the next few days, the entire world was bustling with the news of Aldrian's announcement. The name Aldrian was already known by many, since it had been spread earlier through many information agencies.

Because of the information about the Barisan continent, many wanted to enter that place, but only ended up dead. Many thought that Aldrian might not know if some had infiltrated, given how vast the continent was, but they were proven wrong when not a single person survived after attempting to infiltrate it.

Now that the Barisan continent had been opened to the world, people wanted to see it for themselves. They wanted to know whether the information that had spread over the past few weeks was true.

Many began moving toward the Barisan continent using their own transportation, while transportation agencies also took advantage of the situation by offering services and opening routes to the Barisan continent with their cruisers.

The enthusiasm was at its peak as many wished to visit the new land from their own perspective. The place, long shrouded in mystery since ancient times, was far too valuable to miss, and countless people wanted to explore it.

While outside powers were on their way to visit the continent and needed time to arrive, the situation within the Barisan continent was also quite lively. With the continent opening to the world, it meant that people from outside could now come. This became the talk among the populace of the continent, alongside the excitement for the grand tournament.

They wondered why their great emperor had opened the Barisan continent so soon. Why not wait until the continent grew even stronger?

Many questions arose in their minds, yet with their emperor's announcement to the world, they felt they too could puff out their chests with pride. His declaration also ensured that outsiders would not be able to harm them without consequence. The harsh and arrogant tone of his words, as if their emperor were challenging the entire world, made them truly proud to be his subjects—proud to be the people of the Aster Empire.

But then another thought came to the populace's mind. With the tournament being held a week later, did that not mean the event might be witnessed by those outsiders?

When they considered this, many contestants felt an added pressure, for they could not afford to deliver a disappointing performance. They would be fighting before the eyes of the outside forces, who might judge not only them but also the talent of the entire Barisan continent.

Suddenly, the contestants' spirits grew more intense as they resolved to display more than their best. They wanted to show those outsiders that the talent of the Barisan continent was neither weak nor ordinary, but worthy of recognition. They would not allow themselves to bring shame upon the empire or the emperor who stood behind them with such a bold announcement.

While the entire world was in a festive atmosphere because of Aldrian's declaration, Aldrian himself remained in his private room, receiving the leaders of the major territories. They seemed to be coordinating for the events soon to come, from the grand tournament to the influx of outsiders who would soon flock to their continent.

Since a few days ago, many adjustments had already been made across the continent to prepare for the arrival of the outsiders. Special places were built along the coastline for large vessels, such as interstellar vessels, to land. They also prepared areas around the cities and towns across the continent so that cruisers could land there.

They also discussed many measures for the different possibilities that might occur once the outsiders arrived. Although Aldrian had already given his harsh warning to the entire

world, they still needed clear procedures to maintain order, as no one could predict what might happen after the outsiders' arrival.

They understood that Aldrian was serious about his threats, and all the kings knew he did not truly care about the consequences. Even so, they wanted to prevent Aldrian from having to personally intervene every time a problem arose concerning the outsiders.

They did not want to depend on their emperor for every matter, as that would be inappropriate for his status and would make them, his subjects, seem useless and unreliable. They wanted to handle problems that were still within their ability to resolve, and only if an issue truly exceeded their capability would Aldrian step in to solve it.

They also discussed more details about the grand tournament that would be held the following week. At this point, the registered participants had already surpassed a hundred thousand.

They knew they had to create a phase where they could eliminate many contestants at once, leaving only the true cream of the crop to advance to the next stage. If they relied solely on battle formats, the tournament would take forever to finish.

They also understood that they could not properly assess the true worth of a participant if they simply gathered them in one place and had them all fight at once, like a swarm of gu, where only the last one standing would become the winner.

There were many issues to resolve, and the meeting only ended when the sun was close to setting. For the past few days, they had been holding meetings, and they would continue to do so every day until all of them were satisfied that no problems remained in the plan.

Aldrian sighed after all the leaders of the major territories had departed. He had been truly busy these past few days, and he felt they were the busiest days of his life. Sylphia and Baek Jimin, who had observed most of the meeting from the side, approached him. Baek Jimin sat at his left, while Sylphia stood in front of him.

Baek Jimin gave him a light massage on his arm, while Sylphia gently massaged his temples. Aldrian, of course, allowed himself to be pampered by his women. Although his strong physique and mind meant he did not feel tired from the meetings, he would never refuse their care.

"These have been the busiest days I've seen you in, my emperor," Sylphia said as she massaged his temples.

"Well, what can I do? I have to work hard for the future of my family. I have two women to take care of, after all." With his eyes closed, he replied in a joking tone, which made

both women giggle. The atmosphere was warm and filled with love, with only the three of them in the room.

As Aldrian continued to be pampered by the two women, Sylphia suddenly spoke.

"My dear, I think you should begin organizing the palace. You could start by hiring employees to manage the palace, and also form your own private troops, your imperial troops, so that we don't always have to depend on the royal families under you whenever you need forces in the future."

"With the opening of the Barisan continent to the world, you will become even busier. If you establish your own troops, you can ease your burden, since you will no longer have to guard the palace or your family twenty-four hours a day. You could entrust that duty to the imperial forces."

"The imperial troops would also serve as a show of strength, a symbol of your power as the ruler of the Barisan continent. I know many already consider your very presence enough of a show of force, but with your own strong troops, the prestige of the imperial family as a whole would be elevated."

"All this time, you have been the central factor when people think of the current power of the imperial family—the Aster imperial family. Even with me as the princess of the Ivory Kingdom, Jimin as the young lady of a great sect, and your parents from noble families, all of that is still not enough to be counted as a true deterrent force, especially against the outsiders."

"But if you command strong and renowned imperial troops, then apart from you, there will be something else that stands as a deterrent. The Aster imperial family would have more than just you to rely on, and many people would take that into account."

Aldrian opened his eyes and looked at Sylphia as she continued to massage his temples, then smiled at her.

"Well, that's a good idea. Actually, I've already thought about turning the entire assassins of the Thunderous Shadow Pavilion into my formal imperial force for some time, but I never felt it was that urgent. Still, what you said is right—it seems I need to start organizing the palace structure as soon as possible."

He spoke before suddenly pulling Sylphia and Baek Jimin into his embrace. He inhaled Sylphia's fragrance for a moment, then placed a quick kiss on Baek Jimin's forehead.

"I'm glad I have both of you by my side. I can truly depend on you," he said, which made them smile. But Baek Jimin, with a slight sense of shame, replied,

"What have I done? I'm just here massaging your body, while Sister Sylphia is the one who works so hard and helps you the most. I'm not as useful as—"

"Ssh, ssh, ssh. No, my love, don't say that. Don't belittle yourself. I know you feel that what you do is not as great as Sylphia's, but that is only because she is a princess of a great empire, and she learned much from her father over the years. You, my love, have your own circumstances. In matters of the imperial family, you may not shine as brightly as Sylphia, but you have your own qualities, Jimin. So please, don't speak of yourself that way, it truly makes me feel sad."

As Aldrian said this, he tightened his embrace around Baek Jimin and kissed her forehead again.

Hearing those words, Baek Jimin could not help but feel touched. She nodded softly. Just as he said, Sylphia had her own qualities, and she herself also had her own. What mattered was finding her own way to help Aldrian with the strengths she possessed.

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