

# The Shining Star Above The Heaven

## Chapter 751 - 751: Kang Yongjin's Attack

[ 1,647 words ]

The spectators shouted in excitement. The battle was truly swift, as it did not even take a minute to finish. As expected from the masked man, he was still too powerful, which made the fight end quickly.

Zander did not react much after his victory besides releasing a deep breath. He was glad that his battle went smoothly. He could have ended the fight much faster, but that was not the only thing he was looking for in this match.

What he sought was the experience of battling in this kind of setting against a talented genius. He wanted to know what it felt like to fight one on one against a genius, exchanging varied techniques. In this kind of battle, he could also measure himself more accurately—how strong he truly was compared to the other participants, or even to cultivators in the same realm across the continent.

From this one-on-one format, he would gain far more real experience fighting a strong opponent.

It was different from the secret realm, where he had been ambushed by several participants. In that kind of situation, where everything was freer, he could not accurately gauge the real strength of his opponents because he had to eliminate all of them quickly.

In this battle format, he could compare each other techniques and also the good stage to test his technique that he had all this time. He has some sword techniques but there is not enough opponents that he could test his techniques. That's why this kind of setting is good for him.

For example, the last technique he used against Tristan was one he had obtained after cultivating with the cultivation technique he currently practiced. In the past, he had never tried to use it, as he had never had the chance to test it.

That technique caused the opponent to feel as if their mind was being sucked into the incoming slash. If they could not break free from that sensation, they would become stuck and unable to move.

The technique combined powerful sword slashes with the comprehension of illusion laws, which he had comprehended after beginning to cultivate with his current cultivation technique, in addition to his innate fire laws.

The fact that he could comprehend another law beyond his innate one at the baron stage, when he first discovered this cultivation technique, showed how extraordinary the cultivation technique truly was. It broke the common knowledge that, in order to comprehend another law, a cultivator had to reach at least marquess stage.

His technique then clashed with Tristan's strong technique, which impressed him greatly. He finally witnessed for himself how powerful his technique was and what effect it had on his opponent. It was a special sword technique that he could cancel midway, unlike most sword techniques.

After the winner announcement, Zander and Tristan returned to the waiting area. Zander did not say anything, keeping his mysterious personality intact. This personality caused the other participants to avoid him. It also prevented him from speaking recklessly, which might accidentally reveal his identity.

His master understood his introverted personality, shaped by his experiences. If someone tried to get acquainted with him, his awkward side would likely show. Because of this, his master had advised him not to talk too much throughout the tournament.

The mysterious and arrogant cultivator, that was the image etched into the minds of the others, and it worked, as no one wanted to approach him.

While Zander sat quietly without disturbance, one of the participants glanced at him and could not help but release a sigh. He was Arentinus, who would later become Zander's opponent. The winner of the first battle would face the winner of the second, the winner of the third would face the winner of the fourth, and so on.

The moment he learned that he would have to fight Zander, he seemed to have already resigned himself to whatever outcome awaited him. He knew his chances were not optimistic, since from what he had seen, the masked man had not even used his most powerful move, yet still won the fight with ease. He was not even certain if his trump card could defeat that mysterious man.

The only way he could avoid facing Zander was if he or Zander happened to draw a bye in the next round.

The round continued with the next participants' battle. Zander observed closely while also studying the contestants who might become his future opponents if he won his next match against Arentinus.

From his observation of Arentinus, he already had a general idea of how he would face him. He had even shaped his own strategy so that he could test his techniques against him.

The following battle featured a participant from the Buddhist sect and another from a noble family of the Doria Empire. The fight was quite exciting, with the Buddhist monk displaying his unique style. The Buddha's Golden Body technique he used was truly powerful, able to withstand many of his opponent's attacks. His mastery of the staff technique also could not be underestimated.

In the end, the monk emerged as the winner after more than ten minutes of battle. Before long, the next round began, and like before, Zander observed the fight. In fact, it was not only Zander who did this, the other participants also watched carefully, observing the battles of their potential opponents.

The matches continued, winners and losers appearing one after another, while the participants kept observing. Finally, the battle between slot seventeen and slot eighteen arrived. The moment the two names were called, the spectators grew much more lively, because at last it was time for Kang Yongjin to fight.

Zander turned his head toward Kang Yongjin, who leapt onto the arena. His burly body radiated power, ready for action, while his opponent, a spear user, had already taken his position. His opponent, Areklis Vanreimer of the Vanreimer family, was a handsome man with blonde hair. At this moment, his face was solemn and full of focus.

He knew he could not afford to lose focus in this battle, not even for a moment, because against Kang Yongjin, even a small mistake could prove fatal.

"Are the participants ready?" Orlav asked.

"I'm ready."

"Always."

Both of them answered, and Orlav nodded.

"Then, the battle begins!" he shouted.

However, even after Orlav gave the signal to start, both Kang Yongjin and Areklis Vanreimer did not move. Kang Yongjin simply stood there in a firm yet relaxed posture, while Areklis looked tense and wary. It was clear that one was waiting calmly for the strike to come, while the other hesitated to even attack.

After several seconds of stillness, Kang Yongjin finally opened his lips.

"How disappointing. I truly expected more, but to not even dare attack me? What a coward. Then let me make the first move."

He suddenly shifted his stance as if preparing to throw a punch. The movement of his muscles alone was intimidating, and his fist began to glow with a greyish hue. Areklis, feeling humiliated, wanted to dash forward and attack in anger as his emotions nearly overcame him. Yet the moment he saw Kang Yongjin's posture change, ready to strike, his fury vanished, replaced by tension.

He forgot his displeasure and instead took up a defensive position. A moment later—

**BOOM!**

Without Areklis or most of the spectators realizing what had happened, his body was suddenly hurled far away after Kang Yongjin threw a punch from where he stood. Areklis's body crashed into the ground more than a kilometer away, rolling several times before coming to a stop. His spear had even been flung from his hand.

The event happened so quickly that most people thought Areklis was playing a prank, as if he had thrown himself to the ground to make it look like he had taken a hit. But they knew that was not the case. Kang Yongjin had clearly attacked, but they could not even sense it!

However, the high-level cultivators above the duke stage could sense Kang Yongjin's attack. Watching from his place, Aldrian could not help but nod in amazement at how Kang Yongjin could unleash such a technique at his current stage.

'As expected from the successor of the Heavenly Demon's Black Dragon Scripture,' he thought.

"Dear, what is happening? How could Kang Yongjin's fist reach Areklis undetected?" Sylphia asked.

Aldrian smiled as he answered, "He is using space laws. Kang Yongjin has also comprehended space laws, and his fist technique is based on them. His strike actually reached Areklis while hidden within the void of space, making it extremely difficult for the opponent to detect. They will not realize what is coming until the technique hits them directly."

He could not help but remember the time he had sparred with Sect Master Kang. Sect Master Kang had also used this kind of trick, which meant that he must have already taught the technique to Kang Yongjin.

Sylphia and the others finally understood the secret behind the attack. Both Sylphia and Bark Jimin were truly amazed. Even with their cultivation being stronger than Kang

Yongjin's, they still could not sense the attack. Suddenly, the strike had landed on Areklis directly, and it seemed quite fatal.

Areklis gasped for air, pain twisting his face as the attack struck directly against his chest. He vomited a mouthful of saliva and coughed violently, the force of the fist wreaking havoc inside his body. It felt as if his insides were about to burst from the impact.

He gritted his teeth, at first thinking he had been careless, but then he realized that was not the case.

'No, I wasn't careless. I was already on guard against any attack, but that kind of strike was completely beyond my prediction or expectation.' Kang Yongjin's blow had been undetectable, arriving too swiftly for him to react.

'Damn it!' he cursed inwardly. In his current condition, he doubted he could continue the battle.

"Give up. You can't keep fighting," Kang Yongjin said.

Areklis clenched his teeth once more, and after a few moments of silence, he finally let out a sigh.

"I lost."

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## Chapter 752 - 752: The Finalists

[ 1,643 words ]

The spectators were truly astonished not because of the result of the battle, but because of how fast it had ended. The fist technique that Kang Yongjin displayed was the first time they had ever seen it, and even the demon cultivator seemed shocked by it. For the demon cultivators, they knew that technique from Sect Master Kang, as it was one of his fist techniques, but they had never seen Kang Yongjin use it before.

The technique, said to be complex and difficult to master, was actually unleashed by Kang Yongjin at his stage.

In one of the VVIP rooms, the three sect masters of the three great sects of the Barisan Continent's Demon Territory watched the tournament. Sect Master Ryu, upon seeing it, glanced at Sect Master Kang near him, who could not hide his grin. At this moment, he was truly satisfied with Kang Yongjin's performance.

"To think he could use the Fist of Void, I have to admit that I'm surprised," Sect Master Ryu said.

Sect Master Kang was still grinning. "Well, that is the least he must be able to do. As my successor and the one who comprehended the Heavenly Demon's Black Dragon Scripture, he cannot bring shame to the sect."

Sect Master Ryu then smiled as he looked back at Kang Yongjin's figure. "That is true, but the final winner is still uncertain. That mysterious swordsman also seems to be holding back his full power. Kang Yongjin will have a tough time facing him."

Sect Master Kang's grin slowly receded, but then he shrugged. "I still believe Kang Yongjin will take care of him. That mysterious man is indeed strong, but Kang Yongjin also has something that will bring him victory. If he unleashes his trump card, I believe even you will be shocked."

Sect Master Ryu glanced at Sect Master Kang for a moment. "Is that so? Then I would like to see it," he said before turning his gaze back to the arena.

In another VVIP room, the three sect masters of the three great sects of the central continent were also discussing Kang Yongjin.

"That young man is truly worthy of his status as the successor of the Heavenly Demon's Black Dragon Scripture," Sect Master Han said with a nod of approval. "At least he did not bring shame to the name of the Heavenly Demon."

Sect Master Jang snorted. "Do you think someone who could comprehend one of the three scriptures of the Heavenly Demon is just trash? If that were the case, anyone could have comprehended it since ancient times."

"With his potential, he might even surpass me if he reaches my stage of cultivation," he added, before letting out a sigh. "If only he were my successor, I would not have to worry about the future of the sect."

"Well, we cannot change the past. The three scriptures are in this continent because of the revelation our god gave to our ancestor, which led them to move the three stone tablets here. Although we still do not know the reason, I believe it has something to do with this continent itself. This place is special," Sect Master Baek said.

The other two sect masters remained silent, while the others in the room, such as the Sword Maiden, her friends, and the twin siblings, only listened to their conversation.

They already knew that Kang Yongjin was the successor of one of the Heavenly Demon's scriptures, but they had never known the history of how the scriptures ended up in this continent. Hearing that it was because of a revelation was new to them.

In the arena, Kang Yongjin had already returned to the waiting area. As he leapt back into the section, the other participants made way for him. Kang Yongjin ignored them and instead glanced at the Zander. He then continued walking in the opposite direction to put some distance between them.

He could hardly wait to fight Zander. His sharp eyes carried a hidden battle intent.

For the next battle, because the number of contestants was odd, there would be someone lucky enough to get a bye.

"Alright, we will decide who gets the bye. Pick a ball from the box," Orlav said as he brought out a box.

The participants then picked the balls in turn, and in the end, the one who got the bye was number ten. He was supposed to fight number twelve, who was the winner between the battle of number eleven and number twelve. The moment he realized he had drawn the bye, he was stunned. At first he felt happy, but then the realization struck him, and frustration followed.

His supposed opponent felt the same frustration. That was because the moment number ten got the bye, he would eventually have to face Kang Yongjin. According to the rules, since the odd-numbered participant was the winner of the last battle—which was Kang Yongjin—the position of number ten was taken by Kang Yongjin, which meant that number twelve would have to fight him.

The winner from their match would then have to face the one who had drawn the bye. That was why the participant who received the bye could not truly be happy, because in the end, he would still have to face Kang Yongjin.

They could only curse their bad luck in their hearts as the tournament went on.

A few moments later, the next battle was about to start. It was Zander's turn again, and this time he faced Arentinus. Zander looked at Arentinus with a calm expression, trying to predict what he would do. But the moment Orlav shouted for the battle to begin—

Whoosh!

Arentinus suddenly lifted his sword with both hands, and the blade was engulfed in a massive swirl of wind. The gale grew stronger and stronger until a huge tornado had formed around his sword. The storm sucked in everything within more than a kilometer, and even Zander felt his body being dragged toward it.

The spectators were astonished as they watched what seemed to be Arentinus's ultimate technique. This was the strongest move he had ever displayed, one he hadn't even used in his battle against Rick. To think that he would unleash it right at the start of the fight.

"Arrghhh!"

Sword Storm, First Form: Whip!

Arentinus roared as he slashed with his sword, the colossal tornado following the arc of his strike. Its movement resembled a whip of raging wind as it lashed out toward Zander.

The tornado tore apart the surface of the arena, and the power it displayed was immense, reaching the level of the middle marquess stage.

However, Zander looked at the incoming attack with little expression. In truth, he was surprised that Arentinus had unleashed his ultimate technique right at the start of the battle. This rendered every strategy he had prepared useless, forcing him to respond with a stronger technique of his own.

He gripped the hilt of his sword, channeling his sword intent to empower the technique he was about to unleash.

Fourth Movement of the Valiant Sword: Splitting Earth!

Zander swung his blade, and the moment his slash energy met the tornado—

Whoosh!

The tornado was cleaved in two, each half spiraling into separate whirlwinds that tore apart the surroundings. Arentinus's eyes widened in shock as he watched his technique split apart. But he had no time to remain stunned—the slash energy was already racing toward him.

He quickly canceled his technique and chose to block with his sword directly, having no time to cast another skill. A split second later, the slash energy reached him—

TANG!

The slash energy struck his longsword, and instantly he felt a crushing weight press down on both hands as he struggled to hold on. His body was dragged back more than four hundred meters as he roared, desperately trying to stop the slash energy. But in the end, his sword slipped from his grasp, and he was flung away.

Boom!

His body slammed into the arena's ground, skidding another five hundred meters. Pain coursed through him, and before he could do anything, a shadow loomed over his head.

Zander was already standing beside him, pointing his sword down at him. The moment he saw it, Arentinus knew he had lost, and he let out a weary sigh.

"I lost."

"UWOO!"

The moment those words left his lips, the stadium erupted in another uproar, roaring with spirit. The result of the battle was still within their expectations, so it was not truly surprising. Still, the techniques displayed by both Arentinus and Zander were extraordinary, making the fight highly entertaining despite its short length.

Zander simply nodded and left Arentinus for the staff to treat.

For the next few battles, everything went according to everyone's hopes and predictions. Those who faced Kang Yongjin had to admit his overwhelming strength, while those who faced Zander could only admit defeat before his sword.

After more than two hours since the earl stage began, the finalists were finally decided, and just as crowd had hoped, they were Zander and Kang Yongjin.

The round for the earl stage concluded, and the tournament continued into the marquess stage. The battles at the marquess stage were far more destructive and even brutal compared to all the previous ones.

At the peak of the marquess stage, their attacks could reach the level of a duke stage. Every participant was a genius capable of fighting across levels, and each of them could unleash such terrifying power.

In one match, Orlav himself had to intervene to stop the battle, as one participant's attack nearly killed his opponent. Worse still, the technique he unleashed almost killed him as well due to the backlash.

With each battle, the arena resembled a battlefield, its terrain shifting according to the participants' elemental comprehension. A cultivator who grasped earth laws, for example, could shape the arena into rolling hills or even a steep gorge. Every strike or defense left a massive impact on the stage.

After two and a half hours, the marquess stage finally came to an end, and the final round was about to begin!

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## Chapter 753 - 753: The First Champion

[ 1,621 words ]

"Finally, we have reached this stage, where we will witness the ultimate battle that will decide the true champions of the first edition of the Grand Barisan Tournament!" Orlav shouted, and his words were met with an even greater roar of excitement from the spectators.

"Now, without waiting any further, let us begin with the first battle, the match that will determine the winner in the beginner stage category! Let us welcome our two finalists, Erik Sachfield and Sun Meilin!"

A moment later, Erik and Sun Meilin were already in the arena, distancing themselves by a hundred meters from each other.

Erik was a handsome youth in his teens with short black hair, while Sun Meilin was a beautiful girl with long red hair. Erik wielded an earth-grade sword, while Sun Meilin did not use any artifact, which only showed how remarkable she was. Throughout the tournament, she had displayed mastery over both the wind element and the fire element, which shocked the crowd.

She was a genius cultivator who commanded two elements from the very beginning of her cultivation, and she came from a noble family of the Doria Kingdom. However, her family was not as renowned as other noble houses, since her father was "only" a baron. This revelation truly shocked the audience, as it meant her family had managed to hide her talent so well until now.

Erik also came from a noble family in the Vindas Kingdom. He was more of a sword cultivator, known for his excellent swordplay. Rather than relying heavily on elemental attacks, he focused on his sword.

This set him apart from most participants, who treated the sword merely as a supporting artifact. For a sword cultivator, the sword was not just a tool but their way of life and combat.

The sword was both their strength and their weakness.

The two finalists had already locked their focus on each other, fully prepared for the battle.

"Are the participants ready?" Orlav asked.

"Ready!" both shouted simultaneously.

"Then, the battle begins!"

The moment Orlav declared the start, Erik was the first to move. He charged toward Sun Meilin with his movement technique, his speed so great that afterimages lingered in her vision. Yet Sun Meilin had no intention of simply standing still and waiting for him to reach her.

She suddenly opened her palm, and a ball of flame appeared upon it. Then she blew on it. At first, it looked like a small ball, but the moment her breath touched it, the flame swelled, spreading outward as a massive wave surging toward Erik. The blaze expanded rapidly, its coverage immense, the heat radiating fiercely as the fiery wave grew larger and larger.

Facing the overwhelming flames rushing at him, Erik's expression barely changed. Instead, he raised his sword and slashed forward. The wave of fire split instantly under his strike, and without hesitation he charged straight through the opening he had created, determined to attack Sun Meilin directly.

However, he was caught off guard when he suddenly found Sun Meilin already closing in. He had not expected her to advance head-on. From his observations throughout her battles, she had always fought as more of a defensive type, reacting to her opponent's attacks rather than seizing the initiative.

He had planned to take advantage of her usual passiveness, but this was the first time he had seen her dash straight at her opponent. Still, he did not panic. He unleashed his sword technique, slashing twice in quick succession. Yet, with her nimble movements, Sun Meilin managed to evade his strikes even at such a short distance.

Erik was stunned by her agility, but then he froze as a sudden heat rose from beneath his feet. Glancing down, he saw the arena floor glowing red, as though something scorching was about to burst forth. His instincts screamed at him to move, and he instantly leapt to the side.

A split second later—

Boom!

From the very spot he had just vacated, a pillar of flame erupted, its heat so intense it sent shivers down his spine.

'She rushed me as a distraction—so she could prepare this flame technique,' he thought.

But he had no time to dwell on the realization. Sun Meilin was already pressing the attack, hurling several fireballs toward him. Forced onto the defensive, Erik had no choice but to keep evading, unable to build any momentum.

He tried to slash each fireball with his sword, but Sun Meilin kept pressing forward, unleashing her flame techniques without restraint, as if she no longer cared about conserving her energy reserves. Erik's face grew solemn as he focused on defending himself, and at that moment he thought that he might have been tricked all along.

'This is her true battle style. Those earlier matches were only to make others believe she was the passive type,' he realized as he continued to fend off her relentless assault.

Even so, he did not panic, though his position and situation looked increasingly unfavorable. The flames rained down on him without pause, and he knew that even a single direct hit would cause serious injury, something he could not allow.

'This won't do. If I don't take a risk, I'll never be able to break her momentum.'

Resolving himself, Erik made a daring decision. He suddenly leapt far back across the arena. Sun Meilin immediately sought to chase him, ready to continue her assault with both movement and flames. But in that very moment, Erik unleashed his sword technique.

'First Move of Sachfield's Sword: Order of Flame.'

Suddenly, he dashed forward with a style of sword strike that he had not shown in previous battles. His movement was fast and powerful. As the fireballs rained down on him, his sword slashed through them with ease, each strike following in quick succession. Several came close to hitting him, but he kept advancing.

Sun Meilin, seeing him display something new in this fight, did not falter and continued to press her attack. She was about to intensify her assault when she noticed the sword in Erik's hand become blanketed in flames. In the next instant, he made a swift slash toward her, and the flames took the shape of his strike, flying at her with such speed that even she was stunned.

He had never used this technique before!

She stopped casting her technique and quickly dodged. However, halting her attack gave Erik the opening he needed. It was finally his turn to counter. His swift sword strikes rained down on Sun Meilin, each aimed with precision to bring her down.

She tried to dodge his sword strikes with nimble movements, but it was clear that not all of his attacks could be avoided. Her robe was slashed in several places, and wounds began to appear on her body. His rapid strikes were extremely difficult to evade,

especially since he refused to give Sun Meilin any chance to breathe, counterattack, or even defend.

Seeing her injuries piling up, Erik grew confident that this was the time to end it. He pressed his assault, and then, in a sudden flare of heat, his sword was once again blanketed in flames as he prepared to unleash his ultimate move.

Whirl of Flame.

He shifted his grip, twirling the sword slightly in one hand before thrusting forward. From the tip of his blade, a violent whirl of flame erupted, surging straight toward Sun Meilin. The blazing vortex carried extreme heat as it pushed forward, its power reaching the level of a middle disciple stage attack!

Sun Meilin, covered in wounds across her body, stood before the approaching Whirl of Flame. Its powerful force made it seem like the end for her. The moment it struck, she would be defeated, and Erik would be declared the winner. At least, that was what the crowd believed as they watched her situation unfold.

However, she suddenly smiled, as if to say, got you.

Just before the Whirl of Flame could hit her, the blazing vortex bent to the side and passed by her body instead. The attack that should have landed was redirected elsewhere, leaving the onlookers wide-eyed in shock.

Erik was just as stunned. What kind of trick had Sun Meilin used?

But he had no time to dwell on it. Sun Meilin seized the opening to launch her counterattack. Forced to react instantly, Erik canceled his technique, enduring a slight backlash in order to prepare himself to block or evade whatever she was about to unleash.

He wanted to jump back to create distance, but suddenly he felt something at his feet that made it difficult to move. His legs felt heavy, and he was shocked since he had not sensed anything at all until now. Sun Meilin had already finished her preparation and finally unleashed her ultimate technique.

She thrust both palms forward, and a fusion of wind and fire burst forth.

Flame Lance.

A massive pillar of fire, its tip shaped like a spearhead, shot out at incredible speed. Before Erik could react, the blazing lance engulfed him completely. Carrying the power of a middle disciple stage attack, the flame struck him directly and scorched the arena ground around him. Erik, caught at the center of the impact, felt searing pain as the burning sensation tore across his body.

"Argh!" he shouted in pain, which made Sun Meilin stop her technique. When the flames disappeared, Erik could be seen lying on the ground with his robe torn and burn wounds covering his body, gasping for breath. He groaned weakly as he tried to breathe.

Sun Meilin, too, was clearly exhausted. Her energy reserves were nearly depleted, her breathing heavy as sweat rolled down her face.

The crowd did not need anyone to tell them who the victor was, and Orlav agreed. There was no way Erik could continue in his condition.

"The match is over! With one participant incapacitated, the winner and champion of the Beginner Stage is Sun Meilin!" Orlav announced.

"UWOOO!"

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## Chapter 754 - 754: The Approaching Danger

[ 1,673 words ]

"UWOO!" The spectators erupted in an uproar as they witnessed something amazing. Not only because of the great fight, but also because each participant displayed their true abilities. The finals truly showcased their best, as they revealed their strongest techniques and hidden trump cards.

Erik was truly amazing in unleashing powerful techniques, but for the crowd, what Sun Meilin did shocked them even more.

"To think that kid comprehended three laws, and one of them is the space laws. Her future will be bright if she is supported by the appropriate resources," Aldrey commented. What Sun Meilin did in the last moment before Erik's attack could reach her was bend the space in front of her, redirecting the attack to the side.

She also used the space laws to bend the space around Erik's feet, making it difficult for him to escape from her attack. Although her control over space was still that simple, it was already enough for her current stage.

Erik, who did not know about her true ability, could not sense her space laws and would not realize that this was space laws. After all, someone who could comprehend the space laws at the beginning of their cultivation journey was extremely rare.

Moreover, she was already known as a dual-element cultivator, and no one outside of her family knew about her third law.

Irene responded to her husband's comment with a nod.

"Yes, she was truly amazing. For her to hide such an ability all this time... no, I should say the Sun family hid her talent well, since no one else knew of her true capability," she answered.

Irene, of course, knew more about the Sun family, since they came from her kingdom. She was shocked that the Sun family, a noble house often overlooked and kept outside the spotlight, had been hiding such a gem.

To the outside world, Sun Meilin, the daughter of Baron Sun, was known as a dual-element cultivator from the very beginning of her cultivation. Yet to think it was actually three elements, and that one of them was the space laws.

In the arena, Sun Meilin suddenly fell to the ground. Physicians rushed in to treat her and Erik, with special attention on Erik, who had taken the full force of her ultimate attack.

"Good work, kid. Now you can rest. Let me heal you," one of the physicians said to her.

She felt completely drained, as though she would faint at any moment. She had deliberately put herself forward as bait, and afterward exhausted her energy by using the space laws almost at the same time with her ultimate technique.

The space laws at her stage consumed a tremendous amount of energy, and her ultimate technique did the same. At this moment, she wanted nothing more than to sleep. Yet she could not help but show a smile.

She had done it—she had won and become the champion of the Beginner Stage category!

After a few moments, the two participants were brought out of the arena by the staff, and the destroyed surface of the arena was restored to its original state by Orlav. In less than thirty seconds, the arena returned to its initial condition, ready to be used for another battle.

"We were truly entertained by the final match of the Beginner Stage. Even I was shocked by what Participant Erik and Participant Sun Meilin could do. Now, let us continue with the next battle. We might see something just as unexpected as what we witnessed earlier. Let us welcome the finalists of the Disciple Stage category—Tron Flameheart and Orion Varektus!" Orlav shouted.

The spectators roared in excitement once more as they eagerly awaited the next battle. The two participants stepped into the arena with full confidence, their expressions showing that they were ready to go all out. And after both of them confirmed their readiness—

"The battle begins!"

The announcement was followed by the thunderous cheers of the crowd. The atmosphere remained intense even as the sun leaned toward the western side of the world. Time seemed to pass quickly under the excitement of the finals.

Yet, unbeknown to the many still drowning in the festive joy of the tournament, a danger continued to approach them—or more precisely, their world.

In the depths of space, far from the Ancient Blue Gate World, a massive armada of more than two hundred giant interstellar vessels surged forward through a wormhole. The sheer size of this fleet was terrifying, as if it were preparing for all-out war, and that was indeed the intention of those aboard.

This was the armada of the devils, still making their way toward the Ancient Blue Gate World. At its head was Rulleus, the son of the Vampire King of the First Heaven. These more than two hundred interstellar vessels represented the combined might of nearly all devil factions within the Fallen Star Cluster.

They had chosen to follow Rulleus willingly on his path of war, driven by their discontent toward Xarz, their leader in the Fallen Star Cluster, who had chosen to abort the attack on Ancient Blue Gate World. Nearly all of their powerhouses had joined this campaign, leaving only a handful behind to guard their home stars.

They had brought most of their powerhouses, believing this war could be won by the devils. With so many strong figures and the advantage of a surprise attack, they were certain they would not fail. Moreover, with Rulleus and his troops who came directly from the central region of Heaven, their strength was many times greater.

That was why there was no hesitation among the devils as they advanced toward the star that had recently become a hot topic.

And what about the news of someone who had fought their god? Almost none of them believed such nonsense. For someone of this heaven to face a god, those who believed it must be insane. They were convinced that their god had reasons for canceling his descent, but whatever the reason was, it did not matter.

They would continue marching toward the Ancient Blue Gate World. They would take that star, and even the entire star cluster, regardless of any deviation from their original plan.

As for that so-called existence, they gave it little thought, dismissing the stories from the Ancient Blue Gate World as mere exaggerations meant to frighten devils who might cause trouble there.

However, not all of the devils within the armada shared the same excitement for the coming war. One among them instead grew increasingly anxious as they drew nearer to the central star cluster. At this moment, he was carrying out an errand assigned by Rulleus. In his hand, he held a chain, and at the other end of it was a woman's neck.

The woman was in fact a cultivator at the low Immortal Foundation Stage, but her cultivation had been sealed, rendering her no different from a mortal. She wore only a single piece of cloth, and her eyes appeared vacant, as if under some kind of hypnosis, though she still followed Xarz as he led her toward a certain room.

Two of Rulleus's guardians stood at the entrance, and the moment they saw him, they opened the door without hesitation. The instant the door opened, a strong stench of blood struck Xarz's nostrils, making his vampire body react with hunger. He suppressed the urge, and continued walking inside with the woman in tow.

Inside the room was a massive pool, and Rulleus could be seen soaking at its edge as if he were enjoying his solitude. His back was turned to Xarz, so his face could not be seen.

The overwhelming stench of blood came from the pool itself, its crimson liquid rising up to Rulleus's chest. The pool was filled entirely with human blood, and from the sheer quantity, no one could tell how many lives had been taken to fill it. For Rulleus, this was both a way to indulge himself and a method to increase his power.

When Xarz reached a spot not far behind him, he stopped and lowered his head slightly.

"I brought one of the cattle, Your Highness," he said.

"Good. Send her to me," Rulleus replied without turning his head.

Xarz nodded, whispered something to the woman, and released the chain around her neck. A moment later, she began walking steadily toward Rulleus. Step by step, she moved forward until she entered the pool, the blood lapping at her body, before stopping beside him. Rulleus turned his gaze to her with a cold smile.

Suddenly, clarity returned to the woman's eyes. She blinked, and in the next moment her face turned pale.

"Ahh!" she screamed, stumbling into the pool of blood. But before she could move away, Rulleus stretched out his hand, and her body was pulled toward him.

"No! No! Please, don't do this to me!"

The woman struggled against the pull, but it was futile. Rulleus's cold smile never wavered as she was drawn into his grasp. He seized her by the neck and pulled her close to his face.

"You cattle, your only purpose is to serve as my nourishment," he whispered. "Be honored to die for me."

"No, no, NO!" The woman screamed in desperation, but she could not resist Rulleus's power. A moment later, his sharp fangs sank into her neck. She struggled with all her remaining strength, but it was futile. Her resistance grew weaker and weaker as her body was drained. Before long, her body withered, growing thinner and thinner until nothing remained but bones. When Rulleus was finished, he tossed the dried corpse out of the pool.

"Dump that," he ordered.

Xarz obeyed silently, carrying the drained corpse away and leaving Rulleus alone once more.

Left in silence, Rulleus let out a sigh.

'It's still not enough. I need stronger cattle to push my cultivation forward. Just a little more, and I could break through.' But then his cold smile returned as he pictured what was to come.

'Well, after the war I will have more than enough. I've heard that the Ancient Blue Gate World has many strong cultivators. That will be enough for my breakthrough.'

He thought of nothing else, convinced that no obstacle would stand in his way.

He would bring victory!

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## **Chapter 755 - 755: Looking for a Way to Survive**

[ 1,483 words ]

Xarz, after getting out from Rulleus's room, walked away. His hand dragged the drained corpse, and the devils who saw him knew he must be from Rulleus's room. They ignored him, and some of them even mocked him inwardly, thinking he had now ended up as nothing more than an errand boy.

These devils were the ones dissatisfied with his decision in the past regarding Ancient Blue Gate World and who could only obey because of his strength. However, Xarz himself ignored them and simply carried out the order as he kept dragging the corpse. Inside his mind, though, he thought hard about the situation ahead.

'I only have time, more or less a week, to think of how I could survive this war—No, if all of the information about that man is true, then it will be a carnage. We truly will not survive,' he frowned.

'How am I going to survive that day?! Think, think!' He truly couldn't find any way to survive, because his identity itself already guaranteed death in front of the powers of the Ancient Blue Gate World.

Although he had his own concerns about facing beings like the Dragon King and the Phoenix Queen, he knew that Rulleus had his own way of dealing with them, which was why he seemed so confident in attacking that world.

But the problem was not them, but the person who could fight his god. That one would likely obliterate all of them.

'How about if I just shout surrender and give myself in to that man?'

However, that also did not guarantee his survival, as he might still be killed instead.

As he kept thinking, he passed many cabins, and from each cabin he could hear the screams of women and men. Their screams were filled with pain.

In some other rooms, he could hear moans, both from women and men. Their erotic moans accompanied by the slapping sound of flesh meeting flesh.

Even without seeing what was happening, anyone could already guess what those devils were doing. There were also cries of resistance from some of the women inside, but their partners seemed to ignore them and just continued without pause, indulging in pleasure despite the cries.

A few moments later, Xarz arrived at another cabin located much farther from the earlier line of cabins. When he opened it, it was a vast storage cabin, and the instant the door open, a surge of voices erupted from the many people caged inside the special enclosures.

They were from various races of living beings, the majority being humans. These captives were the ones kidnapped by the devil troops under the order of Rulleus.

On their journey to the Ancient Blue Gate World, they had to pass through several small worlds of civilization. Although those worlds were small, they were still within the influence of the central star cluster.

A week ago, as they passed through these worlds, Rulleus ordered them to stop at one of the worlds and plunder it. For Rulleus and the other devils, this was nothing more than a resupply, but for that world, it meant destruction and annihilation. It was an apocalypse. Almost the entire population was either slaughtered or abducted.

The pool of blood in Rulleus's room came from many humans he had killed in that world. He also consumed the blood and life essence of the humans he had kidnapped every day. Rulleus could kill more than ten people in a single day, either to satisfy his hunger or to cultivate his power.

Inside these cages, all kinds of captives were crammed together, women, men, the old, children, humans, spiritual beasts, dwarves, and even a group of elves.

"Have mercy on me! Please have mercy on me!"

"Curse you, devils, for bringing destruction! You will get your karma! The heavens will not tolerate your existence, you will pay for what you have done!"

"You devils will be cursed by the heavens for spreading death and ruin. I pray the heavens end you."

"Please let my child go! Please, have mercy on them."

Many curses and pleas fell on Xarz. Cries from women and children mixed in, but he ignored them as he kept dragging the corpse past them. The crying and panic grew when they saw the body he hauled. For these prisoners, this was a scene they had seen since their abduction, it happened every day.

Xarz kept walking until he reached the side of the cabin, where a small hatch was built into the wall. He opened it and instantly shoved the corpse inside. The hatch connected to the vessel's disposal lines, which immediately ejected anything thrown in, expelling it into space through one of the side hatches.

The corpse became nothing more than space waste, left to float endlessly unless someone happened to retrieve it.

After dumping the body, Xarz let out a sigh. He still had not found any solution for the future. Walking back out of the storage room, he ignored the shouts of the many captives that continued to echo behind him.

He sighed once more and scratched his head with one hand.

'Fuck! If only I had something I could use to bargain with that man!'

He was genuinely confused as he kept walking. After a few moments, something suddenly came to his mind.

'Wait. Maybe I have something I can use as a bargaining chip for my survival.' His steps stopped. His face shifted from confused to firm. He began to walk again with more confident steps.

'Yes. I can use him.' His expression hardened and his gaze grew sharp.

'Do not blame me. This is my way to survive, your highness.'

-----

At the stadium in Caelestis City, the atmosphere grew more festive and excited. Even though the sun had already set and been replaced by the moon, the excitement did not recede at all. In fact, the atmosphere grew even more spirited and lively. This was also inseparable from the fact that the battle everyone had been waiting for was finally about to begin.

The final battle for the viscount stage had just concluded, and the champion was a participant from the Buddhist sect. The arena had only just been restored to good condition when Orlav shouted to the crowd:

"What a marvellous battle we just witnessed! Once again, congratulations to participant Lin Shengli for winning in the viscount stage category! Now, ladies and gentlemen, we have come to the next category: the earls stage category. Will the two finalists, Kang Yongjin and Mister Z, please step into the arena!"

The spectators grew even more uproarious as they saw Zander and Kang Yongjin step into the arena. They kept their distance of five hundred meters from each other.

Kang Yongjin, finally standing in the same arena as the opponent he had wanted to face since yesterday, showed a smile.

"Finally, I have been waiting for this moment to come. You'd better unleash everything you have. I don't want you to disappoint me. I really have high expectations for you, after all," he said.

Zander, smiling behind his mask, answered,

"Same for me." He then unsheathed his sword and took his stance. However, he glanced slightly toward the place where Aldrian stood to observe him. He could see his

master looking at him with a faint smile, a smile that showed support. Seeing his master like that gave him a boost of confidence and spirit. He took a deep breath and turned his gaze back to Kang Yongjin.

He would win this fight!

Orlav, watching their interaction, finally shouted,

"Are the participants ready?!"

"I'm ready," both of them answered.

"The battle begins!" As soon as Orlav's words fell—

**BOOM!**

A massive crater exploded where Zander had been standing, and the shattered debris flew out with a thick wave of dust sweeping more than a kilometer behind him. But Zander himself had already vanished, reappearing at Kang Yongjin's side with a sudden strike.

Kang Yongjin, who had just unleashed his most powerful Fist of Void at Zander, quickly clenched his hand into a fist and struck at the incoming sword.

Trang!

The sword clashed against Kang Yongjin's fist, producing a sharp metallic sound. The shockwave of their clash swept through the arena. Yet Zander did not stop. Using his speed, he unleashed a relentless barrage of sword attacks. Kang Yongjin, forced onto the defensive, could only block and deflect under the storm of strikes.

But then, all of a sudden, Kang Yongjin let one of Zander's sword strikes land on him, leaving a slash wound, and countered with his fist. His punch tore through the sound barrier, the air around it bending before erupting in a deafening sonic boom. That fist carried enough power to fatally wound even a marquess-stage cultivator!

Zander, nearly caught by the strike, vanished from his spot just as Kang Yongjin's fist smashed into nothing. Yet the aftermath of the blow was clear for all to see, the very space trembled, and the air surged forward like a raging storm, throwing their battle area into chaos.

In the next instant, Kang Yongjin himself disappeared, darting after Zander. Now it was his turn to attack!

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## Chapter 756 - 756: The Intense Battle

[ 1,751 words ]

Kang Yongjin dashed toward Zander, who had taken some distance from him as he evaded the fist strike. His speed was so fast that even low marquess stage cultivators had difficulty following his movements. The sound of clashes followed each movement as Kang Yongjin's fists collided with Zander's sword again and again.

Boom! Trang! Ting! Tang! Boom! Rumble! Rumble!

The arena was truly in chaos, with the terrain destroyed in many places each time they clashed. Craters formed, dust rose into the air, space trembled, and rumbling sounds echoed everywhere, yet Kang Yongjin and Zander's figures could not be seen because their movements were too fast from most of the spectators's perspective.

The spectators were in an uproar, shocked by the battle. This was truly intense! Their speed and power went far beyond the norm of the earl stage! The crowd shouted endlessly, cheering for their chosen fighter. Many supported Kang Yongjin, especially the demon cultivators, while others supported Zander with most of them sword cultivators.

In Aldrian's place, his family also watched the battle in surprise.

"This is truly intense. With this kind of power and strength, even if I were in the same cultivation realm as them, I don't think I could ever defeat them," Aldrey commented.

Irene nodded in response.

"They are truly terrifying. Still, the fact that Zander can more or less match Kang Yongjin's power is amazing. He is already fast, but he can also block some of Kang Yongjin's fists with his sword," she said.

Aldrian, who kept observing Zander, knew that as well and was not surprised. However, he also knew that Zander was still weaker in raw power compared to Kang Yongjin. Kang Yongjin was a body cultivator, and his sheer strength was tremendous, something Zander could not truly match.

Zander himself must have understood that, which was why he did not always block Kang Yongjin's attacks and instead chose to dodge them. Zander's advantage was his speed, which slightly surpassed Kang Yongjin's. Although Kang Yongjin was fast thanks

to the powerful muscles and body refined by his cultivation technique, Zander's speed held the edge because of his past training with him.

He wanted to see how Zander would deal with Kang Yongjin, who was truly a difficult opponent for him. Still, he believed that Zander could do it. He sensed that Zander had a trump card, and if he could use it at the right time, he might succeed.

Kang Yongjin was already using his body technique to toughen his skin, making it difficult for the sword to pierce him easily. Zander had to find a way to break through that defense, which was very different from his battles against wild beasts in the secret realm.

In the arena, the clashes between the two men continued without pause. Zander, who had initially been pushed back by Kang Yongjin's barrage of fists, had already escaped that situation with his speed and launched a counterattack. He was now using his sword intent to enhance the power and strength of his strikes.

Kang Yongjin, who had used his hardened body technique for protection since earlier, could already feel that his technique would not last forever as time passed. The fact that Zander still had not used his sword will was proof of just how powerful his sword intent already was.

That was why he no longer dared to recklessly use his body as bait. He knew that Zander's sword strikes could truly wound him.

Still, he couldn't help but smile in the midst of evading and blocking Zander's sword strikes. This was the first time he had met someone in the same cultivation realm who made him feel this way.

'Yes, this is how it should be, the kind of fight I can truly enjoy,' he thought.

He had finally found someone who could match his pace and strength within the same realm. All this time, he had been forced to fight stronger opponents just to unleash his full potential. There was never any joy in fighting those of the same realm, as they had always fallen short.

However, at this moment, he felt a new sensation, born from finally meeting someone who could stand evenly against him within the same realm. In the past, he thought he would feel this way when he met Aldrian at the Piercing Heaven Sect. But as time passed, he realized that Aldrian was too much of a monster to compare with. Aldrian stood on a level that no one could match.

If the person he once considered a rival was actually too strong and had already left him far behind, then that meant he was never truly worthy of being called a rival at all. He was simply too weak, and Aldrian's status had already risen far beyond his reach.

But the person standing in front of him this time, this might be different. There was no way there could be two people with Aldrian's level of talent, right?

Zander, who was still pressing forward with his sword attacks, suddenly sensed something unusual from Kang Yongjin's body. A wave of pressure burst out from him, and just as Zander was about to strike again, he saw Kang Yongjin's skin turn obsidian. His sword reached the target, but—

Tink!

The blade managed to leave only a faint slash on Kang Yongjin's skin.

Both Zander and the spectators were shocked. A peak heaven-grade sword, normally wielded by cultivators at the duke stage and above, had managed to leave only a faint mark! Even though Zander was still at the earl stage and could not bring out the sword's full potential, he had already infused it with sword intent to boost its strength.

What kind of cheat technique had Kang Yongjin used now for his body to become this strong? Even the Buddha's Golden Body was not this exaggerated.

Inside one of the VVIP rooms, where Sect Master Kang was seated, he smiled proudly as he saw Kang Yongjin unleash a technique he had finally comprehended from the Heavenly Demon's Black Dragon Scripture. It was said to make a cultivator's skin as tough as a Black Dragon's scales.

The only downside was that Kang Yongjin's cultivation was still too low to maintain it, which meant it would drain his energy at a faster rate. Even so, he would have enough time to defeat the masked man without much worry.

"So this is the surprise you wanted to show?" Sect Master Ryu finally asked. He was truly astonished by this kind of body-hardening technique.

"Well, that is one of them. Just keep watching. I believe you might be surprised again," Sect Master Kang answered, causing Sect Master Ryu to raise his eyebrows. There was another surprise?

He turned his gaze back to the arena, where Kang Yongjin looked ready to counterattack. After realizing his strikes had little effect, Zander widened the distance, intending to unleash one of his sword techniques.

However, he was not given the chance, as Kang Yongjin immediately pursued him.

"Ugh!" Zander groaned slightly as Kang Yongjin's fist reached him. Before it could land, he blocked with his sword.

'How heavy!' Zander thought, gritting his teeth as he felt his hand on the verge of breaking. He vanished to gain distance, but Kang Yongjin's speed and strength had already increased compared to earlier, nearly catching him off guard.

Kang Yongjin also seemed to not care about his defense, attacking Zander relentlessly with both fists. But even without defending, every sword strike from Zander that touched Kang Yongjin's skin had little effect.

Zander decided not to hold back and unleashed his sword will. His strikes grew stronger, yet he could see that his sword only left a small slash wound. No—calling it a sword slash wound was too much. It was more appropriate to describe it as a cat's scratch.

'How hard is his skin?' Zander thought.

Still, he found hope in this. It meant that with his sword will, he could at least wound Kang Yongjin's body, even if only slightly. That meant he still had a chance. Ordinary sword strikes would not work, he had to rely on sword techniques to boost his damage.

The problem was that Kang Yongjin never gave him the chance, unleashing a barrage of fists. Some of his attacks were mixed with Fist of Void, making them even more dangerous. Although Zander had not comprehended space laws, his sharp senses still allowed him to notice subtle signs in the air that revealed the hidden fist strikes from within the void.

He was forced to dodge those attacks, as they were the most dangerous ones, while also evading Kang Yongjin's ordinary punches.

While still concentrating on defending himself from the fists, he suddenly felt danger from below and tried to dodge. In that split second, he saw Kang Yongjin actually using a kick aimed at his side rib! Although he realized it quickly, he did not have time to fully evade the kick.

'Shit,' Zander thought.

The kick landed almost perfectly on his rib, but because he blocked it with one of his palms, it was his palm that took the brunt of the force.

Crack!

Pain surged through his left hand, and Zander knew that the bones in his hand were cracked, if not broken. He held back his grunt of pain as Kang Yongjin did not stop attacking, and in that moment he decided to gamble.

He deliberately dropped his sword, which caused Kang Yongjin to be slightly stunned and glance at it in the middle of his attacks. He knew Zander had released the sword on purpose, so he spared a moment to make sure there was no trick hidden behind it.

However, that split moment was enough for Zander to slip out of Kang Yongjin's barrage of attacks. His body disappeared and reappeared beside the sword, and he immediately put as much distance as he could between himself and Kang Yongjin.

Realizing what had happened, Kang Yongjin sighed and looked at Zander with a smile. To think he had been tricked. Still, he felt satisfied, as he had at least injured one of Zander's hands. That wound would hinder his sword techniques.

Yet, Kang Yongjin could already feel the strain of maintaining his Black Dragon's Scale Form. The constant use of the form, combined with unleashing the Fist of Void many times while pursuing Zander, had consumed his energy reserves quickly. His energy had already fallen below half, now nearing only thirty-five percent. That was already too low for him in this kind of battle.

He had to end this battle quickly!

After a moment of hesitation, he decided to take a gamble. If it worked, he would win. If not, he could only bid farewell to the champion's title.

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## Chapter 757 - 757: Lost?

[ 1,587 words ]

Zander, thinking about how he would defeat Kang Yongjin, saw that Kang Yongjin was just standing without pursuing. He could see that Kang Yongjin also seemed to be bearing a burden, as if he had just released a huge amount of energy. Sweat rolled down his face as he tried to adjust his breathing. Although Kang Yongjin tried to hide it, Zander finally understood what had happened.

'I see, he must be exhausted, and his energy reserves must be quite low. That body technique and continuously unleashing his fist technique must have drained his energy quickly,' he thought. He was actually exhausted as well, but he still had plenty of energy because he had not unleashed any of his sword techniques. Throughout his battle with Kang Yongjin just now, he had not had a chance to properly use any of them.

It seemed that was part of Kang Yongjin's strategy, to prevent him from unleashing his sword techniques. Kang Yongjin knew that the combination of his sword techniques, sword intent, or even the sword will would be dangerous.

Then, suddenly, another strategy came to his mind.

'Maybe I could take advantage of his low energy. I could make him drain entirely of his energy and defeat him.' He looked at his left hand from the wrist down, he could not move it at all.

'As expected, it's broken and cracked in some parts.' With one hand incapacitated, even the slightest movement caused pain, hindering both his sword techniques and body movement. That kick had been truly fatal, and it was also his own carelessness. To think he had been so focused on fists that he had forgotten Kang Yongjin's kick could be deadly, he clearly needed more experience in battle.

His eyes focused again as he looked at Kang Yongjin, who suddenly assumed a different stance. He wanted to move again, to bait Kang Yongjin into draining more energy, but his body suddenly refused to obey. A chill ran through him as an unknown fear surged from deep within his soul, freezing him in place.

From his point of view, Kang Yongjin's figure transformed into that of a giant beast, a ferocious creature that seemed ready to devour him. He could see its two eyes, giant yellow orbs with black slits, like those of a colossal reptile. In this moment, Kang Yongjin no longer appeared human to Zander, he was a giant beast.

"What? How could he use dragon's intimidation?" In the spectators' section, some dragons raised that question, because what Kang Yongjin used was undoubtedly one of the dragons' abilities. Although it felt weaker, since Kang Yongjin was not a dragon, what he had just used was an innate ability that every dragon possesses, the dragon's intimidation.

Dragon's intimidation is a psychological attack against an opponent, using the dragon's very existence as a deterrent force. Dragons, as one of the most powerful beings in the universe, have their own ways to assert dominance. Dragon's intimidation is one of these methods, showing anyone who dares oppose them who is truly stronger.

This ability is unique to dragon lineage, and they had never heard of a pure human being able to use it.

In one of the VVIP rooms, the Dragon King frowned.

"This kid is from Black Dragon Pavilion, right? If he is not a dragon or of mixed blood, then according to the records I have read, the only possible reason he could use Dragon's intimidation is that he is the successor of the Heavenly Demon's Black Dragon Scripture," he said.

"It's no wonder that his body technique is also quite strange, as if his skin itself has turned into dragon scales. If that is the case, then it's no wonder he could be so strong." As Dragon King, he already knew the legend of the Black Dragon Pavilion, one of the three great sects of the demon cultivators.

The Black Dragon Pavilion is said to be a sect whose foundation is built upon the existence of a single black dragon. This black dragon, a mysterious being rumored to be a special mutant dragon, seemingly appeared from nowhere and became the Heavenly Demon's mount, accompanying him on his journey.

Legend holds that the black dragon is among the most powerful beings in the history of the universe.

The Dragon King smiled as he looked at the arena, his gaze moving from Kang Yongjin to Zander.

"It seems that kid wants to use his ultimate technique after intimidating that guy so he can stay in his place. I know this might be his last attack, given how tired he seems, but if that swordsman doesn't have anything to resist the dragon's intimidation, then the winner is already decided." As the Dragon King said this, Kang Yongjin's stance in the arena had already shifted to that of a person ready to throw a punch.

Suddenly, the space around him trembled, growing heavier, even the space around his fist wavered slightly. The ground beneath him cracked. His obsidian skin had returned to normal skin, but now it glowed red. The muscles in his arm and torso contracted as if ready to unleash tremendous power.

From his expression, he seemed to be enduring pain himself, it appeared to be a setback as he prepared to unleash his ultimate technique.

However, despite the pain, he could not help but grin. He looked at the motionless Zander in the distance and realized he was still trapped under the effect of the Dragon's intimidation. With this, Zander would not move until the strike hit him.

'I win,' he thought.

In the room where Sect Master Ryu watched, he widened his eyes in astonishment and turned to Sect Master Kang.

"You already taught him Breaking Void at his stage? And he seems to have comprehended it and even used it? Don't you think it's too early and could cause damage to his body?"

Sect Master Kang, still looking proudly at Kang Yongjin, answered, "He has already proven himself as someone who can comprehend one of the Heavenly Demon's

Scriptures and endure the training necessary to receive this technique. There might be backlash, but I don't think it will be a problem."

Sect Master Ryu frowned. "Why would it not be a problem? Kang Yongjin's meridians could burst, and he might even end up crippled for life. Don't you think you are too—" He suddenly stopped and narrowed his eyes.

"Wait, are you thinking of pleading to His Majesty if that happens?" At the moment he asked, Sect Master Kang coughed slightly, causing Sect Master Ryu to widen his eyes in astonishment.

"You presumptuous bastard! What do you think His Majesty is? Your personal physician?" he asked in bewilderment. Nearby, Sect Master Baek couldn't help but smile in amusement, she found the situation hilarious. To think that Sect Master Kang could harbor such shameless thoughts.

Sect Master Kang, as if caught red-handed, flushed slightly and answered shamelessly.

"Well, because I trust His Majesty, I let Kang Yongjin use this technique as a last resort when he asked me if he could use it in the tournament. Anyway, I would prostrate myself before His Majesty if needed so he could heal Kang Yongjin if he could not withstand the setback."

Sect Master Ryu facepalmed and muttered, "Crazy bastard," before looking back at the arena.

The spectators watching Kang Yongjin prepare to unleash his powerful technique felt tense. The masked man, who had shown brilliance since the early phase of the tournament, now seemed destined to lose. He did not move an inch, as if something had rendered him unable to act. The dragons knew that the masked man must be in fear because of the Dragon's intimidation.

His body was frozen by a fear that surged from deep within his soul, one he could not easily erase. To them, this masked swordsman had already lost.

On the balcony where Aldrian was seated, his family watched Zander anxiously. Sylphia then turned to Aldrian.

"Is Zander going to lose? He seems frozen in place. From what I just heard, it's because of Kang Yongjin's ability called the Dragon's Intimidation. With Kang Yongjin seeming ready to unleash his ultimate technique, Zander will be directly hit if he doesn't move," she said.

However, Aldrian was actually smiling, which confused her.

"This is the perfect moment and his only chance for him to unleash his trump card," he said suddenly. "But the moment Kang Yongjin forced Zander to feel fear and remained rooted in place to unleash his technique, he made his biggest mistake."

His comment left the rest of his family confused, but suddenly—

Whoozz!

A surge of sword will erupted from Zander, making every sword in the stadium tremble. Then, one by one, they floated into the air, all directing themselves toward Zander.

From the spectators' viewpoint, a faint illusion of a sword appeared behind Zander. A firm and strong sword that would not bend in the face of any obstacle.

The spectators were shocked by this turn of events as they saw hundreds of thousands of swords floating and pointing at Zander. His sword will, which created a faint illusion of a sword, sent chills down the spines of even Duke stage cultivators.

Kang Yongjin, witnessing this, was equally shocked. He had not expected Zander to withstand his Dragon's Intimidation and release his sword will. At this moment, his instincts screamed danger at the sight of a sword will far more powerful than anything Zander had shown before. It sent goosebumps across his own body.

'I have to end this battle now. He is too dangerous!' he thought.

Feeling that his technique was ready, he decided to unleash it despite the pain coursing through his body, determined to end the battle.

Breaking Void!

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## **Chapter 758 - 758: The Result of the Battle**

[ 1,675 words ]

Zander, entering the state of serenity at this moment, was ready to unleash his ultimate move. He decided to use Infinite Slash, as this was the perfect opportunity for him. A few moments ago, when he was under the effect of the dragon's intimidation, he tried to suppress it using his own will.

The moment he felt fear, he recalled the past he never wanted to return to. He would not be scared anymore like before. He refused to be a coward. He had to defeat the fear within his heart! He had to move forward firmly, destroying any obstacle and showing others that he had already left his past behind.

The beast inside Kang Yongjin was nothing compared to the eye in the sky that once brought terror to the entire continent. If he could fight the weaker version of it inside his illusion, then he could fight the beast inside of Kang Yongjin!

His sword will, growing firmer and stronger, caused every sword in the stadium to react. All of them floated and pointed their tips towards him. It was as if the swords gave their respect to a sword will worthy of receiving honor.

He channeled most of his energy and comprehension into this single sword strike. Since yesterday, he had already perfected the Infinite Slash inside of his mind, making it far stronger than before. However, at this moment, he tried to push it even further, determined to make his Infinite Slash stronger, even if it meant he might suffer some setback.

The moment Kang Yongjin unleashed his fist technique, a massive spatial wave shot toward Zander. The space bent along the line of the punch and continued to move at incredible speed. If this technique had been unleashed by Sect Master Kang, it would have collapsed the entire space in front of him and even created a spatial storm.

However, for Kang Yongjin, this power was more than enough to defeat his opponent. The punch, containing the strength of a high marquis stage cultivator's attack, would surely bring him the winner's title.

The spectators were shocked by the strength of the punch, which was an entire realm higher than Kang Yongjin's own cultivation! This technique was truly too powerful. It could have already killed someone of the same realm a thousand times over!

The spectators grew tense as they saw the punch technique keep moving closer to Mister Z. If he were hit by the punch, he will truly die!

Orlav was already on edge, ready to stop the punch technique, doing so would mean Zander's elimination. From the situation unfolding in front of him, it looked as though the winner had already been decided.

However, before he could move to intervene, he saw Zander finally act. Zander shifted his stance as if preparing to unleash a sword strike. The moment Orlav saw that posture, he sensed a tremendous hidden strength contained within the sword strike Zander was about to unleash. His eyes widened in shock.

As Zander slowly moved his sword, Orlav could not help but remember someone else who had once displayed that very posture. The spectators from the Barisan Continent,

as well as outsiders who had come during the time when Tarius tried to descend, also recalled the same thing. It was as if they were watching that great person unleash the same sword technique once more.

Zander's movement and posture reminded them of their emperor—Aldrian the Great.

"Is it the same technique as His Majesty used at that time?" one of the spectators asked in astonishment.

"No, I think it's vastly different. The movements are quite the same, but the sword will itself is already different from His Majesty's," another answered as they discussed Zander's technique.

How could they not know the sword strike that destroyed the God of the Devils? That was the most powerful sword strike anyone had ever witnessed, and Aldrian the Great's movement remained vividly remembered by many.

Zander, who now displayed the same movement, shocked them and sent chills down their spines. Could this man also use that technique? Could he reveal the power of that sword strike? If that was the case, then perhaps they had to stop this battle immediately! That kind of technique would obliterate everything in its path!

Zander's movement was slow at first, but the moment the slash was about to be unleashed, his speed suddenly surged. He gritted his teeth as he felt the burden of releasing the modified version of Infinite Slash.

His broken left hand throbbed with pain, and the meridians across his arm felt as if they were about to burst. Yet, he continued to unleash the technique.

Infinite Slash!

The moment he completed the slash, a massive surge of slash energy burst forth from his sword and flew directly toward the incoming punch technique. Strong winds howled in its wake, and the very space bent, seeming almost on the verge of shattering to reveal the void behind it.

The spectators, seeing Zander finally unleash his technique, were utterly shocked. The strike possessed the strength of a peak marquess stage attack! It was stronger by more than an entire realm compared to his base cultivation at the high earl stage!

Orlav was also stunned and immediately strengthened the barrier around the arena as a preemptive measure in case this slash could destroy it. Though it might have sounded exaggerated since Aldrian the Great himself had helped construct the barrier formation, he could not dismiss his unease. That kind of worry lingered in everyone who had once witnessed Aldrian the Great's technique.

Even though the strength of this slash was far weaker than what Aldrian the Great had unleashed back then, no one dared to underestimate it. The memory of that sword strike's overwhelming effect was etched so deeply into their minds that even if someone only copied the movement, they would still regard it with the utmost seriousness.

Zander's Infinite Slash instantly tore through the air of the arena, and before long, it collided with Kang Yongjin's fist technique. And the result?

Crash! Trang!

The two techniques, powerful enough to affect space itself, collided with a deafening crash. At the point of impact, a small rift tore open in the fabric of space as their clash briefly released power equal to the middle duke stage!

Strong winds blasted outward, and the ground at the collision point was destroyed, leaving behind a massive crater nearly a kilometer in diameter. Yet the clash between the two techniques held on for a brief moment. Kang Yongjin's fist technique, which at first managed to block the slash energy for a split moment, finally shattered.

The slash energy did not lose its momentum. With incredible speed, it continued forward, tearing through the air as it raced toward Kang Yongjin.

At this moment, Kang Yongjin was truly helpless. Having drained nearly all of his energy, he could do nothing but watch the incoming attack. In his eyes was the reflection of the approaching slash energy—the same slash that had effortlessly destroyed his Breaking Void.

Pain coursed through his body, and exhaustion weighed him down like chains. He wanted nothing more than to sleep. He wanted to move, to dodge this fatal strike, but his body refused to obey.

'Ah, I failed,' he thought. The sword slash was almost upon him, and he believed he was done for, but suddenly—

Crash!

The slash energy was struck from the side by another attack using wind laws. The slash energy was instantly destroyed, and the point of impact created a shockwave strong enough to throw Kang Yongjin backward. His body rolled several times before finally stopping with his back against the floor.

Even now, he could do nothing but lie there. His breathing was uneven, sweat streamed down his body, and wounds had appeared across his torso from the impact of the clash just moments ago.

Orlav had decided to intervene. The sword slash still carried dangerous momentum, and with Kang Yongjin unable to move due to the toll of his technique, if that attack had struck his body, Orlav had no doubt the Black Dragon Pavilion would have lost this prodigy.

He sighed at the unexpected turn of events and then turned his gaze toward Zander. At this moment, Zander was still standing, though it was clear he was forcing himself to remain upright. He looked as if he could collapse at any moment. His breathing was unsteady, as if he were starved of oxygen, and his entire body was drenched in sweat. His robe was torn in several places, and lastly the mask...

It slowly loosened from his face, and finally—

Thud!

The mask dropped, revealing Zander's true face. The spectators, still watching the aftermath of the clash in astonishment, finally saw the man behind the mask. However, most of them did not recognize him, except for a few who had once come from the Heavenly Path Academy.

"Hey, isn't that Zander?"

"Zander who?"

"The one rumored to be His Majesty's disciple."

"What? That's him?"

"Yes, that's him! That's Zander!"

"I was in the same class as him in the past. There's no way I could forget his face."

Conversations like this quickly spread among those who knew Zander from the Heavenly Path Academy. The revelation passed through the stadium like wildfire, and soon the people began to realize—everything that had happened finally made sense.

His talent and potential were something not everyone could possess, and with the strength he displayed, there was no one more worthy to guide him than Aldrian the Great himself. It was no wonder he used the sword strike once displayed by Aldrian the Great—surely His Majesty had taught him!

Too bad for them, they did not know that the technique was only inspired by Aldrian's strike. No one had ever taught Zander.

The stadium was in an uproar, but Zander ignored them all. With what little energy he had left, he raised his right hand, still gripping his sword, into the air. His arm trembled as though he were forcing himself to keep it aloft.

Orlav, seeing this, could not help but sigh and smile. Then he turned his gaze to the spectators.

"The match is over! With one participant incapacitated, the winner and champion of the Earl Stage is Mister Z!" Orlav announced.

"UWOOO!"

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## Chapter 759 - 759: The Aftermath of the Battle

[ 1,593 words ]

"UWOO!" The stadium erupted in an uproar the moment the winner was announced. Across the continent, those watching through the projectors also shouted in excitement. What they had just witnessed truly blew their minds, a spectacular battle that would be written into the history of the tournament.

The battle was so great that none of the spectators could remain still. A fight of this caliber does not often happen, whether in the past or the future, when one of a kind geniuses face each other head-on, just like today.

It was truly a rare moment, not only for the geniuses themselves to clash but also for the spectators. This was the kind of fight they had hoped to see, an intense battle showcasing the geniuses's remarkable abilities, a fight that left them shocked, speechless, and thrilled.

They did not regret watching this tournament.

"ZANDER! ZANDER! ZANDER!" Those who knew his name suddenly shouted, and once they did, the others couldn't help but follow. His name echoed throughout the stadium, the name of the winner of the early stage category, the name destined to rise as a legend.

Many believed that with the talent he possessed and the potential he had shown in this tournament, he would become a great cultivator in the future and leave behind his own

legend. Moreover, with his master, who was also a legend in his own right, Zander's name would always be remembered in the history of this continent.

Zander, still holding his sword in the air despite his trembling hand, looked around at the spectators before turning to Aldrian. He saw his master smiling proudly at him, which made him smile as well. In the past, he would never have dared to imagine standing on such a stage, let alone fighting someone like Kang Yongjin, much less winning this tournament.

He had once been a lost young man who did not know his own worth, trapped in his weakness and underestimated by others. Now he stood proudly in the middle of the arena, carrying the title of winner. He had become someone others looked up to.

"Participant Zander, please relax your body. Let me check your condition and heal you." While he was still lost in thought about himself, he heard a staff member speak beside him. He let out a sigh and lowered his hand, but a wave of extreme dizziness struck him, and his body instantly collapsed.

"Careful," the staff member said as he quickly supported him, preventing him from hitting the arena floor. Zander was carefully laid on his back while the staff began checking his condition. As he examined him, the staff's eyes widened in surprise before he let out a sigh and looked down at Zander.

"Your left hand's bones are broken and cracked in many parts, but it can be healed easily. As for your right arm, you're a lucky young man. The meridians across it were almost torn apart. You must have pushed yourself far beyond your limits to unleash that last sword technique. If those meridians had truly torn, your life as a cultivator would never be the same again, unless you had a miracle medicine." The staff member spoke seriously, then gave a small smile.

"But I think His Majesty has plenty of such medicines, and he might even heal you personally. For now, though, you must avoid using your right arm for a while." He gestured to his colleagues, who brought over a stretcher and carefully lifted Zander onto it.

Zander allowed the staff to treat him as they carried him out of the arena. On the way, he glanced to the side and saw Kang Yongjin being carried out in the same manner. From the looks of it, Kang Yongjin's condition seemed far more severe, as the staff hurriedly rushed him outside.

He wondered about Kang Yongjin's condition, for the situation seemed severe. After a few moments, he was brought into one of the rooms inside the stadium. The room was spacious and serene, a special care chamber prepared for those in need of treatment. It was clean, with several comfortable beds arranged for the participants to lie down.

Zander noticed that Kang Yongjin had also been brought there, placed at some distance from him. Kang Yongjin appeared unconscious as the staff worked with their healing techniques to stabilize his condition.

As Zander felt his body being carefully moved onto the bed through the staff's energy, the door to the room suddenly opened once again. The moment the staff saw who had entered, their eyes widened in shock, and they immediately bowed toward the incoming figure.

"We welcome Your Majesty."

"Rise," Aldrian said as he stepped inside. Behind him came another figure, Sect Master Kang, who had coincidentally encountered Aldrian on the way to the treatment room. The two entered together, first casting their eyes on Zander before turning their attention to Kang Yongjin.

Both of them had sustained injuries, but Kang Yongjin's condition appeared far more severe. Aldrian then glanced at Sect Master Kang.

"It looks like you taught Kang Yongjin a dangerous technique, Sect Master Kang." Hearing Aldrian's comment, Sect Master Kang felt a flicker of embarrassment.

"Well, I taught him that technique more than a year ago, since I believed Kang Yongjin might be able to comprehend at least a small part of it at his stage. At that time, I was simply too excited when I discovered that he could truly comprehend it, even though he was still at the Earl Stage."

"I knew the technique was too dangerous for him if he used it at his level, so I warned him to only resort to it if absolutely necessary. But it seems he was too eager and determined to win, which drove him to use it." Sect Master Kang explained, his words drawing a smile from Aldrian.

"Is that so?" Aldrian replied before walking toward Zander.

Sect Master Kang watched Aldrian's figure and thought to himself,

'His Majesty does not know about my intent, right?' He then turned and walked toward Kang Yongjin to check on him.

Zander, who wanted to stand and greet his master, still felt powerless as his body refused to obey him.

"Easy, Zander. You've truly drained your energy and stamina. In this condition, you'll be bedridden for a few days before you can even move normally again, if I didn't heal you," Aldrian said, standing beside him with a smile.

Zander stopped trying to push himself up and simply lay back down, smiling as he looked at his master. He remained silent while Aldrian checked his body, but at last, he softly said, "I did it, Master."

Aldrian looked at his face with a warm smile and nodded. "Yes, you did. You proved yourself to me and to others, that you are a strong cultivator, not only in body but also in heart. That pride is something you have earned for yourself." As he spoke, Aldrian began to heal Zander with his energy.

Zander felt his body grow warm and comfortable. This was the first time he had ever received his master's personal treatment, and it was truly amazing. He could feel the pain inside him slowly fade away, replaced by a soothing warmth, while the wounds across his body steadily healed. The staff watching were struck with shock, yet their eyes also shone with admiration as they witnessed Aldrian's healing

They did not know what kind of technique Aldrian had used to heal Zander, but the effects showed immediately. They could see Zander's condition improving rapidly, his complexion returning to a much healthier hue.

After a few moments, Aldrian released Zander's hand, and his body had already returned to a healthy state. Though he still felt weak from his drained energy, the pain was gone, and he had enough strength to move again.

Zander looked over his own body for a moment, then raised his head toward Aldrian and bowed.

"Thank you, Master."

Aldrian nodded. "Just replenish your energy, and you'll recover fully. For now, take a rest while waiting for the distribution of rewards after the tournament."

"Yes, Master."

"Good." Aldrian replied before turning his gaze to Kang Yongjin. The young man was still unconscious, with Sect Master Kang beside him, discussing treatment with the staff.

As Aldrian approached, their attention shifted to him.

"Your Majesty," they said.

Aldrian acknowledged them with a nod.

"Let me check Kang Yongjin's condition," Aldrian said, which made Sect Master Kang's eyes glimmer with excitement.

"Yes, yes, please, Your Majesty. Please check Kang Yongjin's condition. With Your Majesty's expertise, surely you must know a way to heal him."

Aldrian couldn't help but smile at that. This man was truly something else. In his heart, he had already been hoping Aldrian would heal Yongjin, yet he didn't dare to ask directly. Aldrian didn't mind. After all, Kang Yongjin had put on an interesting fight and had been the reason Zander was able to unleash his best.

After a few moments of examining him, Aldrian raised his eyebrows.

'His right arm's tendons and meridians are torn in many places, and some of the meridians are nearly severed. This kind of wound could only be healed by a miraculous healing pill of at least excellent grade. Without it, his cultivation path will be hindered, and his right arm may even be crippled.'

That fist technique was truly powerful, capable of unleashing an attack that could rival a cultivator an entire realm stronger than Kang Yongjin. Power of that level always came with a price, for it placed great strain on a cultivator's body, and Kang Yongjin's condition was a clear example of it.

Aldrian nodded in appreciation that Kang Yongjin had been able to unleash such an attack, and after finishing his check, he began the healing.

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## **Chapter 760 - 760: The End of the Tournament**

[ 1,619 words ]

The staff looked at Aldrian healing Kang Yongjin in astonishment. They had already come to the conclusion that Kang Yongjin needed a miraculous healing pill of at least excellent grade. His injury was too severe to be healed by anything below that grade. There were some pills of such quality in the Black Dragon Pavilion's treasure vault, and they were treasures from the distant past.

However, even if Kang Yongjin took that pill, they believed there would still be lingering traces of him having used that powerful technique. His arm might carry hidden injuries that could relapse if he used that technique again or any other that placed great strain on his right arm. The staff physicians thought that perhaps the only way to fully heal Kang Yongjin was for him to swallow a pill of unblemished grade.

But the problem was that no pill of that grade had appeared for a very long time, leaving only one solution: to plead with the emperor to heal Kang Yongjin. The story of his miraculous healing ability was already well known to many, and he might be able to completely restore Kang Yongjin's injury.

And just as they had hoped, once again Aldrian displayed another of his capabilities, making them regard him as a cultivator who seemed capable of anything. With everything he could do, it was no wonder there was a religion that regarded him as a god.

What he achieved as a cultivator was impossible to replicate—not in the past, not in the present, and not in the future. At least, that was what they believed.

The injury they thought would be difficult to heal without miraculous pills was healed with just the emperor's technique. They were truly amazed by Aldrian's unique energy, which carried an extremely potent healing property that allowed him to heal anything without exception. This kind of ability was what all physicians dreamed of.

After a few moments, Kang Yongjin's condition finally returned to normal. His right arm's meridians and tendons were restored to a perfect state, and both his hidden and visible injuries were healed. He was as flawless as he had been before fighting any opponents today.

"I think this is enough. I will go back to watch the tournament, as they will not start the last battle until I appear," Aldrian said, which made Sect Master Kang instantly bow to him.

"Thank you, Your Majesty, for your generosity in healing Kang Yongjin. I am truly grateful."

"No problem, Sect Master Kang. The empire is truly fortunate to have someone like Kang Yongjin as one of its talents, and I hope Sect Master Kang will guide him to become a great cultivator in the future," Aldrian answered with a smile.

"I will, Your Majesty."

After that, Aldrian came out of the room after giving a message to Zander. Not long after Aldrian left, Kang Yongjin slowly regained consciousness. He blinked a few times as he adjusted to the new environment before turning his head to look around. He saw his master, a few staff members, and also Zander lying on a bed some distance away.

"How do you feel?" Sect Master Kang asked.

Kang Yongjin did not answer immediately. He blinked a few times until reality settled in, then let out a heavy sigh.

"I lost," he said, to which Sect Master Kang responded with a nod.

"You already did your best, but that guy over there is truly strong. It's no shame to lose to him," he replied, giving a subtle glance toward Zander.

Kang Yongjin looked at Zander and couldn't help but chuckle.

"So that is you without the mask. I think you are much younger than me. What is your name?" he asked.

"Zander."

"Zander... Zander... I see. To think that I—"

"He is His Majesty's disciple, the one rumored to have been accepted not long ago," Sect Master Kang cut him off, causing Kang Yongjin's eyes to widen in shock. He had already heard the name Zander, Aldrian's newly accepted disciple, but he never imagined that the very person he fought in the arena was him!

But then he sighed again. At least he felt much better now that he had lost to someone connected to the person he admired. He felt that Zander truly did not bring shame to his master and was worthy of being the emperor's disciple. That sword strike was truly powerful, and if Orlav had not stopped it, he would have been dead on the spot.

"You are strong, I give you that, but don't think I will stay back and let you keep walking and leave me behind," Kang Yongjin said, which made Zander smile.

"Then I will not let you overtake me. I will keep making you always look at my back," Zander answered, which drew a smile from Kang Yongjin.

"Is that so? Then I—"

"Aish, you were just healed by His Majesty, and you better rest for now instead of talking about the future competition," Sect Master Kang cut him off, which made Kang Yongjin widen his eyes.

"His Majesty healed me?"

"Who else could heal you this fast besides him? If not for His Majesty, your body might have ended up with hidden injuries that could hinder your future cultivation, so you better thank His Majesty later if you get the chance," Sect Master Kang answered.

Kang Yongjin looked at his body once more and sighed again. No wonder he did not feel any pain and only felt weak from lack of energy. He knew that using Breaking Void at his stage harmed his own body, and he had felt it the moment before he unleashed it.

His master had also warned that the technique might truly harm him, but at the time Kang Yongjin felt that if he did not use it he would regret it. It had been a good opportunity to strike Zander by surprise, and he had thought his plan would work.

However, to think that Zander could break free from the dragon's intimidation and even counterattack with that powerful sword technique—there was nothing he could do but accept his loss.

But then he shrugged. "I will do that later, Master. But I will still do what I can to surpass my current self and become stronger in the future. I will retake the title of the strongest in my cultivation realm." As he said that, he glanced at Zander, who also glanced back at him, still wearing that confident smile that seemed to say, you may try.

Sect Master Kang could only sigh at his sole disciple, who was still full of spirit. Yet he was glad he was that way. Kang Yongjin did not dwell too much on his defeat and instead, he used the experience to push himself forward. Sect Master Kang had worried about how he would react to losing against someone of the same cultivation realm, since he had never been defeated by an opponent in the same realm before.

But it looked like that worry was unnecessary, for Kang Yongjin had found determination even in his loss.

The tournament continued with the final match of the Marquess Stage category, which also marked the closing battle of the tournament. As expected, the fight was far more destructive, with power and strength that could rival the attacks and movements of Duke Stage cultivators.

Even so, the battle between Zander and Kang Yongjin remained the most memorable. Their strength and the way they fought were extraordinary, standing apart even among these geniuses.

It was true that the competitors here possessed great talent and powerful battle techniques, yet none of them had managed to reach the same intensity displayed by Zander and Kang Yongjin. Their strength alone was outside the norm, even among geniuses.

Still, the Marquess Stage final was fierce, and in the end a contender from the Demon Territory emerged as the victor. He was a disciple of the Piercing Heaven Sect, one of their core disciples, and had actually comprehended three elements.

With the battle concluded, so too was the main event of the tournament. The exciting clashes between geniuses finally came to an end, and it was time for the award ceremony. The winners of each category gathered in the center of the arena.

Zander also arrived after being informed about the ceremony. At this moment, under the spotlight and the cheers of millions of spectators, he and the other winners stood side by side to receive their rewards.

Aldrian himself personally presented the awards. He shook hands with each participant before handing over their reward—a storage ring containing the main prize, along with a trophy.

The trophy was a beautiful, long blue crystal, one meter tall and fifty centimeters wide. On one side of the crystal's surface was engraved the title of winner for their respective category in the first edition of the Grand Barisan Tournament.

When Zander received his reward, he nearly burst into tears, but held them back.

Once the award ceremony for the winners was completed, Orlav stepped forward to make another announcement.

"I have an announcement from His Majesty. In addition to the main reward, the winners of each category, along with those who placed second and third, will be given the chance to cultivate in the imperial palace for a month!"

The moment Orlav said this, the participants who had placed second and third became ecstatic. They had thought they would leave with nothing, but to be granted the opportunity to enter the imperial palace, a place not everyone could even hope to step into, was beyond their expectations.

"So we have finally come to the end of our event, marking the conclusion of the first edition of the Grand Barisan Tournament, ladies and gentlemen. I'm Orlav, and let us meet again in the next edition of the Grand Barisan Tournament!"

And so, under the beautiful moonlight and the countless glimmers of stars, the tournament officially came to an end.

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## **Chapter 761 - 761: Creating His Own Force**

[ 1,566 words ]

On the next day, the people who had packed into Caelestis City already started to go back to where they came from. Many of them were from other parts of the continent, while many others were residents of the city after migrating here.

They were the ones who had already registered themselves with the officials of the city back when it was still under construction, and many of them had also helped with the city's building. They were given homes so they did not have to buy property here.

As for others who moved normally, at this moment, the officials of the city were still receiving many applications from people who wanted to move here as soon as possible.

After the tournament, the applications exploded as many really wanted to settle in this big city. They knew if they were not fast enough, they would run out of spaces to live here, since the officials would not accept a population beyond the city's capacity. Although the city was very vast, these people did not take any chances and registered as quickly as possible.

There were screenings and checks for applicants before they could purchase property in the city, but that was something normal. It was meant to prevent anyone from doing something illegal after moving in. With a city this big, there would inevitably be many kinds of beings moving here in the future.

They wanted this city, which was one of the important cities near the central region, to remain in perfect condition and order. Even though no one would dare to try their luck causing trouble here because of its close distance to the central region where the emperor resided, the officials did not want to depend on that alone. They wanted to ensure there were no gaps in the city's security and order.

Despite being new and still receiving many newcomers, the city was already operating like a normal big city. Many businesses had already opened, some of them owned by big names or organizations known throughout the continent.

Names like the Alchemist Association, the Diamond Spirit Commerce, the Golden Phoenix Pavilion, and several noble families had established businesses and properties here. With businesses already open and the steady influx of people, the city's economy was already moving fluidly.

At this moment, in the midst of the people's activities, they sometimes still talked about yesterday's tournament. Even though the tournament had already finished, it remained an interesting topic of conversation, especially with so many remarkable events that had taken place.

The appearance of Zander and his battle with Kang Yongjin was one of the most talked-about subjects. Their fight was truly mind-blowing, with each of them displaying extraordinary strength that made their peers seem like nothing in comparison.

Especially for Zander, his name had become a hot topic as his appearance had shocked the entire continent. A genius who could comprehend sword intent and sword will at an early stage, the disciple of the emperor, Aldrian the Great and the one who defeated the successor of the Black Dragon Pavilion, Kang Yongjin. Stories like these were enough to make Zander the center of the spotlight.

Many said that he would become a great cultivator who might follow in the footsteps of his master, Aldrian the Great. However, there were also many who thought such words were too exaggerated. Although Zander was truly a one-of-a-kind cultivator, Emperor Aldrian was someone whose path could not possibly be followed. He was already on a completely different level compared to other "normal cultivators."

Still, whatever was said about Zander, everyone agreed that he would become a great cultivator in the future with all of his talent and privileges, if he could survive long enough in the harsh cultivation world. In this world, no one could predict what might happen to him. Even with the status of being Aldrian the Great's disciple, there was still the possibility that he could lose his life.

While the people continued talking about him, Zander was at that very moment in Aldrian's palace, having just arrived there along with the champions of each category, followed by the second and third places.

The moment they appeared on the teleportation formation on the palace's ground, they were amazed by the palace's grandeur and by the richness of the energy in this place. No matter who they were, they could not maintain a calm expression. Instead, they looked as if they were village folk visiting a great city for the very first time.

They believed that if they cultivated here, their progress would be many times faster than outside, and they truly felt fortunate to have the chance to cultivate and train in such a place.

Each of them was then given their own cultivation room. The number of training rooms in the palace was more than enough to accommodate all of them. In fact, the number of training rooms inside Aldrian's palace could reach into the hundreds.

Zander himself returned to the cultivation room he normally used and continued with his training. For him, there was no need to change to a cultivation technique created by Aldrian, as his current one was the most suitable for him. The same was true for Kang Yongjin, who was comprehending one of the Heavenly Demon's scriptures.

As these young cultivators enjoyed their cultivation time, Aldrian was meeting with two different groups of people in his throne hall. One group was Arson with his Thunderous Shadow Pavilion assassins, and the other was from the Barevisk family, led by Vars.

All the members of the two groups were already gathered in front of him as he began to speak.

"You must know why I have called all of you here. Arson and Vars should have already informed you about the matter I want to talk about."

The two groups seemed to already understand, as some nodded while the others remained silent in agreement.

"I will create my own imperial force, and both of your groups will be the starting groups that joins it. I have already thought about the division of tasks for both sides, so I expect you to carry out your duties with your best ability once you receive them."

"Yes, Your Majesty," they all answered, and Aldrian gave a nod.

"Alright, first, for you, Arson, and your Thunderous Shadow Pavilion assassin group. You will handle all kinds of clandestine operations for the imperial family, such as intelligence gathering, assassinations, and, in some cases, guarding my family members from the shadows. Your area of responsibility will be within the Barisan Continent, and all of you will be under my direct command."

"From this moment, I am changing your group's name from the Thunderous Shadow Pavilion to the Thunderous Shadow Group. After this, I will also provide you with a stronger cultivation technique than the one you currently use."

"You do not need to worry about destroying your cultivation foundation. Once you begin cultivating with the new technique, it will only strengthen your foundation and accelerate your cultivation speed in the future. You will still be able to use your elemental techniques and even learn far more powerful ones as time goes on."

Hearing this, the members of the Thunderous Shadow Group were ecstatic and instantly fell to their knees.

"We thank Your Majesty for the chance you have given us. We will never disappoint you!" they shouted, to which Aldrian responded with a nod. He then turned his gaze to Vars and his group.

"Vars, you and your group will be tasked with the external affairs of the empire. With your experience and knowledge of lands beyond the empire, and based on your elemental techniques, your group will handle external espionage and intelligence gathering from outside the continent, reporting any potential threats to the empire. If needed, you may also be used as assassins or saboteurs."

"You may also be tasked with guarding the imperial family in times when my family travels outside of the empire."

"From this moment, I name your group the Dark Saber Group, and all of you will be under my direct command. Like the Thunderous Shadow Group, I will also grant you the cultivation technique I created, which you may use as soon as you receive it. You do not

need to worry about anything, as you will still retain your cultivation foundation and all of your elemental techniques. The cultivation technique I created encompasses all of your elements."

"We thank Your Majesty for the chance you have given us. We will never disappoint you!" they shouted as they knelt, to which Aldrian responded with a nod. He then looked at both groups.

"This empire is still so young, and it has only recently opened to the world. There are many things we must take care of with our newly built force. I know your workload may be heavy during these times, but I will not ignore your efforts. I will reward all of you for your hard work," Aldrian said.

"I hope you will give your best for the empire's interests, for its prosperity and order."

"Yes, Your Majesty!" both groups shouted.

After that, they continued to discuss the details of the groups, as there were many questions from the members. Much still needed to be decided in order to make the groups' work more precise and well-directed, preventing any confusion.

While they were still discussing the details, Vars suddenly spoke to Aldrian through voice transmission.

"Ah, yes, Your Majesty. Speaking of news from outside, I have received information that may require your attention."

Aldrian raised his eyebrows.

"Tell me about it."

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## **Chapter 762 - 762: The Problem**

[ 1,639 words ]

"Tell me about it," Aldrian said.

"Your majesty, my apologies if I must ask something first. Is it true that the spirit ancestor of the beast continent is currently inside the empire? I mean, did she visit your majesty?" Vars asked.

"Yes, she has come under the protection of the dragon king and phoenix queen. Because of her special circumstances, the spirit ancestor came in disguise so that no one from outside could tell she was coming here," Aldrian answered.

Vars nodded. "The information I will tell your majesty is regarding the spirit ancestor. Yesterday, when I secretly contacted my informant in our main family branch to look for an update from the family, I received information from him that the location of the spirit ancestor reached them just yesterday. To be honest, your majesty, my family is one of the families that are wary of the spirit ancestor's ability, although we never really made a move personally."

"Still, this information that spread to our family through unknown means could also spread to other powers that truly want to harm the spirit ancestor. I'm afraid the empire will become a battleground for those powers that want to kill her."

Aldrian, who understood the problem with this information, slightly narrowed his eyes. The ones who knew about the movement of the spirit ancestor were only the group of the dragon king and the phoenix queen. The information leak could mean that someone had betrayed them, or that somehow someone from outside had detected the spirit ancestor's movement.

Someone with ill intent toward the spirit ancestor.

Just as Vars said, if those who wanted her dead moved, the Barisan continent would become the battleground. He thought that those powers might use a third party to carry out the killing, since they did not want him to find out which powers were targeting her.

The spirit ancestor was a peak pseudo-immortal stage existence under the protection of the dragon king and the phoenix queen. If someone wanted to kill her, then there must be quite a large force or assassins sent after her. Potentially, some of them could also be peak pseudo-immortal stage existences.

That meant his empire would turn into a battleground for cultivators of that level, which would truly be devastating, and many innocents could be caught in the crossfire.

That was something he needed to prevent, and he had already found the easiest way to do it.

"Alright, thank you for the information. This matter really has to be taken seriously, but I have already thought of a way to prevent any problems from arising. Good work," Aldrian said, which made Vars proud of himself.

"Thank you, your majesty," he answered.

The others knew that Aldrian and Vars had been communicating through voice transmission and waited for them to finish. They then continued to discuss their organizations and finally closed their meeting after more than two hours.

After the two groups left the palace, Aldrian spread his domain sense to sweep across the entire Barisan continent. A single second was enough for him to find what he was looking for, and he instantly disappeared from the throne hall as he teleported elsewhere.

-----

At one of the luxurious inns inside Caelestis City, a mixed group from the beast continent was staying. This place had already become their residence since the first time they came to this continent, because they had heard that this newly built city was the most important one near the central region where Aldrian's palace was located.

This inn, managed by the Golden Phoenix Pavilion, was also a place chosen by some outsiders to stay during their time on the continent. However, the presence of the dragon king and the phoenix queen still overshadowed those outsiders living there.

The people of the city had already begun to learn about the true status and strength of the dragon king and the phoenix queen outside the continent, which made them show even greater respect. Being among the most powerful beings under the heavens, they were truly worthy of respect wherever they went.

At that moment, Aldrian appeared in the sky above the city, directly over the inn. He had already activated his stealth technique so that no one would be shocked by his sudden arrival.

Inside the inn, he could sense that the dragon king and phoenix queen were in their own rooms, occupied with their respective matters. They seemed to be in discussion with their groups of dragons and phoenixes. As for the spirit ancestor, she was conversing with her retainer and guardian, accompanied by a glass of herbal tea.

Knowing it was better to inform them of the problem that might arise in the future regarding the spirit ancestor secretly, Aldrian sent a voice transmission to the three of them.

"My apologies for disturbing your time, spirit ancestor, dragon king, and phoenix queen, but please gather inside the spirit ancestor's room. I wish to discuss something with you all regarding her safety. I will come shortly after you have gathered."

The three of them were stunned by the sudden voice transmission, as none of them had detected Aldrian! Even their groups were confused by their sudden reactions, which left them wondering what had just happened.

However, the three of them knew that this was Aldrian's voice, and from his tone it seemed quite serious. Since it also concerned the spirit ancestor's safety, the dragon king and phoenix queen immediately stopped their discussion with their groups and went to gather in the spirit ancestor's room.

The spirit ancestor's retainer and guardian were confused as to why the spirit ancestor suddenly fell silent, and even more so when the dragon king and phoenix queen entered the room. But then they jolted in shock at Aldrian's sudden appearance near them. They truly had not expected him to appear like that.

Those who already knew of his visit looked at him and gave their respect.

"Your majesty," they said.

Aldrian nodded. "Once again, my apologies for the sudden interruption of your time, but this is something I must tell you, and something I must take care of before it becomes a bigger problem in the future."

Hearing that this matter was quite serious, the dragon king and phoenix queen narrowed their eyes.

"What happened, your majesty? You said it was regarding the spirit ancestor's safety. Is there any problem with her?" the dragon king asked.

The spirit ancestor's retainer and guardian looked at him, then at Aldrian, confused. But when they heard it was about her safety, they became serious. It concerned their spirit ancestor, so of course they wanted to know what it was about.

Aldrian nodded. "To put it simply, the spirit ancestor's location has already leaked to the outside world. At this moment, I expect that many powers outside already know of her presence here. You must understand the trouble that might arise next."

Hearing this, all of them widened their eyes in astonishment. Aldrian then explained the information he knew, which made them frown as they exchanged glances.

"Dragon king, phoenix queen, it is not that I want to doubt any of your people, but do you think there could be a traitor among your group, or anyone from your kind?" Aldrian asked.

The first to answer was the dragon king, who shook his head.

"No, I don't think there is anyone in my group who could betray me. The only ones who know about the spirit ancestor's visit to this continent are this small group of dragons who came with me, and all of them have been my trusted men for a long time. But the greatest reason I believe they would never betray me is because I could detect it through bloodline suppression," the dragon king said.

The phoenix queen also nodded. "It is the same with me. The only ones who know about the spirit ancestor are the group that came with me, and I don't believe they have betrayed us. My reason is the same as the dragon king's—it is because of bloodline suppression."

Aldrian nodded in understanding. In the beast world, bloodline suppression was truly a big matter. It did not only show the purity of a bloodline, but also determined the status of a spiritual beast in front of its kind. The purity of a bloodline referred to how close it was compared to that of their first ancestor.

For example, the dragon king was a special existence with a mixed bloodline. For him to be able to suppress the bloodlines of other dragons meant that, his new mixed bloodline had created a purer bloodline, one closer to that of the ancient dragon god, Long Shentian.

With his bloodline suppression, the other dragons would find it difficult to go against him. That was why even if someone from his group betrayed him, he would instantly know, as there was no way a traitor could remain calm in front of such suppression.

"Make sense. Then that means someone somehow learned of her presence in this continent and spread it to others," Aldrian said, which made the dragon scratch his head repeatedly.

"Those bastards... It looks like our journey here will be a bloody one. I can already imagine many of those people trying to take their chances, even inside this continent when your majesty has already warned about maintaining order. Even if we go back to the beast continent now, there might be an ambush along the way. Oh well, I welcome them anyway," he said.

Aldrian only nodded, but then he smiled.

"Well, I already have the easiest way to prevent that. After all, I don't want my people to be caught in the crossfire."

"Do you have a plan in mind, your majesty?" the dragon king asked.

Aldrian nodded before answering. "The spirit ancestor can stay at my palace. She will be safe there without any disturbance until the situation is resolved. You all can continue to stay in this continent as long as you wish, since I know you still want to be here."

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## Chapter 763 - 763: Catching the One Behind the Scenes?

[ 1,688 words ]

Hearing Aldrian's plan, the others were stunned, but then they understood that it was the safest and easiest method to keep the spirit ancestor safe until the situation was resolved. And how to resolve it?

"While elder stays in my palace, I will first look for the source of the information leak. Since they seem to know elder's location, I think they are currently also in this continent or even in this city," Aldrian said.

The dragon king nodded his head. What Aldrian said made sense.

"Then we will do what Your Majesty planned. We will follow you if you need any help," he said, and the phoenix queen also agreed.

Aldrian smiled and then nodded. "Great, then we will do this..." Aldrian then told them about how to catch the informant quickly. To do that, they would have to be quite conspicuous for a while.

After hearing what Aldrian expected from them, they agreed, and not long after, the dragon king and the phoenix queen returned to their rooms. Aldrian looked at the spirit ancestor with a regretful expression.

"Elder, I apologize for the inconvenience, as this plan has to make you the bait. But I think this is the fastest way for me to catch the ones who want to harm you," he said in a regretful tone.

The spirit ancestor smiled. "It's okay, Your Majesty. I will gladly follow your plan, as it is also a good idea to catch any troublemakers that might endanger your people. Instead, I should be the one to apologize, because of my visit, the people of this continent might fall into danger."

Aldrian waved his hand. "Please don't mind it, Elder. Instead, I hope that you could visit this continent more often, or perhaps even stay here if you wish to look for new scenery. For any problem, just as I said in the past, I guarantee your safety. If I put my heart into it, no trouble will arise in the future. I will prevent that," he said reassuringly.

The spirit ancestor only nodded with a smile, while her retainer and guardian's worries eased.

"Then I will move according to what I have already planned. If I have not yet returned to the palace when elder arrives, Sylphia will receive elder's group," Aldrian said before disappearing.

A few moments later, the dragon king with his group and the phoenix queen with her group had already gathered outside the spirit ancestor's room. The spirit ancestor also came out with her two companions, and together they finally left the inn.

The spirit ancestor and her two companions wore robes that covered their features, the robes they had always used since their journey to the Barisan Continent, and continued to wear whenever they were outside. The robes themselves were artifacts that could block any senses attempting to probe the wearer. No one could discern their characteristics or even their cultivation while they wore them.

The dragon king and the phoenix queen, however, did not conceal themselves. They still wore their grand attire that displayed their status as sovereigns of their races. Their appearance naturally drew attention because of the distinct characteristics of spiritual beasts as they walked through the streets.

Even so, the people had already begun to grow accustomed to the presence of some outsiders from the beast races, so they were not too surprised anymore. After glancing at the dragon king and phoenix queen's groups for a moment, they returned to their activities.

Their group walked across the streets of the city, appearing as if they were sightseeing without any worries. But unbeknown to the people watching them—or anyone else in the city not part of the group—Aldrian was in the sky, observing them while also focusing on their surroundings and the nearby area.

He concentrated his senses to detect any suspicious movement or even hidden communication coming from anyone in the area. His mind worked quickly, filtering through each movement and each conversation among thousands of people almost at the same time.

After waiting for almost an hour, he finally found a clue. He sensed a man with beginner stage cultivation who seemed to be following the group's direction. However, the man kept his distance and acted as if he were just an ordinary visitor enjoying the city's scenery. His movements were natural and inconspicuous, making him appear to others as nothing more than a normal passerby.

Even for Aldrian, the man would not have seemed suspicious, he might have thought the man merely happened to walk the same path as the spirit ancestor's group, if not for the fact that he always kept his pace with them. If the group stopped, then he also

stopped, and at times he even feigned ignorance by walking past the group while keeping a certain distance.

Although the man did not make any communication and remained silent, Aldrian knew that he was in fact following the group. Once he was confident that he had found what he was looking for, Aldrian teleported to one of the deserted alleys in the city, and a moment later, he teleported the man in front of him.

The man was first stunned, then shocked as he realized he was suddenly in a different environment. His shock deepened when he saw Aldrian standing before him. His eyes trembled, and he instantly prostrated himself before Aldrian.

"Your Majesty," he said. He did not think about whether the man in front of him was real or fake, he simply prostrated in reverence.

Aldrian did not answer him for a moment. He could sense that the moment this man saw him, he truly revered him, almost to the point of seeing him as a god, something that normally appeared only from the populace of this continent. After a brief silence, while the man remained prostrating, Aldrian finally asked—

"Where did you come from?"

The man instantly raised his head from his kowtow position.

"I am now staying in this city, Your Majesty, but before that, I was from Arelous City in the Vindas Empire—my apologies, I mean Vindas Kingdom," he answered. Aldrian could sense that he was not lying, which made him nod his head.

"Are you following a group of spiritual beasts?" Aldrian asked again.

The man was stunned, but after a moment, he hesitantly nodded his head.

"Uhm... yes, Your Majesty. A few hours ago, I was asked by someone—well, I don't know his identity. He was wearing a black robe that covered his face, so I couldn't really see any of his features. Anyway, while I was doing my business selling food at my stall, this man approached me. He gave me five hundred peak-level energy stones before asking if I could keep an eye on a group of spiritual beasts in human form."

"Because he gave me that much, and I thought there would be no problem with it, I decided to accept. He showed me the picture of the group and gave me a message: I must act natural, not get caught or draw any attention, and if the group left with someone wearing strange robes, I had to follow them wherever they went. That unknown man also said that today, he would come to me again before sunset."

Aldrian narrowed his eyes in thought. All of the man's words were true, and with how honest he was, he was far too innocent to be part of those who wanted to harm the spirit ancestor.

'I see, those guys must be using third parties like this man to observe the spirit ancestor's movements, making their traces difficult to track even if something goes wrong. They came to him only a few hours ago? Then it seems they just started using third parties today, and they will likely keep using them in the future.'

"Uhm... Your Majesty, did I do something wrong?" the man suddenly asked. His expression turned worried as he looked at Aldrian.

Realizing he would not get anything more from the man, Aldrian finally smiled.

"Well, you did nothing wrong, so you don't have to worry," Aldrian said reassuringly, which made the man sigh in relief.

"Anyway, you can go back to your stall and continue your business. Keep what that mysterious man gave you, but stop following the spiritual beast group. You don't have to worry about the man who comes later—I will take care of it. You just need to act natural, like always," Aldrian added, and the man responded with a nod.

"Yes, Your Majesty, I will do that." The man did not ask anything further and simply obeyed Aldrian as it was. That was how deep his faith in Aldrian ran, which made Aldrian feel irritated that those unknown men would take advantage of his people.

Aldrian then sent the man back to his original place before he had been teleported, and returned to the sky to continue observing the city. He still did not know who was moving behind the scenes, and with so many outsiders blending into the city, the suspects could be anywhere.

At this moment, there were more than a hundred thousand outsiders in the city alone, and perhaps the real suspect was not even inside the city anymore but would arrive again through a teleportation station.

It would be too great a burden to search the entire continent when he did not even know what kind of person he was looking for. That was why Aldrian chose this easier and more effective way to catch them.

Not long after, the spirit ancestor's group entered the teleportation station. Just as planned, they would visit his palace, and the spirit ancestor would stay there for some time. As for Aldrian, he continued to observe the city and also the man who had already returned to selling food.

Time passed quickly, and the sun had already begun to hide its body in the western horizon. As Aldrian kept watching, he finally saw someone approaching the man, just as

the man had described. This person wore a black robe that covered his entire figure, the kind commonly worn by cultivators who wanted to conceal their identity.

Someone like this robed man was not unusual, which was why no one found him suspicious, treating him as nothing more than an ordinary stranger.

'Now, let's see who this guy is,' Aldrian thought.

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## Chapter 764 - 764: Caught One

[ 1,614 words ]

The man who was still selling food at his stall saw the robed man, and he couldn't help but feel nervous inside. He did not know what he would say if this man asked about his task or anything related to the spiritual beast group.

But then, suddenly, the robed man disappeared, which left him stunned. He looked around but did not see the robed man anywhere. He wondered if this was what Emperor Aldrian meant by taking care of the robed man.

Unknown to him, in the dungeon beneath Aldrian's palace, the man was already there, with Aldrian standing in front of him. The robed man stood motionless or rather, he couldn't do anything at all because of Aldrian's spatial lock. Aldrian had instantly sealed his cultivation the moment they appeared here, both to weaken him and to prevent him from committing suicide by exploding his dantian.

Under the shadow of his hood, the man's eyes revealed not only his shock but also his panic. Yet because of the spatial lock, he couldn't move and could only shift his gaze as Aldrian allowed it.

The man still could not comprehend how he had suddenly appeared in this unknown place, already trapped under someone's technique. He couldn't do anything, and his cultivation had been sealed. Because of the dim room that shrouded the figure in front of him, he still couldn't catch even a glimpse of the face before him.

He, a pseudo-immortal foundation stage cultivator, had been abducted by someone against whom he could not even put up the slightest resistance!

There was only silence after that, and the atmosphere grew eerie in the dimly lit room, where a single small candle burned at the edge. The light from the candle was not enough to illuminate the entire space, and Aldrian's upper body remained hidden in the darkness, adding an even greater sense of intimidation to him.

Only the sound of his own breathing and heartbeat could be heard, which made the tension heavier.

After a few moments of silence, Aldrian finally took a step closer. At that instant, the light from the candle reached his face, allowing the robed man to see it. The moment he laid eyes on that face, his heart trembled and his heartbeat quickened. Cold sweat instantly rolled down his forehead, yet his body felt cold.

His mind cursed everything he could think of, for the person standing before him was the very one he wished to avoid the most.

Aldrian suddenly smiled, his expression adding to his charm as he sensed the man's chaotic emotions. Shock, panic, and fear were all mixed within him the moment he saw Aldrian's face. From those emotions alone, Aldrian could already tell that this man was hiding something he did not want to be discovered.

Aldrian then lifted the hood of the man's robe, revealing his face at last. He was a middle-aged man with short orange hair.

To confirm his suspicion, Aldrian released the spatial lock on the man's face only. Still wearing his smile, Aldrian asked,

"Are you working alone, or are you working in a group when you spread the information about the Spirit Ancestor?"

The moment the man heard the question, his heart skipped a beat, and a chill spread through him. Still, he tried to calm himself outwardly and answered Aldrian,

"Your Majesty, Emperor Aldrian, what is the meaning of this?! Why do you treat me this way? Why am I here? Also, what is the question you asked about? What do you mean, Spirit Ancestor?"

His tone and expression truly showed ignorance, even giving the impression of being wronged. Aldrian kept smiling and thought to himself that this man's acting skill was indeed perfect. It would certainly fool anyone who could not read his inner emotions or detect the subtle signs within his organs.

"You talked too much without answering my question. Your desperate effort is good, but unfortunately you are too panicked to control the signs from your inner organs. I have to admit, your acting is good and believable—it's as if you were already trained in this regard. It reminds me of someone like... an assassin," Aldrian said leisurely.

The man's heart skipped a beat again, but he did not show it on his face. Instead, his expression shifted to one of greater displeasure.

"Your Majesty, are you suspecting me of being some kind of assassin from a certain organization? I am from one of the famous merchant groups in the Akares Star, here to visit this continent and build relationships. How could you treat me like this? Are you not afraid of the backlash for treating a guest of your empire in such a way?"

Aldrian kept his gaze fixed directly on the man's eyes, never looking away while he spoke. That stare filled the man with an ominous feeling, making him deeply uncomfortable. The blue eyes, which seemed to shine faintly in the dim light of the room, were like eyes that pierced into his very soul—eyes that could uncover even his most hidden secrets.

"You are good with your words, Mister Hurz. What you said would make sense if it came from someone innocent. But from someone who wanted to harm the Spirit Ancestor? Ck, ck, ck... I don't think so. Even most of your elemental techniques point to the path of an assassin—shadow laws, darkness laws, illusion laws. Quite impressive."

The man's heart turned cold, as if he had fallen into an abyss. How did Aldrian know his real name?! That was a name known only to his colleagues in the assassin group. No one outside of them should have known, because all of them were already dead!

And everything Aldrian had just said was true. It made him realize that this man already knew about his identity and movements. Aldrian must have laid a trap for him, and he had stepped right into it!

His thoughts immediately turned to the food vendor he had ordered to observe the Spirit Ancestor's group.

'Was that man actually an agent planted by him beforehand?' he thought.

Aldrian allowed the man's mind to remain chaotic, full of doubt and questions, shaping his own scenarios. But then Aldrian caught something from his thoughts.

"So, you truly are an assassin, huh? But this makes me confused. If you are part of an assassin group targeting the Spirit Ancestor, why would you spread information about the target to the other powers? If the target were killed by someone else, I doubt your employer would be generous enough to keep using your group's services in the future. Instead, they would likely turn to others who are more capable than your group."

This thought came to Aldrian after confirming the man's identity as an assassin. Such a method was unusual for an assassin group and carried enormous risk. Perhaps it was part of their strategy this time, since their target was not ordinary.

With the Spirit Ancestor protected by the Dragon King and Phoenix Queen, killing her would be a true challenge. Maybe they deliberately spread the information to other powers so those forces would act as distractions, creating the chance for the assassin group to strike.

When the other powers attacked the Spirit Ancestor's group, this assassin group would strike their main target—like the scenario of the mantis stalking the cicada, unaware of the oriole behind. In this case, the assassins would become the oriole. That was the only scenario Aldrian could think of with all the information at hand.

Still, the main problem had not been resolved: how did they know the Spirit Ancestor's location?

This was the true issue, and something that had to be dealt with. As long as it remained unsolved, they would never know how the Spirit Ancestor's whereabouts had been leaked. That hidden danger could one day truly cost the Spirit Ancestor his life.

Aldrian's mood for playing with the man's psychology faded, and he decided to uncover the truth himself. He touched the man's forehead, and the man instantly understood what Aldrian intended to do. A grin suddenly spread across his face.

"It's useless. Even if you try to look into my memories, there is a seal that even someone at peak—"

Clank!

Before he could finish his words, he felt something in his brain, and suddenly his mind felt... freer. He stopped mid-sentence, shocked that Aldrian had actually succeeded in breaking the mind seal!

That special seal inside his mind was connected to his soul and was so fragile that if anyone tried to break it by force even slightly, or even attempted to open it, the seal would instantly kill the assassin by destroying both his brain and soul.

Throughout his group's history, any assassin who had ever been captured ultimately died to this seal when their captors tried to look into their memories.

There had never been a single case of success. That was the reason their assassin group had been able to grow into the most feared in the Akares Star.

So how could Aldrian possibly break the seal?!

"Wait!—" He tried to say something, but Aldrian did not want to hear it. He instantly delved into his memories, not caring about the man's condition and rudely searching through them as much as he could.

The man, feeling the searing pain in his brain, stopped speaking as his eyes rolled back. If not for the spatial lock, his body would have been trembling violently while Aldrian probed through his memories.

As time passed, Aldrian's expression began to change. At first, he narrowed his eyes, then raised his eyebrows as if he had found something interesting. After nearly two minutes, he finally finished and withdrew his hand from the man's forehead.

Aldrian looked at the now unconscious man and couldn't help but sigh to himself.

'To think that the Spirit Ancestor is not their target, and the actual target is me.'

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## Chapter 765 - 765: Catching Another One

[ 1,627 words ]

Aldrian did not expect that the real target of these guys was actually himself. However, everything that happened regarding the Spirit Ancestor also made sense. Why did these assassins want to attract as many powers to the continent and cause trouble because of the Spirit Ancestor?

Of course, they did that to create a distraction and also to test him. If there was a chance, they would likely use it to kill him instantly. They did not underestimate his ability and operated carefully so as not to make him suspicious, even communicating about the mission only through voice transmission.

This kind of assassin group was truly dangerous, and the only thing he knew about them was that they were the most feared assassin group from Akares Star, the Silent Reaper.

Unfortunately, the man in front of him was only one of the lackeys among the many assassins who had come to the continent. He did not know the thing Aldrian wanted most, which made sense, since he was not an important member, only stronger compared to most of the group's members.

He did not even know the real face of the leader who led this assassination operation, only the status of the one in charge.

However, Aldrian still gained some useful information.

Although this man did not know the exact number because of how secret their current mission was, he thought that hundreds of assassins had already infiltrated.

That was truly many just for an assassination mission.

Because of the limited information this guy had, Aldrian still did not know who was the one that paid this group of assassins to go after his life. However, the star where they came from might be a clue to their employer.

'Akares Star again. It seems, at this moment, my enemies always come from that place.'

Although he was starting to get irritated with these problems that seemed to come from the same source, he still could not help but find the situation amusing. Did they really think they could kill him using these assassins? If those who wanted to kill him thought that way, then they were extremely wrong.

These assassins did not underestimate him and truly considered his known or rumored ability in their operation. But unfortunately—

'They did not know the extent of my ability and capability.'

Aldrian now had to think about how to resolve this problem as soon as possible. At the very least, he had to get rid of the assassins who had already infiltrated the continent. From the information he got from this man, it seemed this group of assassins would create greater chaos in the near future.

After thinking for a moment, he looked at the unconscious man.

"If I try to detect all of the assassins using karma laws through this man, I would have to find every single one of them with precision. I must filter the karmic threads that point only to his assassin friends, and I would have to kill them almost simultaneously to prevent any of them from realizing they were compromised."

"If they realize they have been compromised, they could use a desperate move that would endanger many people. Even if I cannot kill them simultaneously, I must make sure any surviving assassins cannot carry out such a move."

Aldrian thought of a way to eliminate this threat as safely and effectively as possible, until he finally found one. He focused his senses on the unconscious man, and then used his karma laws. If he wanted to take care of this assassin problem, the easiest way was to find the leader of the operation directly.

He was the most important person in this case, since he would hold information Aldrian could use. He might even be able to turn these assassins to his advantage and strike back at those who wanted him dead.

His karma laws began to show their wonder as he finally saw many threads of connection from the man. The number of threads was quite large. They spread in all directions and created many branches. Various colours appeared on the threads, showing the nature of the karma with the beings on the other side.

However, despite the many threads, the number of threads was not as large as he had thought. He guessed that this man had not built much communication with other people throughout his life as an assassin, which explained why the threads were fewer than expected.

Aldrian then ignored most of the threads, which could easily number in the tens of thousands. He filtered out the threads that reached outside the continent and looked only for those inside the Barisan Continent. After that, he filtered again for threads that shared characteristics with him, such as the same cultivation technique or techniques with the same properties.

He could not depend on the colour of the threads to decide who the assassins were, since the colour of the threads did not always show the truth about the connection between two beings. If this man did not have a close relationship with his colleagues, then his karma threads would not show a strong bond and would only appear transparent.

If he had a strong bond with someone, then the karma thread would show a colour that revealed the kind of bond they had. It could be affection, love, or even hatred. This man might hate his friends from the same assassin group or even feel affection toward them. He might also have affection toward people outside the group whom Aldrian did not know.

Because of these reasons, he had to filter each person manually using his system. He had to read the information of everyone connected to this man inside the continent. Even after filtering the threads to only those within the continent, this guy still had many karma threads.

That might be because he communicated with many people in the continent and built some connections for the sake of his mission.

At this moment, once again, Aldrian trained one of his divinity aspects of omniscience. His mind had to work hard and fast to filter each piece of information so that he could finish this task quickly.

Thanks to his strong cultivation, which had strengthened his mind and soul, he could do that without injuring either. He had already done the same thing in the past, back when he filtered the devils in the entire Ancient Blue Gate World before killing them.

He had also filtered much information from each person in each region of the continent, and the moment he read that someone cultivated a devil cultivation technique, he instantly killed them. That was how he was able to cleanse the entire world of devils.

Now the difference was that he only needed to filter the ones who had karma threads with the man in front of him. He just had to look for anyone who shared the same elemental comprehension or cultivation technique as this man. And because he was looking for the leader, he focused on the one with the strongest cultivation among them.

Since he already knew what kind of person he was searching for, his mind worked quickly to filter the information he read through his system. After a few minutes of filtering, he finally found someone who was likely the person he was looking for.

At this moment, that person was in another city near the southern part of the central region. He was inside a teahouse, enjoying his tea and gazing at the scenery outside. This man possessed a middle pseudo-immortal stage cultivation, and he was a truly powerful assassin according to the memories Aldrian had seen.

Although he was not the strongest cultivator in the Silent Reaper, he was the second most important person in that assassin group—the vice master of the Silent Reaper.

'Luvier Da Silva, a middle pseudo-immortal stage and...a dark elf?' This was information he had not expected to find. He would not have been surprised if a dark elf worked as an assassin, because dark elves were a special kind of elf with natural compatibility with darkness-based laws.

Their population was far smaller than that of normal elves, who could usually be seen anywhere. That was why he had not seen a dark elf directly in front of him until now. The only time he had encountered them was when he swept his domain sense while searching for devils across the world, and finding the groups of dark elves staying within the continent of elves.

Besides the basic laws that most elves tended to comprehend, dark elves could easily grasp darkness laws and shadow laws, something extremely useful for an assassin. He suddenly felt intrigued by this assassin, and without hesitation, he teleported the dark elf into his grasp.

The elf did not even have time to react before he suddenly appeared in Aldrian's hand. Aldrian choked him and instantly injected golden energy into his body.

He had to act quickly because this elf was at the pseudo-immortal stage. His reaction time would be faster, his instincts sharper, and it would take him only a split moment to realize what had happened before he tried to escape or even commit suicide.

The golden energy blocked all of the energy flow inside the body and instantly sealed the elf's cultivation. Aldrian also changed the properties of the golden energy into that of poison, causing extreme pain that would prevent the elf from thinking clearly.

The elf had no time to think. His body was already in unbearable pain, and his cultivation was sealed, but he still knew that he had fallen into someone's hands. What he could not understand was how it had happened. How could he be here when just a moment ago he had been enjoying a cup of tea?

While still in pain and weakened, his eyes finally focused on the person choking him. The moment he saw that face, he was utterly shocked to the core.

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## Chapter 766 - 766: Enough Being Passive

[ 1,688 words ]

Luvier, the vice master of the Silent Reaper, had never once been caught in his life as an assassin. His success rate was almost a hundred percent, and that was why he was entrusted with this mission to kill perhaps the most powerful and mysterious person in his career as an assassin.

He had already planned how the operation would proceed according to the known information he had gathered about the target this time. This operation was the most secretive and the most cautious one he had ever undertaken. Even if they wanted to discuss something regarding the assassination, they had to communicate through voice transmission between assassins.

On the outside, they acted like normal visitors from outside the continent, exploring and building relationships with the many internal powers of the Barisan Continent. But behind that facade, he and his men were moving strictly according to his plan. He made sure there was no gap for them to be discovered by anyone, especially by Aldrian.

That would be the worst outcome they could imagine.

However, how could Aldrian catch him? He gritted his teeth, wanting to say something to Aldrian, but he also had difficulty breathing because Aldrian was choking him. When Aldrian saw that the dark elf seemed about to faint from the lack of oxygen, he used a spatial lock to trap Luvier in midair and positioned him beside Hurz.

Aldrian released his choke, allowing Luvier to breathe again, and he coughed heavily a few times. His head was the only part of his body that could move, so he could at least cough freely. After a few moments of coughing and adjusting his breath, he finally saw Aldrian more clearly.

He gritted his teeth as if to show his rage.

"You, you are—"

"Before you say something or feign ignorance, you'd better look beside you and think again about what you are going to say."

Luvier, who wanted to use his usual technique to deny everything, stopped his words as Aldrian cut him off. Slowly, he turned his head to the side. The moment he saw the man beside him, his heart trembled and a coldness spread through his chest. Of course he knew the man, because that was the one he had ordered to look for the third party to observe the Spirit Ancestor.

There were many questions in his mind, but he could not ask all of them as he finally realized why Aldrian had brought him here. Although he did not know how Aldrian had done it, he could already guess the worst—that their operation had been compromised. Yet he still did not understand how Aldrian had discovered where he was, or even his true identity.

He, the vice master of the Silent Reaper, was someone not even all members of the organization had ever seen in their lives. And even if they had seen him, they would never have seen his real face, because he always used disguise techniques. The only one who knew his true identity was the master of the organization himself.

Even in this mission, although some members finally saw his figure, he still used disguise techniques that constantly changed his face. They would not recognize him even if they met him every day. Even if somehow Hurz had told Aldrian about him, Aldrian would not have known his face or location, since he had never revealed where he was.

He always concealed his cultivation and even used a special artifact to mask it. So, despite all of that, how could Aldrian pinpoint him and bring him here?

"From everything going through your mind, it seems I'm correct. So you must already know why I brought you here and why you are still alive," Aldrian said.

Luvier gritted his teeth, but before he could speak, Aldrian continued.

"But I truly did not expect to meet a dark elf, and this is the first time I've seen one right in front of me. I thought dark elves were a reclusive type, not too fond of mingling with others. So why would a dark elf become an assassin in a group full of humans?"

Aldrian's question made Luvier's eyes widen in shock. No one except the master of the Silent Reaper knew that he was a dark elf. All this time, even when he met others, he always used a disguise technique so perfect that not even a pseudo-immortal stage expert could detect it. That was why the other members of the Silent Reaper all believed he was human.

The only one who knew his true identity was the master of the Silent Reaper, because he was the one who had brought him in. So how could Aldrian know? Could he really see through the disguise? If that was the case, then this was the first time his technique had ever failed.

He wanted to said something to Aldrian, but once again, Aldrian gave him no chance.

"Well, I have some questions you could answer, but I think those can wait. For now, I want to look into your plan." He then touched Luvier's forehead and closed his eyes.

Luvier knew exactly what Aldrian intended to do, and just like Hurz, he grinned even though he was still in pain.

"You will—"

Clank!

This time, he did not even have the chance to finish the classic line of a captured opponent before Aldrian broke the mind seal. Thanks to the one he had encountered in Hurz's mind earlier, Aldrian had already learned the structure of the seal and was able to break it much more quickly.

Luvier's eyes widened in shock.

"You motherfuc—"

But before he could curse, Aldrian was already delving into his memories. Luvier's eyes rolled back as Aldrian harshly looked deeper, not caring to make his method softer.

As time passed, Aldrian's expression shifted—at first he frowned, then he raised his eyebrows, then frowned again. After a few minutes, he finally finished his search, and suddenly, he couldn't help but giggle before bursting into laughter.

"Hahahaha!" He even covered his face with one hand as he laughed loudly.

Luvier, who seemed on the verge of fainting, tried to gather his strength and gritted his teeth.

"Why are you laughing?" he asked weakly.

Thanks to his strong soul and cultivation, he remained conscious, albeit in extreme pain.

Aldrian's laughter slowly stopped before he looked at Luvier. He placed his hand on Luvier's head and injected his golden energy, which made Luvier feel warm and comfortable. He was astonished, this was the first time he had ever felt such energy, and it was unbelievably soothing. The pain caused by Aldrian's harsh intrusion into his memories quickly faded.

Within a few seconds, Luvier no longer felt any pain, which allowed him to think clearly again. He frowned, unable to understand why Aldrian would heal him after treating him so harshly. Even if Aldrian had let him die just moments ago, he would not have been surprised.

"After looking through your memories, I have to say it's no wonder you ended up in this organization. You escaped from your clan after killing many of your fellow elves because of your twisted personality. When you were on the verge of being captured by your pursuers, the master of the Silent Reaper appeared and took you in."

"You truly are a bastard worthy of the worst death for your many atrocious deeds. But for me, you are worthy of that death because of your plan—planning all that destruction and even targeting my families. I have to commend you, it was truly brave to think of something like that."

What Aldrian had discovered was the large-scale destruction planned for the following week.

This was something Aldrian also found interesting. In the following week, besides the distraction mission that would cause chaos and destruction, there would be a major event involving the devils. Luvier did not know the details, since the master of the Silent Reaper had revealed very little. The key point was that next week the devils would come to the Ancient Blue Gate World.

He did not know how many devils would arrive, but the master had used the words the great war. That alone was enough to show that their number would not be small.

Still, Aldrian paid it little mind. Instead, he felt glad and would welcome as many devils as possible into his world. It would be much easier to purge them if they came voluntarily, and in the end, it would weaken Tarius.

Another piece of useful information was that the Silent Reaper maintained a close business relationship with the Barevisk family. The patriarch of that family had used their services many times for his own interests, and the one who paid for this assassination mission was none other than him.

Once again, that family poked at his patience, and this time even more boldly by sending assassins. These assassins would bring chaos, and according to Luvier's plan,

the distraction combined with the chaos caused by the powers seeking to kill the Spirit Ancestor would result in many fatalities. They would kidnap people, sabotage places, and even poison entire areas.

The most audacious ones were to strike the family of his parents or his women. Luvier knew that his parents and his women spent most of their time in his palace, which was the most secure place. But they intended to use their family as bait to try to draw them out. The next scenario was that these assassins would use kidnapping his loved ones to weaken him and finally kill him.

He found it funny that this group of assassins truly dared to cross his line.

Luvier, who did not know the full extent of his power and strength, dared to target his family? He dared to think of using them to try to kill him? And that Barevisk family again, did they think they could do as they pleased?

Although he laughed at their arrogance, stupidity, and ignorance, a burning rage rose inside him.

They, who already did not hesitate to show their ill intent toward him, did they think he would not make a move just because they believed he did not know what they were doing?

Aldrian's face turned calm as he looked at Luvier.

Enough of being passive. They wanted to kill him? Then he would bring the chaos back to them.

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## **Chapter 767 - 767: I Don't Think I'm Patient Enough...**

[ 1,559 words ]

Aldrian kept looking at Luvier with his calm expression for a moment before he spoke.

"To be honest, I'd like to kill you and all of your minions on this continent right now, to serve as a warning to your group's master and the Barevisk family, but I have a plan that makes you useful alive for now." Aldrian smiled, his gaze still fixed on Luvier.

"You will face the consequences for targeting me, my family, and my empire. You will return to where you came from, and you and your minions will create havoc in your own base."

Luvier's eyes trembled, he had a bad feeling. He then saw Aldrian touch his forehead again while keeping eye contact.

"After this, you will forget about me. You will forget the current mission and you will only obey me," he said, which made Luvier's heart turn cold. He knew that whatever Aldrian wanted to do might spell the end for him.

"Wait, wait!" he shouted, trying to move his head to break free from Aldrian's hand, but Aldrian had already used his spatial lock to keep him frozen in place. He could not move, forced to keep staring into Aldrian's eyes. While Luvier's gaze remained locked with Aldrian's, his surroundings suddenly grew wobbly, and before he realized it, he was already in a different environment.

In that moment, he found himself in the middle of darkness, his body bound to a pole that kept him from moving. From within the void, countless eyes appeared, all of them staring at him. They circled him, every single one belonging to Aldrian.

"Obey my will, obey my will, obey my will."

A chorus of Aldrian's voices echoed, repeating the same words again and again.

At first, Luvier thought nothing had changed, but soon he felt his being and soul start to sync with Aldrian's command. His consciousness was slowly consumed by the words, forcing him to submit.

The chant went on for what felt like hours, endlessly repeating. Luvier kept hearing the words, even finding himself echoing them. In reality, his expression had already turned blank, his mind emptied. His gaze was lifeless, unmoving, as if he were already dead inside.

Luvier had actually fallen under Aldrian's illusion. Although he felt as if he had been trapped in that strange environment for hours, in reality only two seconds had passed. This was the time difference between the illusion and the real world of his technique. The illusion was designed to embed orders or doctrines deep inside the subconscious, in simple words, hypnotic.

However, it was a terrifying form of hypnosis, because once Aldrian finished embedding his doctrine or command, the victim would never realize they had been hypnotized. They would still retain their own consciousness and be able to think freely, yet they would believe that whatever they did under the command was natural and perfectly right.

After Aldrian finished 'brainwashing' Luvier through his hypnotic illusion, he leaned closer and whispered something into his ear for a few moments before closing his eyes. Then, turning his focus once more, he delved into Luvier's memory. With precision, he erased every trace of the mission, anything connected to it, leaving only the memories from before Luvier had received his orders.

Aldrian used death laws to erase those memories, but because of how fragile the mind and soul were in the presence of death laws, he was extremely careful as he worked. After a few moments, Aldrian finally finished and withdrew his hand from Luvier.

Luvier still looked like a dead man with that hollow gaze, and Aldrian knew it would remain that way until he released the illusion on him.

This was the first time Aldrian had used such a technique, hypnosis combined with memory erasure.

Why did he need to erase Luvier's memories of the mission?

It was both to strengthen the hypnotic influence in Luvier's subconscious and as a precaution, in case Luvier somehow realized he was not supposed to carry out what he was about to do, remembered something, and broke free from the technique.

Aldrian knew that his hypnotic technique was not yet strong enough to completely overpower someone at Luvier's cultivation stage. If the target were at the same cultivation realm as himself, then he would not need to erase memories at all. His hypnosis would be strong enough to engulf both subconsciousness and memory entirely, leaving no way for the victim to escape.

But Luvier was someone at the middle pseudo-immortal stage, and individuals at that level could not be underestimated under this heaven. They possessed strong minds and souls, along with sharp instincts and thinking. If Luvier were ever triggered to remember something tied to the mission, he would sense that something was wrong within him, and the hypnosis could collapse.

For example, if someone reminded Luvier about the mission, especially someone like the master of Silent Reaper, the hypnotic would likely break. Now that there was nothing that could make him remember the mission, the hypnotic would be difficult to shatter.

After he finished with Luvier, he looked at Hurz and did the same. For Hurz he only needed to cast his hypnotic technique. When he was done with him, he spread his domain sense across the continent and searched for each assassin under Luvier's command.

From his memories, the real number of assassins who came to this continent was actually one thousand one hundred. It showed how large Silent Reaper was as an assassin group, and those numbers did not even reflect their full strength.

What he needed to do was cast his hypnotic technique on each of them so his counterattack would succeed. This was the plan he had just devised, and although it would take time to cast the technique on more than a thousand people with varied cultivation, it was worth it for the effect. The Barevisk family and the Silent Reaper's master would not realize what was coming until it was too late.

"Well, it will take some time but it's worth it. I hope the Silent Reaper's master and the Barevisk patriarch will be happy with my present," he thought.

On the next morning, Aldrian finally emerged from the dungeon and appeared at the edge of the small forest near his palace. He stretched his body to loosen it and let out a deep breath.

"Ooff, that was quite bothersome, but finally I'm done." He looked at the sun rising over the horizon. "To think it would take me this much time."

Although he had just finished what he set out to do, he still could not rest, there were other things he needed to do. He then walked toward his palace to carry out what he had in mind.

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In another location, Luvier had already returned to the teahouse he had visited the night before being kidnapped by Aldrian. He even sat in the same seat as before, but this time his face showed a confused expression.

"Why am I here? Did I get drunk or something? I don't remember coming to this teahouse. I only remember being in the middle of a mission to target someone, but the target is still unknown," he thought. At this moment he felt disoriented and unsure. He seemed to be in the middle of a mission, yet the mission did not specify the target, which left him unsettled.

However, he still believed that this mission was something he had to carry out, even with the confusion lingering inside him. Nothing felt out of place, and everything he was doing seemed like part of the mission.

"I don't have time to relax. I need to find out who our target is and complete the mission," he thought one last time before disappearing.

At that moment, all of the Silent Reaper assassins on the continent shared the same kind of thoughts as Luvier. Even if they contacted each other, their conversations would revolve only around the unknown mission they were undertaking. None of them would realize anything was amiss, and they would continue acting as if it were just a normal mission.

A few hours later, Aldrian visited Ilona at her inn. After a brief greeting, he spoke directly.

"Sometime after next week, bring me to your father."

Ilona's eyes widened in shock when she heard this. Why was it so sudden?

"I think it will be better to bring down Munez Barevisk from his patriarch seat as soon as possible. It will not be good for your family if he keeps that seat for much longer," he added, making her sigh.

"Wait, wait, Your Majesty—what is this sudden decision? Why next week? Did something happen while I was unaware, for you to suddenly decide to make a move?"

From her reaction and the feelings he sensed, Aldrian was certain that Ilona knew nothing about Munez's attempt to use assassins against him, even though she had been sent as an envoy.

Munez was truly playing in both light and darkness, sending Ilona openly in front, while secretly dispatching assassins from the shadows.

Aldrian then told Ilona about the assassins and who had hired them, which made Ilona's eyes widen in shock.

Munez had done all of that without her knowing!

"That's why, after a certain event next week, bring me to the Akares Star so I can meet your father. If not, I don't think I'm patient enough to refrain from barging into the Barevisk estate, causing a bloodbath, dragging Munez's body outside, and hanging it where anyone could see," Aldrian said calmly.

The words made Ilona's heart shudder.

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## **Chapter 768 - 768: Of Course I Will Fight Them**

[ 1,551 words ]

Ilona's heart shuddered at Aldrian's words. The Barevisk family would truly experience a bloodbath if Aldrian barged in. There were many of Munez's loyalists in the family, even

most of the grand elders were on his side. They were the ones who greatly benefited from Munez becoming patriarch, and they would likely try their best to keep him in that seat.

"I know you don't want excessive destruction for the Barevisk family, since your father is still from there. That's why we have to move as soon as possible, so I can minimize the bloodshed as much as possible. It also benefits me because your family will finally stop bothering me once your father takes over the family," Aldrian said.

The way he said it made it impossible for her to deny, and what he said was true. Ilona sighed after thinking for a moment and nodded.

"Alright, your majesty, but I don't think Munez will react kindly if I return to the family without waiting for his order or without bringing anything worth his attention. There are many eyes and ears of the patriarch, and once they see me return without warning, Munez will find many excuses to punish me," she said.

"Moreover, if I bring someone to my father, Munez will likely want to know everything about your identity, as he is still wary of Father," she added.

Aldrian smiled at her words.

"You don't have to worry about him questioning your return to your father. As I said, there will be a certain event next week, and after that event I don't think he will have any reason to punish you. In fact, that event alone will be enough for you to return to your family."

Ilona turned confused.

"Excuse me, your majesty, but what event are we talking about? Why does it seem like this matter will also force Munez to take it seriously?"

Without changing his expression, Aldrian answered,

"There will be a great war with the devils that came from other stars."

Ilona's eyes widened in shock.

"What?"

A great war? That was not something whose effects could be underestimated, especially when it involved enemies from other stars. A great war between stars could draw in many powerful cultivators. Their numbers could easily reach millions, and history even recorded cases where billions of cultivators with varied cultivation levels were involved.

Aldrian nodded.

"Although I don't know exactly where the devils are coming from, next week they will arrive in huge numbers, seemingly targeting this world. That is information I obtained from one of the assassins, as well as from my own analysis."

Ilona's expression turned solemn.

"Then we have to tell the other powers about it, your majesty! Although I don't like Munez, I will also have to tell him about this matter since it touches the devils and a great war. He will have to know as the patriarch and ready the family to face the devils!"

However, Aldrian shook his head.

"No. We don't have to spread this kind of news to other powers; we would only cause unnecessary panic among the populace. Also, I don't think telling Munez about this matter would be wise because I suspect Munez is involved with the devils and might already know about the coming war."

Ilona was truly shocked again.

"What?! Munez involved with the devils?"

"Well, I still cannot tell you clearly since this is only my suspicion based on analysis, but from the information I have, Munez likely has some connection with the devils and seems to already know about the incoming devils," Aldrian answered.

"If my suspicion is confirmed then we could use this to remove him from the patriarch position. There will be no one to help him once he is revealed to have connections with the devils, unless they do not care that he has such connections."

His suspicion about Munez's involvement with the devils began with the information about the great war itself. The devils were said to arrive sometime next week, and this information was shared by the master of the Silent Reaper to Luvier, his vice master. That alone suggested the master of the Silent Reaper had some kind of connection with the devils.

But was that really the case? Did he truly have such a connection, or had someone else told him about it? Aldrian's thoughts then turned to Munez, the patriarch of the Barevick family. He was also a man with a close relationship to the master of the Silent Reaper. Munez could have been the source of the information, which meant he somehow had ties to the devils.

Even if he did not have a direct relationship, the fact that he knew about the devils' movements while other powers seemed completely unaware showed that he was already on the same side as them. Aldrian knew this kind of information should not yet

be known to other powers, because if it were, they would certainly have come to him and discussed the matter.

This was a great war, after all.

And there was one more thing that convinced him Munez already knew about the devils. Nearly three weeks ago, Munez had given Vars and his group an order to gather as much information as possible about this continent and about him, before returning to the Barevisk family no later than next week.

At first he did not understand why Munez had given that order, but after thinking it through he began to understand. It was because a huge army of devils would come and there would be a great war.

Vars was still under the command of one of the men loyal to Munez, so that must be the reason Munez ordered them to return to the family. It seemed he did not want Vars and his group caught in the crossfire. The same could not be said for Ilona and her group. She could be discarded, and Munez did not care if she was caught in the great war in the Ancient Blue Gate World.

"Then what do you intend to do, your majesty? If your information is correct, the great war is something that must be handled by many powers. Even other stars must know, since the central star cluster is tied to each of them," Ilona asked, worried.

Aldrian smiled. "What am I going to do? Of course I will fight them. How could I just stand still when the devils come knocking on my star's door?"

Ilona was astonished. "Your—your majesty, you want to fight the devils alone?"

Aldrian just smiled, but that alone was enough of an answer for her. She thought he must be crazy, but then she remembered who he was, which explained why he could speak so casually. She thought he was the only one who would treat a great war as if it were a party event.

It was as if he were saying, "Oh, okay, then I'll enjoy it," and then moving on.

He might be able to battle an immortal, but could he really face the devils on the scale of a great war between stars?

Across her life, she had only witnessed one great war, back when she was still at the duke stage. At that time, the devils from the fallen star cluster had tried to invade the central star cluster through Akares Star first. Fortunately, with the support of the other stars, they managed to push the devils back.

That was the only time she had seen the scale of a great war. Space itself had turned chaotic as many powerful cultivators unleashed their techniques. Spatial storms raged

everywhere, and luckily most of the battle took place in space before many of the devils could land on the star's surface. If the entire fight had happened below the atmosphere, the destruction would have been far more immense.

That was the greatest war she had ever seen in her life, and she would never believe that the power of one person could withstand the entire armies of the devils. She did not know if the size of the devil troops that would come next week would be the same as the last time, but no matter how many there were, the numbers would still be overwhelming if it carried the name "great war."

'But maybe this man could handle them?' she thought as she looked at Aldrian's calm expression.

"Anyway, I only wanted to tell you that. Also, how about the thing I mentioned to you last time? About Munez's eyes—did you find anyone suspicious?" Aldrian asked.

Ilona, who understood what Aldrian meant, could not help but release a sigh.

"I have a clue about someone suspicious, but I still need confirmation before knowing if that person is actually an informant for the patriarch."

Hearing her weary sigh and sensing the turbulence in her heart, Aldrian knew this was something sensitive to her, so he did not ask any further.

"Alright then, I'll see you next time. You just need to enjoy the show at the next event, and don't ever tell anyone about the devils, not even to your group." Aldrian said.

"Understood, your majesty," Ilona answered, and then Aldrian disappeared.

Ilona sighed again and looked outside.

'I hope everything works out.'

Aldrian's figure appeared inside his throne hall, where he sat upon his throne. A few moments later, a figure suddenly appeared right in front of him. Seeing this figure, Aldrian smiled, his expression showing clear satisfaction.

The figure standing before him actually had the exact same face as his own!

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## Chapter 769 - 769: The Avatar

[ 1,607 words ]

The figure in front of Aldrian had the same face as him and wore a white robe. His handsome and charming face, his tall and firm body, everything was authentic, just like Aldrian who sat on the throne.

Aldrian smiled in satisfaction at the appearance of this figure. The figure was the result of another technique he created based on his comprehension and memories of his past life, the avatar technique that could produce clones with their own mind. Earlier, he had created one avatar and let it roam freely to test many aspects of the technique itself.

Thanks to his life laws and the immense quantity of energy that seemed endless inside his domain, he was able to create something like this. The avatar was formed from his energy. The avatar could be touched, and anyone would think that it was no different from Aldrian himself.

The sensation would still feel like touching flesh beneath the avatar's skin, despite its body being composed entirely of energy. The congregation of energy was bound together using his comprehension of life laws and karma laws, which ultimately maintained the shape of a body, a body that perfectly followed his own form.

The avatar was connected to Aldrian's soul, and thanks to his life laws, it could also possess its own consciousness. It was like an automatic puppet that gained its own life and mind, although the avatar's personality and mindset were the same as Aldrian's, since its karma and soul were no different from his.

The avatar was basically a split of Aldrian, but one formed entirely from energy. Another feature that made this technique unique was that Aldrian's real body's consciousness could be sent into the avatar, allowing him to control its movements completely.

However, the avatar had certain weaknesses. The first, of course, was its strength. The avatar did not have as much power compared to the real body. Although others would sense that it had the same cultivation as Aldrian, it could not exert the same level of strength. At most, the avatar could only fight opponents one or two realms stronger.

That was also why, albeit the avatar could use all of his techniques, its strength was still lackluster compared to the real body. That was only if the avatar was outside his domain. If it was within the domain, it could draw upon the domain's power and its strength would be boosted.

Although still not as strong as Aldrian's real body, the avatar would then have the capability to battle someone at the pseudo-immortal stage.

The avatar, when using its own consciousness, also could not access the system like the real body, which was understandable since the system was unique to Aldrian's main consciousness.

The second weakness was that the avatar, in automation mode or when using its own consciousness, could not create a domain. In other words, the avatar outside his domain was no different from an ordinary cultivator. Without the domain to boost its strength and support its energy, once the avatar depleted all of the energy within its body, it would disappear.

However, this weakness could be solved if Aldrian moved his real consciousness into the avatar's body. He had already attempted meditating in that state to build a domain, and he had succeeded. If his avatar was somewhere far away, in a place where his domain did not yet exist, he could simply move his consciousness into the avatar and create his domain there.

With that, his real body did not need to travel to the location, as the avatar alone was enough to represent him. Moreover, once his main consciousness entered the avatar, the avatar could finally use the system as well.

The other weakness was that, because the avatar was strongly tied to Aldrian's soul and karma, if something happened to it, for example, being destroyed in battle, his real body would be affected. His soul and body might suffer serious injuries.

This could be prevented if Aldrian canceled the avatar before it was destroyed.

Aldrian stood up from his throne and walked toward his avatar, while the avatar looked back at him with a calm face.

"How do you feel at this moment? Are you done testing everything I asked?" Aldrian asked.

The avatar nodded in response.

"Yes. I already tried testing some of my abilities, and right now I feel weak because my energy reserves are almost depleted. So, would you mind giving me a hand?" the avatar replied.

"Sure," Aldrian said as he touched the avatar's body and injected his energy to replenish it.

This was another weakness of the avatar, it could not cultivate to restore its own energy and required the main body to do so. That was because the avatar was merely a congregation of energy and lacked organs like meridians or a dantian.

It was a fact that Aldrian's real body never needed to cultivate to replenish energy, since his body automatically restored it even without any cultivation technique. If the avatar did not share that privilege, then the only way for it to replenish energy would be to cultivate normally, and for that, it would need a dantian and meridians.

After Aldrian injected his energy into the avatar, its complexion improved greatly, and it looked once again like a normal, healthy cultivator.

As Aldrian continued observing his own avatar, someone suddenly entered the throne hall. The moment the figure stepped inside, she couldn't help but gasp in astonishment.

Sylphia, who had sensed the presence of two Aldrians, grew confused and decided to come check on him, but she never expected to see that there were actually two of them!

Aldrian, seeing Sylphia's astonishment, could only smile at her expression. His avatar did the same. Aldrian walked toward Sylphia, who was still speechless, and gently took her hand.

"What is it, my empress?" he asked with amusement.

Sylphia did not answer right away. Still frozen in astonishment, she glanced at the avatar, then turned back to the Aldrian standing beside her.

"What... what is this? There are actually two of you? Wait—I sensed both of you as the same person. Are you real, or is he real? How is..." She stopped speaking and looked back at the avatar. "How is this possible?"

Aldrian, still smiling, led Sylphia closer to the avatar.

"Of course I'm the real one, my love. Even if the avatar is a part of me, I would never allow it to touch you in my presence," he said, which made her raise her eyebrows.

"Your avatar?" she asked, to which Aldrian responded with a nod.

"You could say this is a high-level cloning technique that creates an exact split of myself with its own consciousness. That's why you sensed the same presence as me. This avatar can act just as I do and has the same personality as me, albeit with many limitations."

Sylphia then turned to the avatar, and when she stood in front of it, she observed it in greater detail. The avatar wore the same smile Aldrian always showed her, which made her heart flutter. She truly could not tell the difference at all.

She reached out and touched the avatar's body—his face, shoulders, torso, hands—and all of it felt like real flesh and bone. The warmth of his body, the firmness of his

muscles, all of it was just like Aldrian's. It was as if she were touching a normal human being, which shocked her even more.

"Are you satisfied?" the avatar asked, making Sylphia jolt and turn her gaze back to Aldrian.

"He can speak too?" she asked in astonishment.

Aldrian nodded. "Yes. Just as I said, this avatar has its own consciousness. Since it's a high level cloning technique, of course it can speak. From the outside, no one would be able to tell this is only an avatar."

Sylphia looked back at the avatar and sighed. "So the Aldrian I interacted with earlier was only your avatar, huh? I feel like I've been tricked." Then she turned her gaze back to Aldrian.

"So you could create many avatars like this? If so, then your work will be much easier from now on."

However, Aldrian shook his head.

"For now, I can only create two at most. Even creating this one placed a burden on my soul. If I tried to create too many, my soul would be unable to maintain them. The result would be defective products, and my soul might be injured from being forced to sustain so many avatars."

Sylphia nodded in understanding and glanced at the avatar again.

"How envious... If only I could also use this kind of technique, my life would be so much simpler."

Aldrian smiled as he wrapped his arm around her waist.

"You could use it in the future, once you comprehend the laws required to create it. It's just a matter of time."

Aldrian was not lying. As an elf, Sylphia undoubtedly had a high probability of comprehending the life laws. Moreover, after the change she underwent when meeting Seralis inside her dream, that probability had increased greatly. As for the karma laws and others, she would naturally be able to comprehend them once she reached a certain cultivation realm.

"Is that so?" Sylphia said, though her eyes lingered on the avatar once more. Then, as if realizing something, she turned to Aldrian.

"Dear, although I already heard about the problem of the Spirit Ancestor from your avatar, is there something else I should know? With you creating this avatar, do you have something in mind that requires it to handle your work? Does this have something to do with the Spirit Ancestor's problem?"

Aldrian touched her nose, leaving her momentarily stunned before she pouted.

"You are so smart. Yes, I have a plan that requires an avatar, and I must tell you, the coming week will be quite festive," Aldrian said.

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## Chapter 770 - 770: As His Representative

[ 1,565 words ]

Aldrian then cancelled his avatar technique, the avatar instantly dissipating into particles of energy which were absorbed by Aldrian. After that, he told Sylphia about the great war that might happen next week and the plan he had for the Barevisk family.

As Aldrian told her the information, Sylphia was truly shocked, and she couldn't help but notice that Aldrian seemed not to pay much attention to the matter he had just shared. It was as if what he had said was not a big deal.

Even though she had never seen a great war between stars, she had already experienced the great war that involved millions of people with the devils. That alone she considered to be a horrifying battle, which caused so much destruction and so many victims.

She couldn't imagine how terrible a great battle between stars would be, involving not only far more powerful cultivators but also far greater numbers. But then something clicked inside her mind, and she narrowed her eyes while looking at her man.

"My emperor, are you planning to face all those devils without the support of other powers? If my guess is correct, the other powers don't know about the devils' incoming attack, because if that were the case, then at this moment all of them would be busy preparing their troops or anything else for the war," she suddenly said.

Aldrian nodded.

"Correct. The other powers do not know, and we don't have to tell them, because it will undoubtedly reach the populace, which in the end will cause panic. Why do I choose to take care of this alone? Well, it will be much faster that way. Also, I can test my strength. Since the appearance of the god of the devils, I have grown stronger, and I need something like the devils to test that strength."

Sylphia sighed when she heard that.

"Truly, you are the only one who could say something like that. Then what about the avatar?"

"I will send the avatar with Ilona to the Barevisk family in the Akares star to take care of her parents' problem and also the Barevisk family. Maybe, if possible, the Valroy family could be taken care of on that trip as well," Aldrian replied.

"As for me, I think after taking care of the invasion, I will visit the Fallen Star Cluster. Well, I have to say that my cleansing operation will begin then."

Sylphia slightly widened her eyes.

"You... you will attack the devil base in the Fallen Star Cluster?"

Aldrian nodded.

"Yes. I will bring the other powers that wish to follow me, and I will use this chance as a show of force to them, to give them confidence, since I need their strength to help me cleanse all of the devils spread across the first heaven."

Sylphia's heart trembled. She knew that her man had a great personal mission in his life, and it looked like he was about to take the first step of his expedition to cleanse the universe of the devils. She sighed and couldn't help but feel worried about his safety, which made Aldrian smile and hug her warmly.

"I will just go to the Fallen Star Cluster, and after taking care of all the devils there, I will come back. So I will not be gone as long as you think. You don't have to worry. I still have to take care of some problems near home after all, and once I finish everything and make sure no problems will arise in the future, only then will I go to much farther places," he said reassuringly.

Sylphia couldn't help but smile and nodded as she hugged him back. After holding each other for a moment, Sylphia released herself from his arms and looked into his eyes.

"Do you remember the princess of the Verdyn Empire asking for your help? About the problem her imperial family faces from the opposition force?" she asked.

Aldrian did not know why Sylphia suddenly brought it up, but he still nodded.

"Of course I remember. What about it?"

"I will visit their empire as your representation. I think that would be enough to show that the Silvarin imperial family has your support. You don't have to visit the Verdyn Empire yourself, and you could focus on other matters while I take care of their business," Sylphia said, which left Aldrian stunned. But then he smiled warmly. He suddenly hugged her again, this time much more tightly.

"You are so cute that I cannot resist hugging you."

"Hey, I'm serious—"

"Alright, you can go to the Verdyn Empire."

Sylphia was stunned for a split second before she finally smiled.

"I thought you would keep me here with a thousand reasons. I even prepared many arguments so you would approve me."

Still smiling, Aldrian stroked her long hair as he answered.

"How could I stop you from helping me? In fact, I'm really grateful that you want to help me with this. What you're doing will ease my responsibility after I gave my promise to Princess Vaeril."

Another reason he agreed was that he wanted his woman to be known beyond their continent and to begin exploring the outside world herself. Sylphia liked adventure, and he wanted to indulge that by letting her travel outside the continent.

This would also serve as her introduction to the continent of elves, showing that Sylphia was his woman, his family, and his representative. They would come to know another important figure from the Barisan continent besides him.

Since Sylphia was of the same race as the elves, she would likely be welcomed more easily. This would also help the populace of the Verdyn Empire view the relationship between the Silvarin imperial family and his empire in a more positive light.

Sylphia smiled happily and tightened her hug.

"Thank you for trusting me," she said.

"You may go to the elven continent after I take care of the devils' problem next week. It will have a much bigger impact that way. However, besides some members of the Dark Saber Group, I will send you with one of my avatars. This is non-negotiable, because there might be unknown variables outside that I do not know, and it is for your safety," Aldrian said.

Sylphia nodded several times.

"Of course, dear. With you by my side, even if it is only your avatar, I will be much more confident and at ease."

They kept hugging each other for a moment before Aldrian suddenly lifted her body in a princess carry. The sudden movement made her yelp. She blinked a few times, wondering what he was doing, but when she saw the lewd expression on his face, she knew exactly what was on his mind.

She couldn't help but blush and turn her head away.

"No, it's still daytime, and I think you have more important things to do. There might also be guests coming."

But his expression did not change. Instead, he leaned his head closer to her ear.

"They can wait. For now, I will do something far more important," he whispered softly, sending a shudder through her body.

Sylphia, unable to resist Aldrian's words and passion, finally let herself be carried away.

A few minutes later, they were already inside their bedroom. Moans of ecstasy escaped from Sylphia, mingling with the sharp rhythm of flesh meeting flesh. They fully enjoyed their time together for the next few hours.

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Time continued to pass, and five days went by without anything remarkable. The populace of the Ancient Blue Gate World carried on with their activities, while many powers from various places still congregated on the Barisan continent.

There were many forces that still wanted to build relationships with the Aster Empire and learn more about the continent. There were also many who wished to meet Aldrian. So, even though the continent had been opened to the world more than two weeks ago, many important figures were still coming to visit, even to this day.

Some of the important figures who had arrived earlier had not yet returned to their own territories.

For example, the group from the Martal Empire, led by Emperor Rozwald. There were many mysteries and interesting places for him to study, and most importantly, there were still matters he wanted to discuss with Aldrian personally while also deepening their relationship.

At this moment, Emperor Rozwald was near one of the forbidden zones on the Barisan continent, Dragon Back Mountain. He had heard that it was a place where violent winds barred entry and could even kill those who forced their way in.

Aldrian, who had decided not to disable the formation on the mountain, allowed it to maintain its forbidden zone status.

The emperor was amazed when, as he ventured deeper into the mountain, the wind's strength suddenly spiked. It was so intense that his group hesitated to continue, forcing him to stop and remain at the outer region.

While he was observing the mountain, Prince Ronwell approached him from behind. Without turning his head, Emperor Rozwald asked,

"How is it?"

Prince Ronwell shook his head in response.

"Nothing. We still can't reach our observer team at the Fallen Star Cluster. It's truly strange, and with them out of contact for more than three weeks, I think we can confidently say this is not a communication problem caused by a space storm or anything like that. I even dare to say that something might have happened to them."

Emperor Rozwald nodded, as he thought the same.

A bad feeling suddenly rose within him.

Unbeknownst to them, somewhere in space, a large armada of interstellar vessels had just emerged from a wormhole.

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## **Chapter 771 - 771: The Devils Arrived!**

[ 1,456 words ]

In outer space, still quite a distance from the Ancient Blue Gate World, interstellar vessels began emerging one by one from the wormhole. At first, there were only ten, but soon they became tens, then hundreds, until the number reached more than two hundred vessels of various sizes. However, all of them were still large enough to carry hundreds of thousands, and even millions, of people.

This was the devils' armada, finally arriving at the central star cluster after a journey of more than three weeks. At the forefront of the massive armada, Rulleus gazed at the Ancient Blue Gate World, which could already be seen in the distance through his window.

He smiled coldly, knowing the time for war had finally come, before turning his eyes toward a recording crystal that would broadcast his figure to the entire army standing by inside the vessels. The broadcast spread across the armada, and all of the devils could see him.

Rulleus's figure appeared in projection within every cabin of every vessel before he finally began to speak.

"To my brave warriors! To my great swords and shields that will bring me another thousand victories. In a moment we will enter a war that will carry our great names to the other side of heaven!"

"With war already upon us and our enemies unaware of the danger approaching them, we will catch them off guard and achieve a swift victory!"

"Be brave and do not be afraid. Your glory awaits. Once we seize that victory, no one will dare stand against us. We will be free to do as we please in that world, and each of you will receive the rewards awaiting you there. Seize them and take them, for they are yours to claim!" Rulleus roared.

Clank! Clank!

"UOHH! UOHH!"

The devil troops, already wearing their armor, clashed their weapons against their plates, producing a metallic din as they shouted a war cry to raise their spirits. Yet amidst the fervor, Xarz that stood not far from Rulleus, only glanced at him before turning his gaze to the Ancient Blue Gate World. His anxiety kept rising because they were almost there and his survival would be decided later.

"Take your posts! Be ready to deploy!" the generals of each vessel ordered, and many devils filed into the smaller cruisers. Inside each interstellar vessels were many cruisers that would be dispatched once they drew near the Ancient Blue Gate World.

These cruisers were special cruisers able to travel in space. They could not use warp, but they were still useful for carrying large numbers of troops, as in the current situation. Most of those inside the cruisers were cultivators below the emperor stage who did not have strong ability to fly or could not fly at all.

Rulleus looked forward again at the Ancient Blue Gate World and then gave his command.

"Start the siege!"

After that, the entire vessels moved forward toward the Ancient Blue Gate World, but they began to spread out instead of advancing in one large group. From their movement, it was clear they wanted to trap the entire star with a circling formation. Many vessels pulled away from the main armada, aiming to close in from "behind" the Ancient Blue Gate World.

At this moment, another interstellar vessel appeared in their path. It was actually a patrol ship, monitoring space for irregularities, and it approached to verify the identity of the incoming fleet.

Inside this vessel, the commander, a peak pseudo-immortal establishment stage cultivator, widened his eyes in shock. His heart trembled and his body turned cold. Recognizing many of those vessels, they were the devils' vessels!

"How the fuck could they get here without any signs?! I haven't received any news from headquarters either!" he shouted in disbelief.

At first, when he saw hundreds of vessels appear in the distance, he was stunned and felt something strange. Because no news had come from headquarters about these vessels, he decided to approach and check. But the moment his vessel drew nearer, the group suddenly spread out, and at that instant he could clearly see the shapes of most of the vessels.

They were the vessels usually used by the devils!

The commander shouted to the man behind him, "Tell the headquarters! The devils have come—"

Boom!

Suddenly his vessel, right at the commander's cabin, was struck by a cannon beam from one of the devils' vessels. The patrolling interstellar vessel was not too large, and the cannon beam pierced through it, blowing apart a great section of the ship in a violent explosion.

Many were instantly killed, while the survivors in other parts of the vessel fell into panic. They did not know what was happening outside, and only a moment later another cannon beam struck, destroying the vessel completely and killing everyone inside.

Other devils' vessels were also soon spotted by interstellar vessels that happened to be passing by. However, these vessels met the same fate as the earlier patrol vessel. The only difference was that this time, someone finally managed to send a message to warn the nearest star, the Ancient Blue Gate World, about the devils' approach.

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Thirty minutes later, at the Ancient Blue Gate World, on the Barisan Continent, the sun was almost sunk beneath the horizon. Inside an inn within one of the cities of the Eternal Sanctuary Forest region, Emperor Rozwald sat reading a scroll containing a report from his empire. Even though he was far from his empire, he still bore the responsibilities of an emperor in managing it.

While he was still reading, a sudden, violent knock struck against his door, making him frown as he glanced toward it.

"Come in."

The moment he spoke, Prince Ronwell rushed inside and instantly spoke in a hurried tone.

"Father, they have actually come!" he said, his voice tinged with panic, which deepened Emperor Rozwald's frown.

"They? Who are they? Why are you panicking? Speak clearly, Ronwell."

"The devils! The devils from other stars! From the direction they are coming, it seems they came from the fallen star cluster, and their vessels number in the hundreds! I got the information from the information department, that every patrol vessel or any vessel that happened to pass by them was destroyed," Ronwell said, his voice steadier now.

"The information came from one vessel before they lost contact with it. And with the strange disappearance of the observer team, they concluded this might be the devils' strategy. They are launching a surprise attack. With those numbers of vessels, Father, this will be a great war!"

Hearing that, Emperor Rozwald widened his eyes in shock.

"What?!" His body froze and his heart turned cold. He did not think this was just bogus information, the devils' matter could not be taken lightly. Moreover, with the words "great war" spoken, he knew he had to treat the situation with the utmost seriousness. Gritting his teeth, he instantly gave his order.

"Give the Black Order of War. Prepare all troops to depart," he commanded as he rushed outside.

"I already did that earlier using your name, Father."

"Good. I will go to warn His Majesty Emperor Aldrian. He must know about this."

Ronwell was stunned, but he nodded.

"Alright, Father. Then I will inform the other powers about the devils and coordinate with them in case they have not received any information yet." He then ran toward the opposite direction.

At this moment, scenes of panic like this could be seen across the continent, where many leaders of different powers resided. In fact, across the entire Ancient Blue Gate World, each headquarters fell into panic at the sudden information that the devils were almost upon them. The devils seemed to have come with the intent of a great war, throwing every power in the Ancient Blue Gate World into chaos.

This was because there had been no signs or information from the observer teams, leaving them unprepared. Moreover, with many of the leaders gathered in the Barisan Continent, their responses were delayed as they received orders later than expected. Still, those in the headquarters did their best to prepare for war.

Troops began to gather as quickly as possible, and the interstellar vessels were readied. Not a single moment was wasted.

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At Aldrian's palace, he was in the garden, quietly observing its beauty. His expression was calm as he touched the petal of a flower. He could clearly sense the intent from the flower, which showed a happy response to his touch, and he couldn't help but smile.

But while he was still enjoying the flower's beauty, his domain sense picked up frantic movements from countless figures across the continent, many of them rushing toward his palace.

When he focused his sense on them, he finally understood the cause of their panic. His expression returned to calm, and he lifted his gaze to the sky, which was growing dark as the sun sank completely beneath the horizon.

'They finally came.'

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## **Chapter 772 - 772: Unprepared**

[ 1,698 words ]

At this moment, across the world, the populace finally realized that something had happened. The huge mobilization of troops was something that could not be hidden from them after all.

"What happened? Why is there suddenly a call for mobilization? Are we going to war with someone?" one bystander in the Martal Empire asked in astonishment as they saw many troops suddenly gathering from various directions toward the imperial palace.

Many also started to enter some of the interstellar vessels that had already been prepared to take off.

"I heard from my cousin who works in the imperial army that this is a black order of war from His Majesty. It looks like there will be a great war," another bystander answered.

"A great war? Against who?"

"I don't know, but we will see in the next few hours. I think we will know then."

The great war was not something often heard by the populace. The last time they had experienced that kind of war was a long time ago, and their wars had mostly been against the devils within each of their continents.

However, since the emergence of Aldrian the Great, the devils seemed to have gone into hiding, no longer daring to act. The world became more peaceful with their absence, and their territories were seized by many neighboring powers.

But what was happening now? Why were they going to war again? Who were they going against?

On the Barisan Continent, many leaders, such as Emperor Rozwald, the Dragon King, the Phoenix Queen, and the sect masters of the three great sects of the central continent were at this moment making their way to Aldrian's palace. Their intent was the same, they wanted to warn of the incoming invasion.

Because they had to use the teleportation formation near the Xin Family's secret realm, all of them had to gather there. They could not simply fly directly to Aldrian's palace, as there was an anti-flight formation surrounding the floating land.

The formation nullified any flying ability of cultivators who tried to barge into the palace from outside the floating land. They could only fly once they had entered the palace grounds.

Some people also finally noticed that something had happened, as several figures suddenly flew frantically toward the central region. Others moved in different directions, as if rushing to deal with something urgent. This made many people raise their

eyebrows in wonder, questioning what those figures were doing and what had happened.

At the teleportation formation near the Xin Family's secret realm, many leaders arrived almost at the same time. They did not question each other, as each of them must have already known about the news.

The guards were shocked by the sudden arrival of so many leaders. Usually, at this hour, no one would come to visit, as it was considered inappropriate unless there was something urgent requiring an audience with Aldrian.

However, the elder stationed there seemed already prepared and was not particularly surprised. It was as if Aldrian had already told him about it beforehand.

The first leader to arrive hurriedly spoke to the elder and the guards stationed at the teleportation formation.

"Quick, bring us to His Majesty Emperor Aldrian. We have an important message that we must convey to him!" said Emperor Rozwald, who had just arrived after flying at full speed. The other leaders followed behind him, arriving quickly one after another.

The elder nodded.

"Alright, please stand on the teleportation formation, ladies and gentlemen." He did not ask questions and simply served the leaders.

A moment later, all of them appeared in the central region. From there, they moved to another teleportation formation beneath the floating land before taking yet another one that led them directly into the floating land. The moment they arrived on the grounds of Aldrian's palace, they rushed to search for him.

They spread their senses, something normally considered rude, but at this urgent moment they had no time to waste. Finding Aldrian at the side of the palace, they instantly used their movement techniques to approach him.

A few seconds later, they finally found Aldrian, who at this moment was gazing at the night sky. Although he wore only a red casual robe, it did nothing to diminish his charm. Even now, beneath the night sky, his figure seemed transcendent.

Still, these leaders had not come to admire his charm and beauty.

"Your Majesty."

"Your Majesty."

They almost simultaneously called out as they rushed toward Aldrian. However, before they could say more, Aldrian had already opened his lips.

"This is truly a beautiful night for gazing at the stars, is it not, esteemed guests?"

They were stunned, but then Emperor Rozwald quickly spoke again.

"Your Majesty, this is not the time to admire the beauty of the night sky! I fear that after this, we will not even have a moment of peace. We are on the brink of war, Your Majesty. The devils from the Fallen Star Cluster have come to invade this world, and their numbers may reach tens of millions, with hundreds of interstellar vessels."

They thought they would see Aldrian showing his concern. However, they only saw him show little reaction, and instead, he simply turned his head toward them.

"Do you want to watch the stars more closely?" he asked. Then, suddenly, Aldrian disappeared. The leaders were stunned, but quickly sensed that he was already high in the sky. They followed after him, rising until they nearly reached outer space, though still within the upper atmosphere of the Ancient Blue Gate World.

"I already know about their coming," Aldrian said, leaving the leaders astonished. Yet their shock soon shifted to something else.

The moment they arrived, they could see outer space clearly. In the distance, many interstellar vessels had already taken position, encircling their vast world. The sight made the leaders' faces turn grim.

Surrounding the interstellar vessels were countless smaller cruisers that were also approaching. Among them flew many cultivators, and the fact that they could fly in space showed they were at least at the peak emperor stage.

From where they floated, the incoming devils looked like a swarm of wasps. Their numbers were simply too great to be counted by sight.

On one of the vessels, Rulleus noticed the group floating in the star's upper atmosphere. As the projection of their figures became clearer, he finally saw Aldrian with all the leaders gathered behind him clearly.

Rulleus couldn't help but snort in disdain, as he already knew most of them through the information he had gathered before launching this war. He was actually a little surprised to see so many figures from other stars among the group, but he did not care. In fact, he felt fortunate at this moment.

That was because he now had the chance to wipe them all out here, which would greatly weaken the strength of their stars. He did not know why they had congregated in one place, but it didn't matter. The only thing he did not recognize was the figure at the

front. A man with long red hair and captivating blue eyes, who showed little expression as he faced his massive armada.

Rulleus snorted again.

"Let's see if you can remain so composed after this," he muttered before giving his order.

"Launch the opening attacks. Don't let their troops take up position, immediately launch the land invasion once the first strike hits the star. Don't give them time to coordinate their movements, let them fall into chaos."

"Yes, Your Highness," answered all the generals.

Xars, who had also seen the projection, could not help but fix his eyes on the Aldrian's figure at the front. His heart turned cold and he thought to himself,

'Is it him?'

On the other side, where Aldrian and his group floated, the Dragon King, who had observed the devils' forces, smiled arrogantly.

"To think the devils come with so many troops. This is truly a great war. Let them come! We will wipe them out!" he said, full of confidence.

"Don't underestimate them, Dragon King. With this number of interstellar vessels they could have brought millions of troops. I just got a report that the fleet is visible from the other side of the world as well. It seems our world has been surrounded," Sect Master Han said seriously.

The Dragon King only snorted, though his gaze lingered on the approaching vessels. The leaders then took out their communication artifacts and ordered the troops to depart. Moments later, from the continents below, countless interstellar vessels and cultivators could be seen flying up, moving swiftly to take their positions.

However, before all of the Ancient Blue Gate World's forces could fully assemble, the leaders noticed sparkling lights forming at the fronts of many devil vessels. The instant they saw it, they understood what was coming.

"They're about to fire their beam cannons! Raise the defenses!" Emperor Rozwald shouted. Even before he finished speaking, the other leaders had already spread out in every direction, erecting barriers to prevent the cannon fire from reaching the world below.

The beam cannons of the devil vessels were a fusion of darkness and lightning laws, creating a devastating force capable of tearing through nearly any defense. These

beams were the vessels' primary offensive weapons, designed for mass destruction. When pushed to their limit, their firepower could rival the full attack of a peak pseudo immortal stage cultivator!

Aldrian also saw the devils preparing to fire, but instead of moving, he simply closed his eyes. Then, his voice suddenly boomed across the entire world.

"To all troops of the Ancient Blue Gate World, do not leave the atmosphere. I repeat, if you wish to live, do not leave the atmosphere."

His words stunned everyone. Across the world, cultivators froze, realizing this was the voice of Aldrian the Great. Even the leaders were astonished, unable to understand why he would issue such an instruction.

Normally, to defend against the beam cannons, the best choice was to raise their defenses as far from the world as possible. That way, even if the attack was blocked, the residual force would not damage the land below.

Confusion lingered, yet none dared to question. He was the strongest cultivator present, and with unspoken agreement among the leaders, all accepted that he was qualified to command the entire force and decide what was best for them.

Aldrian stood still, as if concentrating on something unseen. While he remained motionless—

**RUMBLE!**

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## **Chapter 773 - 773: Incomprehensible Sight**

[ 1,515 words ]

**RUMBLE!**

Across the vacuum of space, the rumbling sound echoed. Thanks to the heaven and earth energy acting as a medium, the loud noise could be heard even in the space. The devils' vessels had actually begun their attack!

"No, there are still many places not yet covered by the shield barrier!" One of the leaders of the Orian continent's organization shouted as he raised his energy shield to

block a cannon beam. His face twisted in horror as several of the beam cannon attacks shot toward the Orian continent, with no one in position to block them.

The troops from the Orian continent had not yet taken formation, and they could not stop attacks that carried the force of a full strike from a peak pseudo-immortal stage cultivator.

The others could only defend against what was directly before them. Since they were still concentrating in a single area, they could not spread fast enough to cover many parts of the world. Emperor Rozwald, who also saw several beam cannon attacks directed toward his continent, could only grit his teeth. He was not fast enough to move and protect his empire's territory.

However, when all the beings in this space were already expecting the impact of the simultaneous strikes to hit their targets—

DUUM!

Suddenly, the beam strikes collided with something invisible across the world. The space struck by the beams rippled, as if water had been disturbed by a small pebble. All the beings who witnessed this phenomenon were truly astonished. Those who had already raised their shields saw the beams stop against something before ever reaching their barriers.

The beam attacks finally ceased, yet there was none of the destruction they had anticipated. Only silence followed the assault.

The advancing devils, realizing their attacks had been stopped by something invisible, halted in their tracks. They, who had been preparing to land on the Ancient Blue Gate World after the first strike hit its target, now did not know what to do, as the beams had not even reached their mark.

Rulleus, watching this, widened his eyes in shock, and all of his men nearby shared the same disbelief. What had just happened? Why had the beams failed to reach their target?

"That is space laws. The beam attacks are being blocked by a spatial barrier," one of his guards, Vertiz, said in astonishment.

Even after realizing what had stopped their attacks, their surprise did not lessen. The scale of the barrier was truly vast. No—calling it vast was an understatement. It seemed as though the barrier itself covered the entire side of the world, successfully blocking all of their strikes.

"Your Highness, this is Ortiz Group. Our first attack has been blocked by some kind of spatial barrier. We have decided to stop our advance, as the barrier seems to cover a

vast area of the world," reported one of the field commanders through the vessel's communication artifact.

"Your Highness, this is Argun Group. Our first strike failed! There is a barrier blocking our attacks!"

"Your Highness, this is—"

One by one, reports came in. All of them said the same thing, their attacks had been stopped by the spatial barrier.

Hearing the reports, everyone present was truly shocked. All of those groups were spread across various directions of the world. They had encircled the Ancient Blue Gate World from many positions, and with the element of surprise, they were certain that at least several of their attacks should have struck the land below.

However, to think that all of their attacks had been blocked—didn't that mean the spatial barrier was covering the entire world?

The moment this thought surfaced, their shock deepened. How was that possible? How could something as absurd as this barrier exist? Was it some kind of formation? Even Rulleus, a noble from the central region of heaven, had never seen anything like it, at least not on this scale.

There were cases where a small world could be covered by a large protective barrier. Such barriers consumed enormous resources, and formations had to be activated from many places across the world to keep them standing. Those small worlds already possessed large-scale formations that could cover their entire realm in situations like invasions.

However, not all worlds could achieve this, and those that did were far smaller compared to the Ancient Blue Gate World. The Ancient Blue Gate World was the largest star in the central star cluster, and to cover something of this scale, a far more complex formation would be required.

Rulleus had already concluded that no formation could accomplish such a feat. There was no formation capable of covering a star the size of the Ancient Blue Gate World. If such a thing existed, then his own star, which was equal in size to the Ancient Blue Gate World, would have been using it long ago.

So how could the people of this star have done it? How could they have erected a spatial barrier that covered a star of this size?

Another question arose, how could they have had the time to erect the barrier? Activating something of this scale would require considerable time. With a surprise

attack like this, there should have been no way for them to raise such a defense so quickly. So how?!

Aldrian, who still had his eyes closed, finally opened them. He looked toward the devils' troops in the distance and spoke calmly.

"Where is your commander, devils? You had better come out yourself before I drag you out myself."

His voice was calm, yet filled with authority, and it carried across the devil troops near the Ancient Blue Gate World. It was as if the world itself were speaking to them. But Rulleus and his henchmen in the cabin, along with many others on his side of the world, knew this voice came from a single man, and they knew exactly which man.

Rulleus, still reeling from the failure of their earlier attacks, was momentarily stunned. Then his expression darkened, his pride stung by humiliation. He could not endure it and gave another order.

"Keep attacking! I don't believe this barrier will remain strong if we continue without pause. We have brought enough resources for a long battle! There is no need to hold back—attack with everything you have!" he shouted.

The beam cannons recharged once more, and this time every vessel fired. Yet again, the spatial barrier blocked the assault. At that moment, the forces from the Ancient Blue Gate World understood that this had to be someone's doing.

Those nearest to Aldrian turned to him, wondering if it was his work. He remained calm despite the many attacks just now, and he showed no surprise at the sudden appearance of a barrier they themselves had not sensed. He had already said that he knew of the invasion beforehand, so they began to think Aldrian must have made preparations.

But how could he possibly achieve something on the scale of an entire world? Was this a kind of formation under his control? If so, then where was the formation's foundation? To activate something like this would require enormous resources and many people to maintain it. Yet they had never heard of, nor seen, any formation being built across the continents.

Most of them still did not want to believe that this was purely Aldrian's technique because a scale like this was beyond the scope of a mortal. Yes, Aldrian could fight an immortal because of his overwhelming strength. Yes, he might rule over an entire continent, know everything that happened within it, and be able to use his techniques anywhere on it.

But a technique capable of covering an entire world? That was an entirely different matter.

To accomplish something like this purely through technique, someone would have to control the entire world's space laws—in other words, the entire world's space would be under their command. Such strong control and deep comprehension were beyond what they thought was possible for a mortal.

Still, some of them believed that this might indeed be Aldrian's pure technique. One of them was the spirit ancestor floating not far from Aldrian. She looked at the back of his figure. At this moment, her heart trembled, and her old eyes opened, shaking.

She saw a vision, Aldrian was like a world itself. His figure was so vast that calling the entire world his body was no exaggeration. She could also see that Aldrian's figure was not limited to this world, it expanded so vastly that she could not comprehend its full size.

She wanted to prostrate herself before him, but she refrained because of the current situation.

After continuous attacks, none of which succeeded in piercing the barrier, Aldrian finally spoke again.

"I see that I will have to drag you out myself."

Suddenly, the entire devil force surrounding the Ancient Blue Gate World felt a sudden heaviness in their bodies. Moments later, their bodies were actually pulled toward the star's atmosphere! All of the vessels and cruisers were also slowly drawn in, leaving everyone in shock.

The vessels stopped firing their beam cannons as their massive hulls gradually approached the atmosphere of the Ancient Blue Gate World.

The entire force of the Ancient Blue Gate World was astonished once again.

What is it this time?

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

## **Chapter 774 - 774: Aldrian's Move**

[ 1,844 words ]

The devils' troops and all of their vessels started to be pulled toward the Ancient Blue Gate World's atmosphere. They tried to resist and fly in the opposite direction, but the pull only grew stronger. Shock spread among them, and panic began to appear on many of the devils' faces.

"Your Highness, there is some invisible force pulling us toward the atmosphere! This is not good, we can't resist!"

"Your Highness, we are being dragged into the atmosphere by an unknown force! It is as if the gravity of the star has become stronger and is pulling us in!"

Many reports came to Rulleus, but he himself was confused. Instead, he showed an angry face.

"What the fuck is this now? What kind of trick is he pulling this time?!" he shouted as he tried to steady himself, grabbing his seat so he would not slip. His vessel had also begun leaning heavily toward the atmosphere as something pulled them.

"It seems the gravity of the Ancient Blue Gate World is getting stronger and dragging us all, Your Highness," one of the vessel operators reported.

"When we tried to increase power to push the vessel back, the gravity level of the star also increases."

Hearing the report, Rulleus was shocked once more. Was he being told that the man with long red hair could control the gravity of the entire star?! How the fuck?!

"We will activate the anti-gravity formation, Your Highness!" one of the operators said before giving the order to someone else. A moment later, their vessel began to slow down, and it seemed the other interstellar vessels also did the same as they started to stabilize themselves. The smaller cruisers had the same function, so they used it as well.

However, the cultivators outside of the interstellar vessels or cruisers continued to be dragged toward the atmosphere. They tried to maintain their position, but it was futile as the pull grew stronger.

Rulleus, who saw this, gritted his teeth, but then something clicked inside his mind. He saw that the force from the Ancient Blue Gate World itself seemed unaffected. They were not being dragged into the surface of the star. Instead, only the devils' troops were pulled. If the gravity of the star had truly changed, then all beings without exception should have been pulled toward its surface.

'Did all of them use a special artifact that nullified gravity?' he thought. But that would also mean their invasion plan had already been known beforehand.

This situation confused him, because he had made sure their arrival would not alert any beings in this star. From the troops of the Ancient Blue Gate World's movements and the reactions he had seen so far, they showed genuine surprise, which meant his element of surprise had worked.

Then how could he explain what was happening before his eyes?

He decided to push aside that problem for now and instead gave his order.

"All units near the flagship, attack that red-haired man! Use everything you have and concentrate your attacks on him! Even if you are being pulled by the gravity, you must attack that man!"

"For all units outside the flagship's range that can still attack the barrier, keep attacking the barrier! Do not stop!"

After his order, many cultivators who were still being pulled by the gravity began to unleash their elemental techniques. Countless kinds of laws appeared in space, lightning, darkness, blood, the space laws itself, and many others.

There were also summoned beings, red-furred bats unique to the vampire race, massive avian creatures, and even undead, including an army of bones. That bone army was formed from the remains of humans and other races, and among them stood three giant dragons with terrifying cultivation at the peak of the pseudo-immortal stage.

All of them launched their attacks toward Aldrian, yet none could pierce through the barrier. Their strikes caused space itself to collapse and even spatial storms, but the rifts quickly closed as if someone were controlling the space before they could spread further.

Across the surrounding star, attacks continued to rain down on the barrier, but none succeeded. At most, they created faint ripples.

At Aldrian's place, he saw the devils trying to attack him, yet even as their strikes continued to rain in his direction, he maintained a calm expression. Besides shaping his domain into a spatial barrier that protected the entire surface of the star, he had also added gravity laws into it.

He turned the outer surface of his domain into a gravity field far stronger than that of the Ancient Blue Gate World itself, pulling everything near it down toward the atmosphere.

He had not changed the world's own gravity, because if he did, every being around it would be affected, not just the devils. With his method, everything under his domain remained unaffected by the pull.

However, he was slightly stunned when his focus fell on the three bone dragons. For a moment, he froze as fury rose from his heart.

While he was deciding on his next move, he suddenly felt an aura flare not far from him. Turning his head, he saw that it was the Dragon King. Seeing dragon bones used as summoned beings by the devils, the Dragon King's face twisted with fury as his aura flared chaotically around him.

"How dare you...?" he grumbled, his voice heavy and followed by a growl. Slowly, his body transformed into a giant long red dragon. His aura was so suffocating that even all the leaders stayed away from him.

"HOW DARE YOU STAIN MY RACE WITH YOUR DIRTY HANDS!" the Dragon King roared as he began gathering energy from his surroundings to launch a powerful attack. He was ready to unleash the signature technique of his race—the dragon's breath. He opened his mouth, preparing to unleash his most devastating breath, but then Aldrian's voice reached him.

"Dragon King, I know you are angry, and so am I. But please stand back. I am concentrating on my next move, and I am afraid this time you will be caught in the crossfire."

The Dragon King was stunned as he closed his mouth and looked in Aldrian's direction. He saw Aldrian's calm face already turned toward him, and he could not help but feel his heart tremble. He did not know why, but as he looked at Aldrian's expression, he understood that it was better not to protest. Beneath that calm face, it seemed Aldrian held far more rage than him.

The Dragon King simply obeyed and remained silent. After that, Aldrian's voice boomed across the star's upper atmosphere.

"All forces of the Ancient Blue Gate World, retreat one kilometre away from the barrier. If you still wish to keep your lives, you had better do it now. From this moment onward, I will unleash a strike that will not differentiate between friend or foe. I have already given my warning."

Hearing that, the troops floating in the atmosphere were stunned and confused. But seeing the current situation—which they could not fully understand and knowing the voice came from Aldrian, they decided to obey. They pulled back from the barrier to a distance of one kilometre. Without exception, all of them moved further away.

At this moment, only Aldrian remained nearest to the spatial barrier that was still being frantically attacked by the devils. The gravity laws were still active, and countless devils continued to be pulled toward the atmosphere.

Aldrian's eyes rested on the devils who kept striking madly in his direction. His face showed no expression, yet fury burned within his heart. The moment he saw those dragon bones, he could not help but focus on them and use his system to examine their information.

What he discovered was that these dragon bones had once belonged to the dragon tribe that had been his followers in the past.

How dare they use them like that? Even in death, these devils did not spare them, and now they were being used against him. Fury flared inside his heart, and in that moment he resolved to attempt something he was not even certain he could execute.

Still, he would try. His rage only fueled his determination.

He closed his eyes, concentrating as he felt the energy of the entire world. Then, he began to draw upon it, controlling the world's energy and moving it toward the upper atmosphere.

Many beings across the surface of the Ancient Blue Gate World were still looking at the sky, as the war seemed to be happening above. All of the troops appeared to be flying high into the atmosphere, but because of their cultivation and visual limitations, they could not see anything. Still, they kept watching, hoping there was something they could catch from their position.

But then, suddenly, all of them felt a shift in the surrounding atmosphere. For cultivators, the shock was far greater, even horrifying, because they sensed the energy around them slowly dissipating as it moved in a certain direction.

What the hell was happening?

On the grounds of Aldrian's palace, his family was also gazing at the night sky. Those who had received rewards from the tournament also stopped their cultivation or whatever they were doing to look upward.

Since the earlier commotion with many leaders of the outsiders arriving, they had wanted to know what was happening. They had heard about the war, but it seemed to be taking place in the high sky, which made them keep their eyes fixed there.

Zander, too, was looking at the night sky when suddenly he turned his head toward the sword at his waist. It began to tremble, and a few moments later it unsheathed itself from the scabbard, rising into the air.

At that same moment, across the entire world, every sword trembled and slipped free from its sheath before floating upward. One by one, all of them pointed toward the heavens. A second later, a powerful sword will swept across the world, shaking the hearts of all beings.

Zander's chest tightened under the sudden burst of sword will, even fear welling up inside him. The sword will surged like a tidal wave across the lands, yet he recognized it as belonging to his master.

His gaze returned to the night sky, and his eyes widened as countless glimmering lights appeared above. It was as if an endless number of new stars had suddenly come into existence. And it was not only him, people across the world also saw the sudden change in the heavens.

The sight was breathtaking. Countless shimmering lights adorned the sky, making it appear festive, as though countless jewels had been scattered across the heavens. For a moment, they forgot about the swords that had risen into the air or the overwhelming sword will that had swept across the world. Their eyes were captured by the beauty above, mesmerized by the endless lights.

Yet the same could not be said for the troops of the Ancient Blue Gate World in the upper atmosphere, nor for the devil forces beyond it. Both sides were shaken by what they saw, even their hearts gripped by fear.

Because what appeared before their eyes was something that overturned their common sense and would be carved into their memories for the rest of their lives.

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## **Chapter 775 - 775: Swords Apocalypse**

[ 1,499 words ]

Earlier, not long after Aldrian closed his eyes, the energy in the upper atmosphere suddenly became much denser. All the cultivators present could sense it, which left them astonished.

At that moment, while controlling the energy of the entire world, Aldrian was also thinking about the technique he was about to unleash. Actually, this technique was something he had come up with long ago, as he had already created the concept. He had tried a simpler version of it before, but never on the scale that existed in his mind. That was because he never had a chance to use it in practice.

However, at this moment, the chance had finally arrived, and the scale was even greater than what he had imagined.

His next technique itself was based on his comprehension as a swordsman. One of the highest attainments for a sword cultivator was reaching the state where they could use anything as a sword. From something that could be touched and sensed to something abstract, even to things that only appeared inside one's mind.

The sword is in everything, and everything is the sword. This was the state where a cultivator comprehended the deeper meaning of the dao of the sword.

The sword heart.

The heart would become as sharp and as strong as the sword, and their faith in the sword would never waver. All things, whether inside or outside of beings, were believed to be the sword. Everything was a sword, and those who believed that all things were swords within their heart would reach the attainment of the sword heart.

To achieve this state, a cultivator must not harbor even the slightest doubt about the dao of the sword, and they must possess a strong will.

To do that, the first step was to believe in oneself, which meant believing in one's sword intent and sword will. They had to believe that their comprehension all this time was solid enough to reach the state of the sword heart. They had to believe that their comprehension was the truth, unshakable and could truly reach that level.

For Aldrian, he had no doubt about his comprehension of sword intent and sword will. He did not doubt his dao of the sword and was even extremely confident in it.

'Sword is everything, and everything is sword. Body and mind, reality and illusion, tangible and intangible.'

Aldrian thought to himself as he entered the state of enlightenment. Without him realizing it, a change occurred within his body. Suddenly, his body felt as if it had become a sharp and sturdy sword, while his mind grew sharper and firmer.

Sword Maiden, who was also in the upper atmosphere not far from Aldrian, looked in his direction with trembling eyes. From her gaze, she could see that Aldrian was undergoing a change. His sword will had transformed into something far greater. It made her heart shudder as she thought of the attainment beyond sword will.

What she now saw in Aldrian was something she had never seen, not even in her master. That was why her mind turned toward the level of attainment far higher than sword will—the sword heart.

From the records she had read, across the central star cluster's billion years of history, there were only more than ten thousands people who had comprehended the sword heart before their ascension to immortality. All of them had been great swordmasters of their era, truly undefeatable sword cultivators.

Sword Maiden had never seen nor sensed what someone who possessed the sword heart would be like, but at this moment she thought she might finally be witnessing it. Aldrian's heart was as firm as his strong sword. The sword at her waist suddenly began trembling, as if resonating with Aldrian's newfound comprehension.

In fact, all the swords within Aldrian's area were trembling in the same manner. This caused some of the devils who were still attacking with their swords to feel confused and even panic as their weapons suddenly shook violently, disrupting their techniques.

Sword Maiden, still staring at her trembling sword, turned to Aldrian once more. She continued to observe him despite the devils' attacks that kept trying to reach him, although they were blocked by the spatial barrier.

At this moment, Aldrian had finally reached the attainment that every sword cultivator hoped to achieve in their lifetime. He did not waste any time and immediately applied his newfound comprehension and power to the creation of his technique.

Then, all across the world, every cultivator who wielded a sword felt their weapon tremble violently before it floated into the air and pointed itself toward the sky, more precisely, toward Aldrian's direction. A moment later, a surge of powerful sword will swept across the entire world.

It spread like a tidal wave, startling everyone on the Ancient Blue Gate World.

The energy around Aldrian then reacted to his comprehension. He stretched his hand toward the direction of the devil troops, and a few seconds later the energy suddenly began to congregate, taking form. Slowly, it shaped itself into a golden sword.

The number of swords surrounding him kept increasing—tens, hundreds, thousands, millions, billions. They continued to multiply until the entire upper atmosphere was covered with swords. All of them were forged from the natural energy of heaven and earth, turning the very energy itself into swords.

The sword is energy, and energy is the sword. The result was swords created entirely from natural energy.

'The energy comes from the entire world, and I will use it as my sword. The world itself is my sword, and I will wield it as it is. If the entire world is the sword for me, then my sword will can also be used upon the world.'

At this moment, every being in the upper atmosphere and beyond was staring in that direction with horror etched upon their faces. The attacks aimed at Aldrian had already ceased, as all the devils who had been charging at him were now frozen in fear, even shifting into despair.

The sight of countless golden swords made of energy, filling the entire upper atmosphere and all pointed toward the devil troops, was breathtaking. Not only were there too many swords to count with the naked eye, but the power contained in each one was overwhelming. Every sword radiated tremendous strength, releasing an aura comparable to a peak pseudo-immortal stage cultivator.

Even now, Rulleus could no longer maintain his arrogant or angry expression; there was only horror on his face. Even from inside his vessel, he could sense the immense power contained in each of those swords. His mind froze, and he forgot everything else in that moment.

All of the devil troops were equally paralyzed, their eyes fixed on the countless swords radiating the power of peak pseudo-immortal cultivators, all pointed directly at them. A single sword would be enough to kill many of them, then what could they do against this many? They were utterly doomed.

With the gravity still pulling on the devils, all of their bodies kept drifting closer to the sea of swords. Finally, some of them tried to escape, abandoning any thought of invading the world and attempting to flee in the opposite direction. But the gravity would not allow it. Even those at the pseudo-immortal stage were dragged, let alone the ones below it.

Some began using their escape talismans, but in outer space, they could not get far. Even if they managed to move far from the Ancient Blue Gate World, they would still be easily detected due to the lack of obstacles in space.

As for the troops from the Ancient Blue Gate World, even they could not hide their expressions of fear. They finally understood why Aldrian the Great had instructed them to keep a distance of a kilometre from the barrier. All of them remained behind the line of swords, as the sea of swords completely filled the space between them and the barrier.

Each sword, possessing the power of a peak pseudo-immortal cultivator, was enough to kill all of them thousands of times over, and in front of them were countless swords. Even knowing that this was Aldrian the Great's creation, it was still utterly ridiculous.

How could a mortal accomplish something like this?

At this moment, all who witnessed the scene truly understood why Aldrian bore the title of "the Great." For those who had already seen him battle Tarius, their image of Aldrian grew even larger, and his figure as the strongest cultivator was etched even deeper into their hearts.

Aldrian, at this moment, felt a weight in his mind and soul. He slightly gritted his teeth, feeling pain in both, as he bore the burden of creating a world scale technique. Still, he was glad that he had succeeded, the result was exactly what he had hoped for.

He did not wait any longer and finally unleashed his technique.

The rain of swords that will obliterate everything, the rain that will end all things.

Swords Apocalypse.

He then clenched the palm of his hand which was already stretched toward the devils.

"Die."

What followed would truly be what the devils could only describe as an apocalypse.

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## **Chapter 776 - 776: The Apocalypse Swept the Devils**

[ 1,548 words ]

The moment Aldrian unleashed Swords Apocalypse, the swords floating in the upper atmosphere instantly flew towards the devil troops. The swords moved only in straight lines, but with the power of a peak pseudo-immortal stage, their speed was truly terrifying. There was no time for the devils to escape the swords' trajectory.

The only ones who could evade were those who had comprehended space laws, as they could use their space laws based movement techniques much earlier, before Aldrian released Swords Apocalypse.

For those who could not evade, their bodies were instantly pierced by the swords and even exploded, unable to contain the force of the attacks. All of them were obliterated instantly, without exception. Even the devils at pseudo-immortal stage could not withstand the barrage of swords attacking them.

Every barrier technique and defensive artifact the devils used was utterly useless against the overwhelming force of Swords Apocalypse.

Clang! Clang! Tring! Trang!

"No!"

"Escape! Escape—Agh!"

"Arghh!"

The sounds of destroyed armor and failed defensive techniques, accompanied by the devils' screams of horror, filled the space. All of them desperately tried to escape or defend themselves, but it was all meaningless.

Many of them were vampires, famous for their regenerative abilities and difficulty to kill. However, in the face of the barrage of swords that obliterated everything, their regeneration was useless, the strikes were simply too numerous and too powerful.

The devils' summons were also destroyed by the attack. The dragon bones, now without their summoners because they had been killed by Swords Apocalypse, crumbled, and even their bones were shattered.

Aldrian, witnessing this, could only think for them to rest in peace while he continued controlling Swords Apocalypse.

The swords of Apocalypse also reached the cruisers and interstellar vessels. The cruisers, with their weaker defenses, were instantly pierced through the hull by countless swords. Their hulls were pierced as easily as a hot knife through butter, and the devils aboard could only watch as their cruisers were destroyed and they were killed instantly.

Most of those inside the cruisers were devils with cultivation below the emperor stage. Their bodies were instantly destroyed the moment the swords pierced them, their flesh exploding into pieces of red meat.

The cruisers looked like cheese riddled with many holes, burning and exploding as something inside them was triggered.

The interstellar vessels, made of much sturdier materials and equipped with stronger defenses, had already erected their barriers to shield themselves from the barrage of swords.

However, the end result was the same. With countless swords attacking the barriers, the defenses were almost instantly overwhelmed and shattered. The swords pierced the hulls, and even the strong materials could not stop them. Inside the vessels, the swords wreaked havoc, destroying compartments.

Because of the enormous size of the interstellar vessels, they did not fall immediately. The destruction did not instantly disable or destroy them entirely, but damage kept piling up, gradually disabling many vessels.

The beam cannon of the vessels was the first to be destroyed, as it was located at the front of the vessel. The cannon exploded as its destruction triggered the blast, followed by the inner sections. After the barrage of swords, some compartments of the vessels

were even severed from the main hull. The number of severed compartments kept increasing.

Inside Rulleus's vessel, everything was already shaking heavily as the swords' barrage struck again and again.

"Your Highness, we are losing control of the vessel! We are going down, we are going down!" one of the vessel operators shouted in panic as the vessel lost most of its functions and was slowly pulled toward the Ancient Blue Gate World's atmosphere.

"Your Highness, the barrage of sword attacks is too powerful, we are retreating—Uwagh! Bzzt."

"Your Highness! We are from—Agh! Bzzt."

"Fall back! Fall back, don't wait any longer! Those swords are too powerful! Go back quickly, faster—Agh!"

Many reports filled with panic also came from other groups on the other side of the world. Their voices, full of horror, could be heard by everyone, adding to the tense and chaotic situation.

However, Rulleus, the one who should have been their leader, at this moment wore a blank expression. His face showed that he had lost all sense of what to do. Inside his mind, he was already thinking that this invasion was a failure, a huge failure without him reaping anything. His troops had been obliterated without resistance.

He was already defeated even before he touched the Ancient Blue Gate World's atmosphere. The combined strength of his proud troops, together with the many millions more from the Fallen Star Cluster, still could not enter the Ancient Blue Gate World. No—even worse, they had not killed a single being of that world.

Amidst the chaos, his gaze lingered on the figure with long red hair, now much closer as his vessel was being pulled into the atmosphere. That handsome face was full of focus, his stance firm, and without the slightest hesitation. From the beginning, Rulleus had never seen a single negative emotion from that man, only calm and relaxed composure before he unleashed this hell.

He then remembered Xarz's words about the man who had once faced their god and forced their god to retreat. Was this the man Xarz spoke of? Was it truly him? How could someone like this exist? Everything he had done was beyond comprehension, beyond the scope of mortals. There was no way he could achieve such a feat unless he could control the entire world by himself, something no mortal could do.

"Your Highness!"

Suddenly, his thoughts were interrupted by one of his guardians. Vertiz shouted as Rulleus turned his head toward him, meeting the man's serious gaze.

"Your Highness, whatever happens, you have to escape. You cannot die here. There will be chaos in the central region of heaven if you die now. We can escape through the emergency capsule, and you can flee to the nearest star with it. We could then hide for a moment until our support arrives," Vertiz said.

Rulleus's face finally regained some clarity. He took a deep breath and nodded.

"Alright."

They then rushed to the door to move toward the emergency capsule located at the back of the vessel. However, before they could reach the door—

"Uwagh!" Suddenly, Vertiz's chest was pierced by a sword from behind. With swift movement, the sword retracted, then immediately slashed toward another of Rulleus's guardians. The event happened so quickly and abruptly that Rulleus could not comprehend what had happened. His side was stained with Vertiz's blood as shock froze his face.

He could only stare in horror as suddenly Xarz began slaughtering everyone in the cabin. Only then did he realize that Xarz had already gone mad, killing anyone in sight without hesitation. With his surprise attack and cultivation at the peak pseudo-immortal stage, he easily cut down everyone in the cabin quickly and without difficulty.

Rulleus, knowing he had to escape, prepared to use his escape technique. But as if anticipating his intent, Xarz activated his domain, locking the space under his control. In that instant, Rulleus could no longer flee, and Xarz's hand shot out, seizing him by the throat.

"Uoogh." Rulleus groaned as his body was lifted into the air.

Struggling to breathe, he forced out words between choked gasps.

"What... what are you doing?"

Xarz let out a slow sigh.

"Nothing, your highness. I'm just trying to survive. I warned you of the danger here, but you ignored me. If I don't act, I'll be the one who dies. You think you can run away and leave me behind? No... I won't let that happen. You are my ticket to survive."

The moment Rulleus heard his answer, he realized what Xarz intended to do. His eyes burned with fury.

"You traitor! How dare you use me as a bargaining chip! My father will take your head for this!"

Xarz drew in another deep breath and gave a small nod.

"Well, I don't doubt His Majesty will do that, but could he really face that monster?"

The moment that question left Xarz's lips, even Rulleus could not answer with certainty. What they had witnessed was already beyond comprehension. That monster's power was so terrifying that even he did not know if his father could handle it. He had never seen his father unleash his full strength, but could it truly compare to the scale of destruction that monster had shown?

"Enough with our chit-chat, Your Highness. You just need to go to sleep," Xarz said as he unleashed his technique to make Rulleus fall unconscious.

Rulleus could only grit his teeth, his eyes burning with fury as he glared at Xarz.

"You will pay for this," he spat with what strength he had left.

Xarz's eyes turned red, and a moment later Rulleus sank into his illusion before finally falling unconscious. With only a pseudo-immortal establishment, Rulleus was no match for Xarz, no matter his higher status.

Xarz let out a deep breath once again and looked at the scene outside. The vessel was already badly damaged, and the sword barrage still had not stopped. The vessel shook violently under the sword barrage, and it was only a matter of time before it crashed down into the atmosphere of the Ancient Blue Gate World.

He needed to act before that happened, and without hesitation, he shouted,

"I'm Xarz, leader of the devils from the Red Mist Star—I surrender! I also have someone from the central region of heaven in my hand!"

His voice rang out clearly, reaching Aldrian where he floated.

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

## **Chapter 777 - 777: Not My Interest**

[ 1,728 words ]

Aldrian, who heard Xarz, turned his head toward one of the vessels in his sight. He still kept Swords Apocalypse activated, enduring the pain in his soul and brain. Millions of devils had already perished, tens of thousands of cruisers had been destroyed, and more than two hundred interstellar vessels were almost disintegrated.

"Xarz of the Red Mist Star? As expected, these devils are truly from the Fallen Star Cluster," Emperor Rozwald, who was not far from Aldrian, said before moving closer to him.

"Your Majesty, he is the true leader of the devils from the Fallen Star Cluster. He leads every devil's movement from that place. However, if someone from the central region of Heaven actually came with him, then that means someone with higher status than him is ordering him," he explained.

The others also began to move closer to Aldrian, wanting to hear what he intended to do with that bastard. As they drew near, Xarz's voice resounded again.

"I proclaim surrender as the leader of the devils from the Red Mist Star. I have someone from the central region of Heaven in my hand as tribute, and I want to negotiate."

Aldrian finally stopped his technique, whether the spatial barrier, gravity laws, or Swords Apocalypse. A moment later, all the swords lost their momentum and slowly disappeared into particles of light. They returned to their original form as energy and went back to the Ancient Blue Gate World.

At this moment, all beings across the world could sense the energy returning, which left them stunned. They thought that whatever had happened in the upper atmosphere was what caused the energy to suddenly vanish and then reappear.

All of the swords floating across the world also finally fell, and the tense atmosphere faded away. Everyone on the surface of the Ancient Blue Gate World finally could breathe in relief as they wondered what had happened above.

After Aldrian stopped his attack, the pain in his soul and brain lessened greatly. Swords Apocalypse on the scale just now seemed slightly too much for his current level. However, he felt satisfied with the result and looked at the destruction caused by Swords Apocalypse.

Only silence followed after the apocalypse. The wrecks of cruisers and interstellar vessels were scattered around the Ancient Blue Gate World, creating space debris. There were also many remnants of devils' bodies here and there, forming a gruesome scene.

All of them were slowly pulled toward the Ancient Blue Gate World's atmosphere by the star's gravity. For the vessels, they had already lost their floating or flying functions due to heavy damage, with even large parts of their hulls destroyed.

"Could Your Majesty bring that man here? I would like to meet this devil," Aldrian finally said to Emperor Rozwald before turning to the others.

"Also, my apologies to all of the esteemed figures here, but I must ask for your help in checking for or hunting down any escaping devils."

After Aldrian said that, the others instantly showed their respect by cupping their hands.

"Of course, Your Majesty Aldrian. You already did the most work, and I feel ashamed for only standing still and watching Your Majesty do everything. You do not have to worry, just stay here while we do the rest," Sect Master Han said.

"Your Majesty Aldrian does not need to take care of the aftermath, as we can handle it. Your Majesty must be tired after releasing that technique, so please stay here and recuperate," the Dragon King said confidently.

The other leaders echoed the same sentiment before spreading out to the areas where the space debris was scattered.

"To the forces of the Ancient Blue Gate World, you may now take care of the aftermath and hunt down any surviving devils. I do not care about the loot. If you find treasures or anything you wish to take, you do not need to report it to me, but I hope you will not cause trouble or conflict because of it." Aldrian's voice echoed across the upper heaven.

The troops across the world's upper atmosphere, who were still observing the aftermath of Swords Apocalypse, began without hesitation to do as Aldrian said. After seeing what he had done just now, their hearts were still reeling in chaos. There was reverence, admiration, and even fear among them, which made them obey Aldrian's words as if they were obeying their own leaders.

Earlier some of the devils already escaped using talismans or techniques, and those became the main targets. As for the other survivors, there were none. The sword barrage had been far too devastating, leaving the low-level devil cultivators no chance of survival.

Aldrian, who was observing the others sweeping through the destruction, also began to recuperate himself. Since earlier, blood had nearly spilled from his nostrils, but he forced it back. Although the pain had lessened greatly, he still felt throbbing pain in his soul, which he then treated with his golden energy. From the looks of it, his soul was injured, something that would already cause panic for other cultivators.

The injured soul was difficult to heal because only rare pills or elixirs could restore it. A soul injury could affect future cultivation, which was why many cultivators treated anything related to it with utmost care. They would never risk using a technique that could damage the soul, just like Aldrian had forced himself to unleash the world-scale Swords Apocalypse.

However, Aldrian did not think too much about it, for he had his golden energy that had never failed him. It could heal anything, and he was truly glad he possessed it.

After waiting for a while, he finally saw some figures returning in his direction. Emperor Rozwald and his son were escorting what appeared to be Xarz and an unconscious figure carried on his back. He also noticed the Dragon King and Phoenix Queen escorting many figures toward the interstellar vessel owned by the Martal Empire, which had come as support.

Those figures, however, were not devils. They seemed to be from various races, and most of them were not strong in cultivation, which made Aldrian frown. Why were those people inside the devils' vessel? Were they prisoners or something else?

After waiting for a few moments, Emperor Rozwald arrived in front of him with Xarz beside him.

"Your Majesty, this is Xarz. As for the figure behind him, I have to say—we caught a really big fish here," Emperor Rozwald said.

Aldrian looked at Xarz calmly before turning his gaze to the unconscious Rulleus. Although there was no vampire race in the Ancient Blue Gate World, he had already heard of this race from discussions with some leaders.

"Also, we found many prisoners inside some of the interstellar vessels. They were inhabitants of one of the small worlds near the Central Star Cluster. Their world was invaded by the devil forces while they were on their journey here," Emperor Rozwald said, his gaze turning cold as he looked at Xarz.

Xarz shuddered but quickly tried to clarify himself.

"That wasn't me who—"

"You shut up unless His Majesty Aldrian asks for your opinion!" Prince Ronwell shouted from beside him, forcing Xarz to stop his words. He carefully looked at Aldrian. He was finally standing in front of the man who had become the hot topic all this time. Only after facing him directly did he sense Aldrian's aura—at the low pseudo-immortal establishment stage.

This caused his heart to shudder. This man had accomplished all of that while still only at that stage. Although he had already seen what Aldrian was capable of, he was still reeling in disbelief that a mortal could do such things, even more so when he was only a pseudo-immortal establishment cultivator.

He had prepared himself to face the worst if he ever met Aldrian but he had never expected something as great as the technique he had just witnessed. The story of this man fighting their god now more and more believable.

Just a few hours ago, he still held a little doubt about that story. But now, after experiencing Aldrian's ability firsthand, he believed that Aldrian might truly possess the power to fight toe to toe with their god at that time.

After a few moments of silence, Aldrian finally opened his lips.

"You said you want to negotiate, huh? What do you want to negotiate for?"

Knowing that his chance to speak had come, Xarz answered Aldrian's question.

"My life. I want Your Excellency to spare me, and in return I will give Your Excellency information. I will also hand over the man behind me. His status alone is enough for Your Excellency to consider my terms, and it could bring Your Excellency extreme benefit."

"The man behind me is the son of the Vampire King of the First Heaven, Rulleus van Reinfer. He comes from the central region of Heaven and is the successor of the Vampire King himself. In other words, he is the heir to the leader of the devils on one side of the First Heaven."

Aldrian still did not know the true status of the Vampire King, but hearing that he was the leader of someone like Xarz meant that the Vampire King held higher authority than many devils.

What interested him even more was the mention of the central region of Heaven. That was why he had not immediately killed these two earlier and had instead ordered Emperor Rozwald to bring them here. Still, Aldrian could not help but smile after hearing Xarz's answer.

"You are betraying your higher-ups for your own survival? Truly a decisive person."

"Well, if I were not decisive, I would not have survived this long as a devil cultivator. I am simply doing what is best for my own interests. That is why this war is not my concern, as it was not my interest. It was the unilateral and arrogant decision of Rulleus, Your Excellency. So I hope you understand," Xarz replied.

"Is that so? Then tell me, why should I keep you alive when I could just look into your memories and be done with you? Would I not still gain the benefit while keeping the man behind you alive?" Aldrian said calmly.

Xarz's heart turned cold, but he forced himself to remain steady as he answered.

"I know Your Majesty could do that, and I cannot refute it at all. I know I cannot go against you. But, Your Excellency, I guarantee you will find me far more useful alive than if you simply looked into my memories and killed me."

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

## Chapter 778 - 778: Shooting Stars

[ 1,743 words ]

There is only silence after Xarz's words, a silence that, for him, seems like a long time. He knows that every second ticking by is a wait for the judgment from the man in front of him. This is actually a gamble he has taken himself, choosing to surrender to Aldrian rather than attempting to escape on his own.

There are a few reasons why he did not choose to escape after betraying Rulleus. The first is that he is not even confident he could escape from Aldrian. If he chose to flee, then Aldrian would see him in an even more negative way and would undoubtedly kill him in the end.

It is better to show his 'sincerity' through surrender, which holds a higher probability of survival.

The second reason is that once news of the failed invasion reaches the central region of Heaven, he is quite sure the Vampire King will send many more forces to the Fallen Star Cluster. Moreover, with the unknown fate of his successor, he will definitely ask anyone responsible about Rulleus in the Fallen Star Cluster.

If he went back to the Red Mist Star, there would be no doubt he would be dead, because he would be returning after leaving Rulleus behind. The Vampire King would execute him for being safe while his son was left behind.

The third reason is that even if he could escape from the Vampire King or Aldrian, he could not return to the Fallen Star Cluster and would be forced to live as a fugitive. He could only survive in a secluded place where he could live in peace.

But the problem is that such a place would be difficult to find with his identity as a devil cultivator. He would still be discovered in the future by anyone able to sense his devil aura.

Without an interstellar vessel or resources to support him, he could not make a long journey.

If he cannot escape far, then he cannot escape the Vampire King or Aldrian, which ultimately brings him back to the first reason.

He decided to gamble his fate here in front of Aldrian after much thought. And the result of his gamble was—

Grab!

Suddenly Aldrian grabbed his head, leaving him stunned. Before he could even ask anything, he felt a violent jolt in his soul as Aldrian struck him with his lightning laws. His eyes rolled back, his body convulsing violently for more than ten seconds. In that time, Xarz felt unbearable pain, and it seemed like an eternity had passed before darkness finally engulfed his sight.

He lost consciousness with his soul injured after Aldrian continued electrocuting it directly for more than ten seconds. His and Rulleus's bodies then suddenly disappeared, leaving Emperor Rozwald and Prince Ronwell stunned.

"I already secured them. They will have much useful information, so I will keep them alive," Aldrian said.

Emperor Rozwald nodded.

"I see. I think this is also a good decision, Your Majesty. That bastard surely holds much information regarding the Fallen Star Cluster and even the central region of Heaven. There are still many mysteries shrouding the central region of Heaven and the Fallen Star Cluster since the devils took over those territories," he said.

Aldrian nodded.

"Anyway, I will go back first. Emperor Rozwald and Prince Ronwell, you may continue what you need to do."

"Ah, yes, Your Majesty. Please take a rest, and on behalf of all beings of the world, I truly thank Your Majesty for solving the threat that could have brought destruction to the Ancient Blue Gate World," Emperor Rozwald said as he bowed. Prince Ronwell also did the same, and those nearby, hearing Emperor Rozwald's words, also bowed.

Those farther away did not know why so many were bowing, but the moment they saw the bows directed toward Aldrian, they followed as well. Aldrian truly deserved such respect after saving their world once again. The devils' surprise attack had deeply shocked them, for they had been utterly unprepared.

If this were a situation without Aldrian the Great, there would already have been millions of victims in the first wave of attacks alone. Those beam cannons from the interstellar vessels could have destroyed many cities and towns across the continent and turned entire regions into seas of fire.

Thanks to whatever Aldrian the Great had done earlier, the beam attacks were blocked across the world.

Aldrian, seeing many people bow toward him, waved his hand.

"No problem. This is the world I also live in, after all. There is no way I will let those devils bring chaos here," he said before descending to the Barisan continent below, intent on returning to his palace.

The others straightened their bodies and watched Aldrian's figure descend with respect, then turned back to deal with the aftermath of Aldrian's slaughter.

A few moments later, Aldrian's voice echoed across the world.

"To the people of the Ancient Blue Gate World, I know that you are confused about what has happened, but you will know soon. You do not need to worry, because the problem has been solved. Just continue what you are doing."

The populace across the world who heard his voice sighed in relief. They did not really understand the situation because of the sudden mobilization, and had remained tense since earlier. They did not know who they were up against or where the battle had taken place. They could only look at the sky and assume the war was being fought in outer space, since so many troops had flown high above, even using their interstellar vessels.

Those troops were in a place beyond their reach, where they could not follow to observe what was truly going on.

They decided to return to their activities and simply wait for the news about what had really happened today.

Aldrian continued descending until he finally arrived above the sky of his palace. He saw his family and every inhabitant of the palace looking in his direction. The moment they saw him descend, their eyes glimmered and smiles of relief spread across their faces.

His calm expression finally softened into a warm smile. A few moments later, he landed on his floating land. Sylphia and Baek Jimin ran toward him and instantly embraced him. Aldrian's strong body stood firm even when struck by the force of the two women's bodies as they hugged him tightly. He could only smile warmly as he stroked both of their hair.

Their embrace lasted only a few seconds before they released him. His parents then finally approached.

"Aldrian, what really happened just now? Was there truly a war with the devils from other stars? I was so worried when I suddenly could not sense the energy surrounding us anymore and thought something might have happened to you," Irene said worriedly.

She and Aldrey had only been told by Sylphia about the devils' invasion earlier, when they were confused after hearing the commotion from the leaders of other powers who had gathered in the palace.

Aldrian gave her a reassuring smile.

"It's okay, Mother. You don't have to worry about that. Just like I said, the problem is solved, and there is nothing to be concerned about. As for the disappearance of the energy for a moment earlier, my apologies—that was my doing. Well, I needed it to clean up trash."

To create the world-scale Swords Apocalypse, with the power of the peak pseudo immortal stage imbued in each sword, he had nearly gathered the entire world's energy. It could be said that more than ninety percent of the energy across the world had congregated in the upper atmosphere at that moment and condensed into countless swords.

It was no wonder countless people across the world panicked when the energy surrounding them suddenly disappeared. The heaven and earth energy was crucial for cultivators, and if it were to vanish, they would no longer be able to progress in their cultivation.

Aldrey and Irene were confused by Aldrian's answer, but they did not press him for now. He would likely tell them the details later anyway.

Aldrian then looked at Zander and the other awardees in the distance, who were gazing at him in wonder. He smiled at them.

"My apologies to all of you for the commotion just now, but you may return to your activities. Take advantage of this place as much as possible to aid your cultivation journey," he said.

Kang Yongjin and the others instantly bowed to him.

"Yes, Your Majesty!" they shouted in unison before dispersing to their own rooms. However, Zander continued to look at his master, admiration shining clearly in his eyes. His gaze glimmered, but in the end, he also bowed in reverence.

Suddenly, a voice transmission came to him.

'You will also reach that stage someday. Keep up your hard work.'

Zander was stunned, but he responded at once.

'I will, Master.'

He then returned to his training room, his spirit reignited.

Aldrian smiled at them before leading his family to the other side of the palace garden, where he could explain in detail what had happened earlier. They conversed in a relaxed manner beneath the beautiful night sky filled with stars, when suddenly countless shooting stars streaked across the sky.

Their eyes reflected the dazzling sight, and they were mesmerized, falling silent as they stopped their conversation to simply enjoy the scene above.

Aldrian also smiled as he gazed at the night sky ablaze with falling lights. He knew that these shooting stars were in fact the remnants of the devil troops—debris from their cruisers and interstellar vessels burning in the world's atmosphere.

All of it had finally reached the world's atmosphere, and it seemed that the troops from the Ancient Blue Gate World had also let much of the wreckage to be consumed by the atmosphere in order to cleanse the space surrounding the world. Any parts that were too large were cut into smaller pieces before being released to fall and burn.

With the countless remnants of the devil forces, it was no wonder the night was filled with so many shooting stars, a sight both breathtaking and serene.

This breathtaking scenery unfolded across the entire world, visible to all. Everywhere, people lifted their heads toward the sky, and even in regions where it was still daytime, trails of countless falling lights could still be seen cutting across the heavens.

From this day forward, the people would remember it as the Day of Shooting Stars—the day their world was once again protected from a great threat by the figure from Barisan Continent.

The name Aldrian the Great would spread even farther, not only throughout the Ancient Blue Gate World but across the entire central star cluster.

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

## **Chapter 779 - 779: Shocking the World Again**

[ 1,633 words ]

On the next day, the event that had happened last night in some regions and during the daytime in others was already known to the populace. They were truly shocked that something of that scale had occurred.

The devils from the Fallen Star Cluster had come to invade, and all the powers of the world did not realize it until the devils had already arrived near the Ancient Blue Gate World. Those powers frantically sent their troops to defend the world, but they knew they were already too late.

Then came the most shocking part. There were no casualties on the Ancient Blue Gate World's side. Thanks to Aldrian the Great, the danger was contained. Many shared the story about how Aldrian had used a kind of technique, to protect the world from the devils' attacks.

If not for him, there would already have been many casualties on the Ancient Blue Gate World's side. Many beam cannon attacks would have destroyed many regions and taken innumerable lives. The attacks, comparable to the strike of a peak pseudo-immortal stage cultivator, were enough to annihilate everything. The populace would not have been ready to withstand such destruction.

Then the story continued with Aldrian the Great releasing his technique, which created countless swords, each carrying the power of a peak pseudo-immortal stage cultivator! The first story already sounded unbelievable, yet this one seemed even more absurd.

To create countless swords from pure energy, with each one holding the power of the strongest cultivator under the first heaven, such a thing was difficult to believe. Yet it was a fact, and many had witnessed it.

Aldrian the Great had, basically, stopped the great war alone and slain most of the tens of millions of devils by himself. The other powers could only watch as Aldrian the Great did most of the work, leaving them only to clean up what remained.

It was another of those unbelievable feat, just like when Aldrian the Great had once fought an immortal in the past. But this time, the number of witnesses was far greater, for the entire world had been under siege by the devils before they were annihilated by Aldrian's sword technique.

Just as when he had battled the immortal summoned by the devils, the majority of the populace had not seen the clash directly. However, despite that, they could still sense the overwhelming effect of Aldrian the Great's technique with their own bodies.

The countless glimmering golden swords created a scene as if new stars had appeared across the sky, and the sudden disappearance of energy around the world was undoubtedly the effect of Aldrian the Great unleashing his technique. To create

something like that, he must have required an immense amount of energy, and it seemed he was able to draw upon the power of the entire world itself—which was equally absurd.

Absurd stories, absurd abilities, absurd strength—everything about him felt like a fairy tale, yet it was a true story. Everything concerning Aldrian the Great was far beyond their comprehension. This only caused his figure to become even more deeply engraved in their hearts as the greatest cultivator of all time, a cultivator who had never appeared in the past and might never appear again in the future.

Because of yesterday's event, the name of Aldrian the Great once again became the hottest topic spoken of everywhere. The legend of Aldrian the Great also spread across other stars once again, but this time far more widely and with greater weight than before.

Thanks to the presence of many leaders and guests from beyond the stars during the invasion, they too had witnessed Aldrian in action directly. This was different from merely hearing stories of the past. They had personally seen with their own eyes the overwhelming power of the living legend.

Many were truly amazed and admired him even more, and because of that, since a few hours ago, more and more people from other stars had begun their journey to the Barisan Continent to see the legend with their own eyes.

However, not all who heard of Aldrian's great feat were enthusiastic. Some were worried, even afraid. One such example was the patriarch of the Barevisk family. At this moment, he looked out the window of his workroom with a worried gaze. He then walked to his seat and tried to calm his mind, but he could not.

Soon after, he stood up again and looked outside once more, his demeanor restless. On his table lay a report from the Ancient Blue Gate World detailing the events of yesterday. The devils who had come to invade had instead met their doom at the hands of Aldrian the Great.

After reading the details, he could only let the report fall blankly onto the table. Everything he had once imagined had crumbled, replaced instead with worry and even anxiety about his own future.

He had thought that the devils' surprise attack could throw the Ancient Blue Gate World into chaos for at least a few weeks, even with an existence like Aldrian the Great present. While that world fell into disorder, the assassins in the Barisan Continent would have a chance to eliminate Aldrian the Great.

With Aldrian eliminated and the devils exhausting the strength of the Ancient Blue Gate World, the Barevisk family and the Valroy family could step in and "rescue" the situation. That was the most desired result. But if Aldrian survived and the devils were defeated, it

was still acceptable, since at the very least the forces of the Ancient Blue Gate World would have been greatly weakened.

The devils were not finished yet, and more from the central region of heaven would likely come—even a much stronger force than the one Rulleus had brought. When that time came, he intended to simply sit back and not involve himself directly, for he and the Valroy family already had their own plans for the future.

Every possible ending had seemed favorable to him, so he had not been too worried about the great war itself.

But all of that was crushed with the devils' defeat in such an unexpected manner. The great war he had imagined would engulf the Ancient Blue Gate World never came to be. No—even calling it a war was ridiculous. What happened yesterday was nothing more than a one-sided slaughter.

The millions of devil troops did not last even an hour after arriving near the Ancient Blue Gate World, and they had not even touched the star's atmosphere before being wiped out.

It sounded like the wild imagination of children, yet that was the reality that had unfolded.

Now, this was the thing that worried him most. He had never expected the devil troops to be annihilated so easily by Aldrian the Great, and now he feared this event would somehow bring the problem back to himself and the Barevisk family. After all, he had received advance news of the devils' invasion from someone but had chosen not to inform the other forces.

By doing so, he had indirectly aided the devils. In the eyes of the other forces, and especially in the eyes of Aldrian the Great, that placed him on the same side as the invaders. From what he read in the report, some of the devils had even been captured alive after the slaughter. Worse still, Xarz had surrendered and brought with him a bargaining chip.

Those captured devils might truly bring him trouble, for they could reveal information that would eventually point to his source—and in the end drag both him and the Barevisk family into it.

Because of that, he grew restless as he thought about the future. The worst outcome would be if this matter drove Aldrian the Great to make a personal move against his family. With that kind of strength, Aldrian the Great was basically unstoppable if he chose to sweep away anyone he deemed in league with the devils, including him.

The patriarch gritted his teeth, unable to find any way to solve this problem. The only thing he could hope for now was that the assassins of Silent Reaper would succeed in

their mission. Yet even then, his confidence had waned. With the distraction plan involving the devils already crumbled, he doubted those assassins alone were enough to kill Aldrian.

In fact, he had begun to question whether Aldrian could even be killed at all with such strength.

'I have to discuss this matter with young master Randolph. He will undoubtedly be implicated by this,' he thought as his eyes turned toward the scenery outside.

In another place, the young master being spoken of was also reading the report. At this moment, he showed a rare expression, so different from his usual relaxed and even arrogant manner. His face was solemn, and he sank into deep thought, while his butler stood silently behind him, gazing at the back of the Valroy family's young master, Randolph. To be honest, the butler too was shocked when he learned the contents of the report.

Aldrian the Great's unbelievable feat had completely overturned all of their plans. None of them had expected Aldrian to truly be that absurdly strong, so strong that he could wipe out tens of millions of devil troops by himself. The fact that it had all happened in no more than a few minutes made it feel surreal.

How could someone like that even exist?

Battling an immortal and winning was one thing that could be attributed to Aldrian's absurd strength, but to annihilate the entire devil army that surrounded an entire world at the same time was another matter altogether. Aldrian's ability was beyond their comprehension, to the point where they could not even guess at its limits.

'What is he really? A god?' the butler thought.

After a few moments of silence, Randolph finally opened his lips.

"I truly underestimated his ability. To think he could wipe out those devils so quickly, without much trouble."

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## **Chapter 780 - 780: Decided to Meet Him Directly**

[ 1,534 words ]

Randolf's face was solemn as he thought about the report. This was truly unexpected, even for him, as not even in his wildest imagination had such a thing ever crossed his mind. Defeating an entity like the avatar of the devil god was one thing, but killing the millions of troops surrounding an entire world at the same time was something else entirely.

Facing a single entity was much more "manageable", since the battle would be fought face to face, even though the opponent was already absurd in strength as it was still an avatar of a god.

However, to sweep away the entire army surrounding a world as large as the Ancient Blue Gate World required not only tremendous strength but also an ability that could cover the entire world, an ability no mortal should possess.

Once again, the story that came from Aldrian left him unable to decide how to regard him. His greatest weakness against Aldrian at this moment was the lack of information about the full extent of Aldrian's abilities and capabilities. To overcome this, he needed to use every opportunity, such as the great war, to observe him.

However, every time Aldrian revealed his strength, it grew even more absurd. What was worse, Randolf did not know if what he had seen so far was the full extent of Aldrian's power. With so little information, all of his plans carried the risk of becoming useless.

For the devils' invasion, according to his plan, besides expecting the devils to exhaust the forces in the Ancient Blue Gate World, he also wanted to see what Aldrian could do.

Yes, Aldrian possessed tremendous strength and could fight a god's avatar, but Randolf wanted to know more. If he could get rid of Aldrian during the war, that would be the best scenario, but if not, that was still acceptable.

At the very least, he would gain new information about what Aldrian was capable of. The more Aldrian acted, the more weaknesses he would reveal, since information itself was strength for Randolf.

However, if the information only revealed an extremely powerful Aldrian with incomprehensible abilities, then it was the same as having no information at all. He could not create a proper plan against someone like that, and it truly frustrated him.

For the first time in a long time, Randolf could not find any effective plan to contain the problem. To spread his god's influence, he needed to get rid of him, yet Aldrian remained too mysterious and too powerful.

'Is he actually an apostle, just like Zhang Haoran and me?' he thought seriously.

'Even if he is an apostle of some god who also came in secret, his ability is too exaggerated. But that might be the reason he has such strength. Although I don't know

what his god gave him to make him this powerful, the fact that his mysterious abilities and strength cannot be explained could point to his power being a god's reward.'

This was the final possibility that came to his mind. At first, he had set it aside, because the appearance of another apostle in the same area as Zhang Haoran should have drawn the devil god's attention. That should have caused conflict between those gods who appeared to be in alliance. However, he knew that in truth they each had their own agenda, just as his own god did.

His god had sent him here carefully, without the devil god's knowledge, and his mission was simple, to spread his god's influence in secret.

Because the first heaven had already been decided as the devil god's territory, any other god was expected to act in accordance with that agreement. However, what was spoken openly between gods was not always the same as what happened behind the scenes. His own god, for example, still played tricks by sending him here to spread influence in secret.

He did not know if other gods were doing the same, but the fact remained that he had been able to come here without the devil god's knowledge, and he had even managed to operate for so long. Although he had to act carefully and in secret, the result was that he had successfully spread his god's influence within his family and a few others.

If Aldrian was truly an apostle of some god, openly fighting the devils and even defeating Zhang Haoran, did that not mean his god ignored the so-called alliance of gods?

Did it not mean that Aldrian's god was hostile to the devil god, openly mocking him by placing his apostle in the very place where Zhang Haoran resided? By fighting devil cultivators openly and killing them without hesitation?

However, if that was the case, why had he not received any signs from his god that anything had happened in the higher heavens? He had also received no sign that another apostle had appeared, and with the commotion caused by Aldrian, his god would surely know of it.

'This won't do. I will not resolve this problem if I only move behind the scenes and depend on outside forces. If that man is truly an apostle, then he will have many unknown abilities that could render all of my plans useless. I need to confirm it myself. I must confront him, and if his god is truly hostile to the devil god, then perhaps I could even use him.'

'The first thing I need to do is to know him directly before I can plan for the future,' he thought before opening his lips.

"I will personally visit the Barisan Continent and meet with Aldrian the Great."

Hearing that, his butler widened his eyes.

"Young master, are you sure?" he asked in astonishment. It had been a very long time since his young master had chosen to act personally. Usually, he only used his brain and moved behind the scenes to control the situation. But it seemed the problem called Aldrian the Great was too great for him to handle from the shadows alone.

"Yes, I cannot depend on outside forces in this matter. Aldrian the Great is too mysterious and powerful to confront only from behind the scenes," Randolph answered, which made his butler worry.

"But young master, he is too dangerous for you to confront personally. I do not doubt that you have many mysterious abilities granted by our god, but from the way I see the situation, he is too powerful and too unpredictable. You could fall into danger if you make a single wrong move."

Randolf showed a smirk.

"Well, that is why I will come to him with peaceful intentions. I will approach him as if I seek a good relationship. I will build trust between us, because that way I can learn everything about him, including his weaknesses. At this moment, he has no opinion of our family, since he has never seen anyone from us. He will not be suspicious of anything, and I simply have to act normally," he said.

His butler still wore a worried expression, but if that was already his young master's decision, then there was nothing he could do. He could not even offer his best opinion in this matter, as it was already beyond his understanding.

"I will meet with him the day after tomorrow. The timing is good, as he will likely receive many more guests because of his tale. There will be no problem," Randolph said as he walked out of his room.

The butler could only sigh and hope that no problems would arise in their plan or in the future.

-----

At the Barisan Continent, there was not much change except for the increasing number of visitors from outside. The stories of Aldrian's feat the previous night still dominated the talk of the populace, and for the citizens of the Aster Empire, there was no prouder moment than seeing their emperor showcase his power to the world.

Their emperor's name would spread even wider, and this also gave them, his subjects, benefits as citizens of the Aster Empire. Many outsiders would become more eager to build business and establish good relations with the empire's people, which would boost not only their economy but also their connections.

Although no one from the continent had yet traveled beyond the empire, in the future, once they did, their identity as citizens of the Aster Empire alone would already carry more weight everywhere compared to the past.

The event last night was different from when their emperor fought the immortal. Last night, many people from across the world, and even from other stars, had witnessed and felt the effect of Aldrian's technique.

As the people across the continent continued their daily activities, the main figure of every conversation sat inside one of the rooms in his palace dungeon. The room was dim, lit only by four special candles placed at each corner, giving off an eerie atmosphere, something normal for a dungeon.

Aldrian sat on a wooden chair, one hand resting on the table in front of him as he tapped it.

Tuk, tuk, tuk.

Across the table, Xarz sat with a tired expression, while beside him, Rulleus looked on in tension, fear clearly in his eyes.

Aldrian said nothing, continuing to tap his index finger against the table.

Tuk, tuk, tuk.

After a few moments of silence, Aldrian finally opened his lips.

"Say something that interests me."

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## **- Chapter 781 - 781: Interrogation 1**

### **Chapter 781 - 781: Interrogation 1**

[ 1,626 words ]

"Say something that interests me," Aldrian said. His face was calm, even showing that he looked bored.

Xarz looked at Aldrian in confusion and asked back.

"What is interesting to your excellency?"

"Well, I don't know. Just say something that interests me so I might think it's worth keeping you alive," Aldrian answered.

Xarz knew that Aldrian must be baiting him to reveal some information or secret regarding the devils. After a few moments of silence, as Xarz sank into deep thought, he finally began to speak.

"First of all, I need to clarify something before I begin to say more. I'm not the one who wanted to start the war with the Ancient Blue Gate World. All of that was because of the man beside me right now. I already told him not to attack the Ancient Blue Gate World, but his arrogant character blinded him, and I could do nothing but obey him. His father is also my lord, after all."

Rulleus was stunned and glanced at Xarz. He couldn't help but grit his teeth, yet he did not say anything. He was afraid that if he spoke, he might offend the man across the table and cause him to change his mind and kill him instantly.

"Alright then, let me start again with a more proper introduction." Xarz continued.

"I'm Xarz Luitrich, the leader appointed by his majesty, the vampire king Virusius van Reinfer, to command all of the devils in the Fallen Star Cluster. I hold the highest authority in the Fallen Star Cluster, and the one beside me is Rulleus van Reinfer, the vampire king's son and his successor."

"Now let's start with this war first. Well, actually, your excellency, his highness Rulleus came to the Fallen Star Cluster to act as support after our god descended. Initially, according to the plan given by the god's apostle, after the god's descent and the Ancient Blue Gate World fell into chaos, we from the Fallen Star Cluster would then make our move to wage a great war across the Central Star Cluster to aid the devils' movement here."

Aldrian already knew that Zhang Haoran could provide information outside of the Ancient Blue Gate World and bypass the barrier of the Barisan continent thanks to the system. His system had the function to communicate and spread his plan to other devils across the First Heaven.

"The Central Star Cluster would have been engulfed in a great war, and the support coming from the central region of heaven was meant to ensure that we gained victory. However, the appearance of your excellency shattered that plan. Our god did not descend, the world did not fall into chaos, and I decided to pull back from the plan to attack the Central Star Cluster."

Aldrian's expression still did not change, so Xarz continued speaking.

"Well, his highness Rulleus then came but, seeing something outside his expectation, he decided to take matters into his own hands, and the result can be seen by your excellency. I already warned his highness about your excellency, but he did not listen and kept waging war."

Rulleus was truly furious, almost forgetting his fear. Xarz clearly wanted to pour all the blame onto him. Although what Xarz said was true, Rulleus would not let him keep piling it on. The more Xarz shifted the blame, the worse his fate would become if the man called Aldrian in front of them truly grew angry at him.

He wanted to say something but—

"Don't say a word. You kept silent earlier, and he was the first one to speak. You will have your time later." Aldrian spoke in advance, leaving Rulleus stunned and forcing him to close his lips. His heart shuddered, and he instantly obeyed.

As Aldrian looked at Rulleus, he thought this man must have lived a smooth-sailing life. He had likely never experienced something like this, so his character was truly that of a coward who could only obey without showing much discontent.

Still, Aldrian felt nothing but disgust, even growing more infuriated with this vampire prince—not only because he was a devil, but also because of what he had done before arriving at the Central Star Cluster.

He had already received detailed reports from Emperor Rozwald and others regarding many non-devil cultivators inside the devils' vessels. They were inhabitants of a small world near the Central Star Cluster. Around the Central Star Cluster, there were many small worlds scattered about, still within its sphere of influence.

These worlds also acted as an information network for the Central Star Cluster whenever there was movement of interstellar vessels from outside, especially those of the devils. If the observer teams in the Fallen Star Cluster served as the first line of warning, then these worlds were the second line.

On their way here, Rulleus had ordered an invasion of one of those worlds to resupply. That small world obviously had no power to resist. Its strongest cultivator had only reached the Immortal Foundation stage. Although they fought with all their strength, they were no match for the might of the devils' troops.

The devils also cut off their communication during the siege, which prevented the information from reaching the Central Star Cluster.

In the end, billions of the population either died or were kidnapped.

Emperor Rozwald and several other powers had already sent their interstellar vessels to check the situation on that world. There might still be many survivors, and they were dispatched to help them.

After Aldrian's words toward Rulleus, Xarz decided to continue.

"To be honest, this war, where our god was supposed to descend, is quite important for us devils. The Central Star Cluster is one of the strongest places in the First Heaven, and with its fall, the expedition to the rest of the First Heaven would become much easier."

"Also, we could weaken the forces of those who rebel against our god by killing what we call the divine dragon and phoenix in the Barisan continent."

Xarz suddenly felt a chill that reached deep into his soul.

Aldrian was still looking at him with a calm expression, yet Xarz sensed a faint killing intent just now, sharp enough to make his soul tremble for a split second. That fleeting killing intent was enough to pierce his soul, and sweat instantly rolled down his forehead. That kind of killing intent was no joke. He could not imagine how many people Aldrian had already killed.

He suddenly grew uncertain about continuing, not knowing what had triggered such a reaction from Aldrian. If he said the wrong words, he might be dead on the spot.

Rulleus fared even worse. His face instantly turned pale, his body froze, he looked more like a statue than a living being.

Only silence followed, making the atmosphere grow tense, and Xarz realized the mood had dropped. After a few moments, Aldrian finally spoke.

"Alright, my mood has already dropped, so I will ask questions. You had better not lie, because if you do... well, let's just say you will regret ever trying. I can sense whether you are lying or not, so watch what you say before the words leave your mouth."

Xarz grew even more tense and instantly nodded, while Rulleus remained frozen like a statue.

"Was the information about the divine dragon and phoenix spread by the apostle?" Aldrian asked.

Xarz quickly nodded his head.

"Yes, your excellency. He is the one who spread it. I just followed his plan, and even I did not know about beings called the divine dragon and phoenix. The only information I

received from the apostle was that they were also divine beings, just like our god, and that they escaped from him and hid themselves in the Barisan continent."

"Their existence is a threat to the devils' plan in the future, but the only one who can defeat them is a divine being like our god, so that is why the plan for the god's descent was made."

Aldrian did not say anything, and only after a few moments did he speak again.

"Were the ones who followed to the Ancient Blue Gate World last night mostly made up of the powers of the Fallen Star Cluster? I killed almost all of them, so how weak is the Fallen Star Cluster right now?"

"Yes, mostly they were from the Fallen Star Cluster, and almost all of the powerhouses or prominent figures of the Fallen Star Cluster also followed the armada. Only a minority of powerhouses stayed behind to guard the base." Xarz replied.

"With your excellency killing most of them last night, the Fallen Star Cluster is basically a sitting duck. Even the powers of the Ancient Blue Gate World alone could likely conquer the entirety of it. The devil population in the entire Fallen Star Cluster is more or less three trillion, and most of them have cultivation below the Emperor Stage, so they will have no power to resist the forces from the Ancient Blue Gate World alone."

Aldrian gave a slight nod. This would be much easier, as he would not need to bring too many people to the Fallen Star Cluster.

"Your excellency, uhm...my apologies if this is presumptuous, uh... but what happened to our apostle?" Xarz asked hesitantly, forcing himself to brave the question.

Aldrian glanced at him for a moment.

"Dead," he said shortly, before turning his gaze to Rulleus.

That brief answer made Xarz sigh inwardly. He had already guessed it, but hearing it confirmed still struck him deeply. The apostle appointed by their god had been killed, and their god's plan was foiled by the man before him.

This man's existence was truly a nightmare for the devils.

Aldrian ignored Xarz and instead fixed his eyes on Rulleus.

"Now, it's your turn, 'your highness.' I have some questions regarding the central region of heaven, and it should be easy for you to answer since you come from there," he said, emphasizing your highness as though mocking Rulleus.

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## Chapter 782 - 782: Interrogation 2

[ 1,602 words ]

"You must know much about the central region of heaven. I would like you to answer my questions properly in a way that I find satisfactory," Aldrian said as he looked at Rulleus with a slight smirk. Rulleus shuddered in his heart, and he did not dare to look directly into Aldrian's eyes.

Xarz, who had been watching how this proud prince acted since earlier, couldn't help but snort inwardly. His arrogant demeanor was nowhere to be seen, and his power or status could not be used here. He was no more than a cowardly prince who only relied on his privilege as royalty to act however he wanted.

In the midst of the pain and uncertainty of his own fate, at least he could see this brat face the consequences of his arrogance and decisions.

"What is it that your excellency wants to know? I'm afraid that I cannot tell much—"

"Ssh, ssh, ssh, that is not what I want to hear, your highness. I believe the questions I will ask are things you would know the answers to. I do not care that you are afraid of your father. What I care about is what you tell me after this," Aldrian cut Rulleus off, which made him grit his teeth.

"So now, let's start with the current situation in the central region of heaven. What is it like right now? Who is in charge of that place? And how is the devils' life and power there?" Aldrian asked.

Rulleus still felt hesitant to answer, but then a painful sensation suddenly rose from his soul. The moment he felt it, his body trembled and his eyes rolled back. His body grew tense, and his expression showed that he was truly in pain. After ten seconds, amidst the extreme agony, Rulleus finally opened his lips.

"I... talk... I... talk... please."

The pain in his soul finally stopped, and his body instantly went limp. However, because he was tied to the chair, he remained upright. He gasped as he took a deep breath. Saliva dripped from his lips, his eyes turned slightly red, and cold sweat rolled across his body.

After a few moments of adjusting himself, his expression regained clarity and he finally began to answer.

"This is the situation when I left in the central region of heaven more than two years ago. Since I left, the time that has passed there should be about three years, so I don't really know the current situation now," he answered with uneven breath.

"However, the situation at that time had not changed much. The devils were simply living our 'normal' lives as devils. But during that period, there was expectation and excitement because the plan for our god to descend was finally approaching. The journey for the devils to spread our influence and the faith of our god across the first heaven would become much easier. The Central Star Cluster in the Arbion Galaxy, which had been a stumbling block for many generations of devils, would finally be swept away by us."

"With the Central Star Cluster and the Arbion Galaxy falling into our hands, there would be no obstacle to spreading the devils' influence and territories to the southern side of the first heaven. It would be an easy journey, though it would still take time, yet we firmly believed that no real challenge awaited us in the southern part of the first heaven."

"The life in the central region of heaven for the devils is the best, as the environment there has already been shaped to our needs by many generations of devils who occupied that place. For non-devil cultivators, that place is a hell, and we doubt they could keep their lives or even remain sane once they step into it."

"The thick devil energy and the many strong cultivators compared to other regions of the first heaven, that place serves as our headquarters for the entire operation of the devils in the first heaven." Rulleus was still gasping from the aftereffects of pain as he paused slightly.

"The central region of heaven has many star clusters, and the population of the devils there reaches more than ten trillion, with millions of peak pseudo-immortal stage cultivators. Also, many people from the higher heavens descend there to help us in our plans and movements. This is only known by the higher-ups. In fact, my father is also from the higher heaven."

Hearing that, Aldrian did not change his expression, as he knew that higher-level cultivators from the higher heavens could descend to the lower heavens by sealing their cultivation down to the level allowed in that heaven.

That was how Long Shentian, Feng Xuanyan, and many others of his followers in the past were able to descend to the lower heavens and build all the preparations for his return.

But he was still surprised inside to learn that the vampire king was one of the higher heaven cultivators. He thought that Tarius must have placed more faith in the higher heaven's cultivators to manage the central region of heaven, as that was the most important piece of territory if Tarius wanted to dominate the entire first heaven.

Rulleus had said that many cultivators from the higher heavens had descended, and that troubled him. It was also a sign that the law of causality in the first heaven had been extremely weakened. Those invading gods, who were already masters of universes, must have been the ones weakening the laws of causality, as they were the only ones capable of doing so.

There was also a difference in treatment when it came to higher heaven cultivators descending to the lower realms between those outsiders and the indigenous people. His followers in the past, who were indeed indigenous people, had an easier process when descending to the lower heavens.

That was because of the strong karma they had already built with the universe, which caused the heavens of this universe to grant them a kind of "leniency."

However, it was different for those invaders who came from outside of the universe. They had no connection to this universe, and when they tried to descend, they faced much greater difficulty. There were many burdens and setbacks compared to the indigenous people.

The same also applied to indigenous cultivators of this universe who practiced cultivation technique originating outside of it. They received the same treatment as outsiders because by practicing what was from beyond this universe, they accumulated karma connection from outside the universe as well.

But there was one thing they could do to ease the burden or setbacks of descending. That was to weaken the heavenly laws, or the law of causality, in each heaven they wished to descend into. For this, only gods who had already reached the realm of Master of Universe could accomplish it.

That was why the information that many invaders had managed to descend was troubling. With the laws of causality weakened, reinforcements from the upper heavens could easily pour into the first heaven. At this moment, he thought that the laws of causality in the first heaven must be in far worse condition, since Tarius was even able to send his avatar to descend.

While Aldrian was thinking over the information he had received, Xarz's expression was already in shock as he heard something new. He had never known that the Vampire King was from the higher heavens, nor that many cultivators from above were mingling with them.

He then glanced at Aldrian, who did not seem particularly surprised, as if this information was something he had already known.

Seeing that Aldrian did not show much reaction, Rulleus continued.

"My father is one of the four overlords of the central region of heaven. They have held that position since before my birth, succeeding the previous generation of overlords."

"My father, along with the other three overlords who also came from the higher heavens, manage the four sides of the first heaven's operations for the devils."

"My father, the Vampire King, is in charge of the south. The east is under the Nine-Headed Hydra, the west is under the Spear Devil, and the north is under the Necromancer King."

"All of them are truly powerful cultivators, so strong that even a peak pseudo-immortal stage cultivator would have difficulty facing them. With them at the helm of the central region of heaven and managing the devils' operations across the first heaven, the devils have only grown stronger, and their influence has spread wider."

"Trillions of devils and the four overlords, since ancient times, we have maintained our grasp of the central region of the first heaven without anyone being able to retake it." Rulleus then stopped, grimacing as the aftereffects of the pain in his soul still stung.

Aldrian slightly nodded his head.

"I see. So I can guess that among your troops that I killed, there was at least one necromancer from the higher heavens, correct?" he said, which left Rulleus stunned, though he still answered.

"Well... yes. There were some among them who came from the higher heavens."

Aldrian finally knew why those dragon bones had appeared in the first heaven. The bones came from one of the dragon tribes that resided in the second heaven, the Silver Iron Dragon.

The Silver Iron Dragon tribe was only one of the many factions that had become his loyal followers in the lower heavens in the past. Their fate was now unknown, but he would not be surprised if they had already suffered the same fate as the Silver Lightning Dragon, extinction.

He could not help but grit his teeth in irritation, but he forced himself to remain calm. He took a deep breath and then looked at Rulleus.

"If I kill you, will your father come to me personally?"

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## Chapter 783 - 783: Manifestation of Spiritual Sense

[ 1,561 words ]

Rulleus felt a chill as he thought that Aldrian might kill him based on this question alone! The problem was that he did not know the right answer to this question. That was because the intent of the question itself was unknown to him.

Did Aldrian ask this to know how his father would react if he killed him now? Did he want to bait his father to come here by killing him? Or did he want to avoid attracting his father by not killing him? However, without asking that question, Aldrian should know that killing him would be a challenge to the vampire king.

From the way Rulleus saw it, Aldrian asked this question to bait his father into coming here by killing him. Aldrian wanted to know if he was useful in that way.

"Please spare me," he suddenly said without much thinking. He felt that any answer would lead him to his death.

Aldrian did not change his expression.

"That is not the answer I want to hear, so let's repeat once again: will your father come here if I kill you?" he said in a deliberately slow, threatening tone.

Rulleus gritted his teeth. He was afraid of everything in that moment. He was afraid of the pain he had just experienced, afraid of giving the wrong answer, afraid of being killed by the man in front of him. His mind was in chaos and he could not think straight.

Xarz, who watched the prince almost break down, could not help but feel pity because he knew Aldrian was torturing this man with that method. Aldrian must already know the answer to the question because it was obvious. There was no way the vampire king would sit back if his successor were killed by someone.

Even if the vampire king had no fatherly love, killing Rulleus would be the same as mocking him and challenging his authority. For an overlord who had never been mocked and who inspired fear in others, such a challenge would not be taken lightly. He might move personally if necessary, once he heard what had happened in this star cluster.

Aldrian's intent seemed to have shaken Rulleus's mentality with that question, pushing him toward a breakdown. This would surely leave a deep trauma in his subconscious for the rest of his life. Well, if he lived long enough.

Rulleus's body trembled and his lips quivered. He opened and closed his mouth repeatedly, wanting to answer but unable to. Aldrian's eyes stayed fixed on him without moving, as if he had all day to wait for a reply. That calm gaze made it feel like the moment he gave his answer, Aldrian might kill him instantly.

After a few moments of hesitation, Rulleus finally forced himself to speak.

"Yes. He will most likely move personally if I am dead, BUT I'm sure you will find me more useful if you keep me alive. You could use me to talk to my father. My father will not act as long as I am alive... yes, if you keep me alive then you will have more leverage against my father." Rulleus replied in a rush, trying to show the advantages of keeping him alive.

He would take any chance and say whatever he thought might keep him breathing and might catch Aldrian's interest.

Silence followed, and with each passing second Rulleus grew more tense. He waited for the judgment that would decide whether he lived or died.

After a few seconds, Aldrian finally opened his lips.

"Your reasoning sounds good," he said. He stood up from his seat and walked toward Rulleus.

Rulleus was stunned, then his face fell into relief and a happy expression.

"Your Excellency, your decision to keep me alive will prove to bring you extreme benefit—" Rulleus rushed to say.

"But I still believe killing you is far more profitable for me." Aldrian interrupted with a chilling smile, cutting Rulleus short as he suddenly grabbed his head.

The words and that chilling smile struck Rulleus at once. His eyes widened in shock, and even Xarz was astonished.

"Wait, Your Excellency!—" Before Rulleus could say anything, Aldrian was already intruding into his memories, forcing him to stop speaking. His body spasmed as Aldrian harshly sifted through the memories he deemed important. Xarz could only watch the process with a tense expression, and after more than twenty minutes—

Splat!

Suddenly Aldrian's hand, which was gripping Rulleus's head, tightened, and Rulleus's skull exploded instantly. Brain matter and chunks of flesh splattered across the surroundings, with some landing on Xarz's face. His expression shifted from shock to horror as his eyes trembled, feeling the remnants of Rulleus's head clinging to his skin.

Aldrian, still holding his stance, let out a sigh.

"Ah, what a relief. This bastard is more irritating than—" Aldrian said, but his words were cut off when a sudden pressure enveloped the entire room. The pressure itself was actually strong enough to cover the entire floating land, but Aldrian had already blocked the room with a spatial barrier so that anything inside would not affect the outside.

Xarz was shocked by the sudden pressure, but he immediately understood where it came from. From Rulleus's dead body, a transparent figure emerged. It expanded into a massive silhouette before gradually becoming clearer, revealing the head of a middle-aged man with two fangs on his lips.

The moment Xarz saw that face, his eyes trembled in fear and his heart turned cold. That head was the manifestation of a cultivator's spiritual sense. A cultivator capable of manifesting and shaping their own spiritual sense, then storing it inside another, was certainly at least at peak pseudo-immortal stage.

At that stage, the soul had already begun to transform into a much stronger and more solid form in preparation for immortality, making it possible to manifest spiritual sense in the shape of one's own figure. Basically, the spiritual sense manifestation was created by cutting off a small part of the cultivator's own spiritual sense and power, then transferring it to the chosen person.

There were benefits to having this ability, but its primary use was to protect those chosen to carry the manifestation.

In essence, the cultivator would put their spiritual manifestation into another's soul as a safeguard. When triggered, that spiritual sense could materialize and release a portion of the peak pseudo-immortal's power once, to protect the bearer's life.

One of the fatal weakness was that the manifestation had to be activated manually by the host cultivator. They needed to trigger the spiritual sense within their soul the moment they believed their life was in danger. If there was no time to activate it, the result would be just like Rulleus—he had no chance to trigger the spiritual sense embedded in his soul.

And what if the host cultivator died? Then the very thing happening now in Rulleus's case.

The spiritual sense, having lost its host, instantly manifested. Xarz, watching this unfold, felt as though his own soul would leave his body. For the spiritual sense inside Rulleus's body belonged to none other than his father, the Vampire King!

The pressure that exuded from the manifestation was truly suffocating, and it was only a small fraction of his true power. Xarz could not imagine the full strength of the Vampire King, but looking at Aldrian he knew Aldrian was a monster on another level. He did not know who would win if the two fought, but he knew there would be vast destruction.

The manifestation's expression twisted in fury. His eyes locked on Aldrian, then shifted briefly to Xarz. After that, he looked at the headless body of Rulleus, and at last he lost control. Veins bulged on its forehead and the pressure around them grew heavier, but Aldrian's expression remained calm. It was as if the force from the manifestation did not affect him at all.

"Who are you? How dare you kill my son!" the manifestation's voice boomed, making Xarz feel as though his ears would burst.

Aldrian, still calm, replied to the Vampire King. "You should teach your son some manners. He has become a bad boy and spread destruction everywhere. This is merely the consequence of his attack on my world. You and your entire devil troop will suffer the same fate." He pointed at the headless corpse as he spoke.

Hearing Aldrian's answer, Xarz almost lost his mind. To ask a Vampire King—a devil cultivator—to teach his son some manners because he spread destruction? They were devil cultivators, for fuck's sake! Spreading destruction and corruption was what they did. And on top of that, Aldrian even dared to threaten him.

But then Xarz realized Aldrian was deliberately provoking the Vampire King. It was insane, yet this man truly had the strength to back it up. Xarz glanced at the Vampire King, and as expected, he could no longer hold back.

"Courting death!" the manifestation roared, his eyes turning red as he prepared to unleash his blood law technique.

However, before he could fully execute it, Aldrian teleported behind the manifestation's head and grabbed it, leaving the vampire king stunned.

"This is my gift for you. Enjoy it." Aldrian tightened his grip around the manifestation's head and then—

Crash!

A shattering sound rang out as the manifestation was destroyed. The pressure instantly vanished, and the atmosphere returned to stillness.

Xarz, still reeling from the manifestation's appearance, could only stare blankly at the scene. But then a chill ran through his soul as Aldrian's gaze shifted in his direction.

Panic surged in his heart.

'No... is he going to kill me next?'

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

## Chapter 784 - 784: Vampire King's Rage

[ 1,616 words ]

At an unknown place, there is a giant castle under a red sky, the same as the sky in the devil territory. The atmosphere is truly like that inside the devil territory—ominous and suffocating—and it could drive anyone who steps into this place insane with the thickness of its negative energy.

Inside the castle, there is a vast hall where a throne stands, and on it sits a handsome middle-aged man with two fangs on his lips.

He rests his hand on his cheek with his eyes closed as if sleeping peacefully. Although he seems relaxed and releases no aura, he is one of the most feared existences in the First Heaven.

The Vampire King, one of the overlords who lead the devils of the southern side of the First Heaven, Virusius van Reinfer.

His long black hair is neatly combed to the back. His pale skin makes him look as if blood is lacking beneath it. His handsome face could captivate many of the opposite sex. He continues to exude a special charm even though his eyes remain closed and he does nothing.

Although he appears motionless at this moment, his mind is fixed on what he saw in the Soul Hall last night. Usually, before his troops march to war, they pour their energy into an artifact called the Soul Lamp. The function of the Soul Lamp is to give a sign of whether the energy owner is still alive or not.

This place is where the soul signs of the troops he sent as reinforcements to the central star cluster in the Arbion Galaxy are kept. When he received the report that more than a million life signs had suddenly gone out, he instantly came to check.

He was shocked by the sight of more than a million Soul Lamps that had gone dark, signaling that those troops were already dead. His men who observed the Soul Lamps reported that they went out rapidly, and within less than a minute, almost all of them were extinguished.

It was truly astonishing. He looked at his son's Soul Lamp, which still shone. He frowned at it, for his son's guardian was already dead, yet his son remained alive.

Since last night, there has not been much change, and he keeps thinking about what really happened with his son's troops that he sent there.

His mind drifts back to the time not long ago when there was a sudden visit from "above," saying that the plan had changed and their god would not descend. This left him confused. There was also no news from the apostle regarding this, leaving him without guidance.

He could not tell his son immediately because of the distance, and when they were in the wormhole, communication could not connect. Even if he sent a message, there would still be a delay for some time.

Still, he believed there would be no problem despite the change in plan. With such a massive and powerful army, some of them even from the higher heavens, they should have been difficult to defeat.

But the sight in the Soul Hall showed that his son's troops had encountered something capable of almost wiping them out in such a short time. This is the thought that still weighs heavily in his mind.

However, while he is still thinking about this matter, he suddenly opens his eyes, quickly releases his aura, and grabs his head.

"Argh!" he shouted in pain as his aura flared, startling the devils around the castle with their king's sudden outburst.

The royal guards outside the hall instantly rushed in, only to see their king clutching his head in agony. They were astonished, but they quickly gathered around him.

"Your Majesty, what happened? Who is attacking you?!" one of the guards asked while the others checked the surroundings.

Virisius gritted his teeth, not answering the guard's question right away. He had almost been caught off guard by a sudden karmic attack.

The moment he sensed it, he immediately raised his karmic defense. Just before that, his spiritual sense manifestation in Rulleus had been triggered, allowing him to perceive what his manifestation perceived. And what he saw made his fury erupt.

His son was dead.

And that arrogant young man who did not know the immensity of heaven and earth dared to mock him.

What shocked him even more was that his manifestation had been crushed, and he had nearly been caught by the powerful karmic attack. If not for his defense, his soul would have suffered severe injury, which would have truly given him a disastrous day.

Luckily, he managed to defend against the attack, but his soul was still shaken and affected by the karmic strike, and he could still feel the lingering pain deep within.

'That bastard... how dare he... HOW DARE HE CHALLENGE ME?!'

As the guards continued to wait for an answer, they were stunned to receive only a furious growl and a blazing glare from Virisius. They did not understand what had happened, but their shock grew as their king's aura surged stronger and stronger before he finally roared.

"I declare Code Devils Judgment! We will go to war! I will lead the army myself!"

His voice boomed with rage, echoing across the vast land. The devils who heard it were struck with disbelief at such a sudden and terrifying announcement. What in the world had happened?

The Code Devils Judgment was a command that summoned nearly the entire force of the Vampire King and his influence to march under his banner. It was a decree that could only be issued by the King himself.

Throughout history, there were only rare occasions when this judgment was invoked. The last time had been three million years ago, when the devils sought to radically expand their territory across the First Heaven. At that time, the king of that generation personally led the army, conquering lands and stars in the name of the Devil God.

That war devastated countless regions in the First Heaven, and though the devils triumphed in most places, they paid a heavy price. Many troops perished, and the king himself nearly lost his life.

Now, for the Vampire King to declare the Code Devils Judgment, this would be the first time since that era. Without asking questions, all the devils who heard it immediately moved according to the standard procedures set for such a command. Moreover, seeing their king's fury, none dared to speak.

If the Vampire King was enraged, then the only thing to do was to remain silent and obey. If he wanted to go to war, they would prepare to depart for another great conflict, one that might bring destruction on the same scale as the war three million years ago.

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Back in the dungeon of Aldrian's palace, Xarz felt a chill run through him when Aldrian turned his head toward him. He did not dare to look directly into his eyes and quickly lowered his gaze. He tried to keep his body under control, to stop it from trembling in front of Aldrian.

He ignored the blood and remnants of brain matter still staining his face, focusing only on calming his body and mind. Aldrian was truly insane, daring to do anything without hesitation—even challenging the Vampire King to his face. Xarz knew he could not afford to go against such a madman.

Then he heard Aldrian's footsteps drawing closer until a shadow loomed beside him. His heartbeat quickened as he awaited his judgment. If Aldrian truly wanted him dead, then he could only fight desperately to survive. Even though he knew he stood no chance, he would not simply stay still and let his life be taken.

He had come this far and was still alive, and he would do anything to keep it that way.

Aldrian did not say anything at first. He leaned against the table in front of Xarz. After a few moments of silence, heavy and tense for Xarz, Aldrian finally spoke.

"I have to at least commend you for not being a coward after all this time, and for thinking of every way to survive. At least in this aspect, you are better than this headless corpse." He glanced at the headless body of Rulleus.

"Luckily for you, you still have some use to me, although I truly feel disgust toward the devils." Aldrian then straightened his posture.

"You had better show me a more useful side of yourself in the future. Because when I decide you are useless, you will be dead, and there will be nothing you can do." He said this before walking out of the room.

After sealing the room, Aldrian's footsteps grew fainter and fainter until Xarz could no longer hear them. Yet Xarz still did not move, even after more than a minute. Sweat was already soaking his entire body, and after a few moments he finally let out a heavy breath of relief.

He had truly thought he would die just now!

He then looked at the headless corpse and couldn't help but shudder. That could have been his fate just now, and he thought himself truly lucky.

At least for now, he could prolong his life for a while. He did not know what would happen to him in the future, but he knew that he had to stay on Aldrian's side from this point on. He needed to keep himself useful so that Aldrian would not kill him.

He also knew that in this situation, the Vampire King would see him as a traitor, and his fate would be worse than death if he ever fell into the king's hands. The only thing he could do was make sure he never ended up in the Vampire King's grasp.

'But the future will be truly chaotic once they meet face to face,' Xarz thought as he imagined the day when Aldrian would confront the Vampire King.

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## Chapter 785 - 785: Taking Care the Problem

[ 1,560 words ]

On the next day, Aldrian called Princess Vaeril of the Verdyn Empire to his throne hall, accompanied only by her guardian. Inside the hall, there were only him, Sylphia, Princess Vaeril, and her guardian.

The princess looked at Aldrian with a gaze full of admiration at that moment. The sight from that night was still vivid in her memory. She had been among those who followed many others into the upper atmosphere with the intent to hold off the devils.

Although she was an elf, and outer space was not the elves' natural environment for battle, they could still provide some help with their support techniques.

However, the war she had imagined did not happen because of the man before her. The countless golden swords that barraged millions of devils surrounding the world were truly a sight that would be etched into her memory for life. Her guardian thought the same, as he too looked at Aldrian with admiration.

They both wondered why the princess had been called upon by him at this moment.

"Your Highness, I'm sorry to disturb your time, but the reason I called you is to discuss the way I will help you regarding your family's problem," Aldrian said with a smile, which left Princess Vaeril stunned before her expression turned ecstatic.

"Yes, Your Majesty. When would you like to visit the Verdyn Empire? I will ask my mother to—" she said enthusiastically, but Aldrian cut her words.

"No, I cannot visit your empire personally because I have something to do, and this is regarding the devils, which I also want to tell you about later," Aldrian said.

Princess Vaeril couldn't help but feel inwardly disappointed, a feeling that Aldrian could clearly sense.

"However, although I cannot visit the Verdyn Empire as soon as possible, my fiancée would like to visit the Verdyn Empire for sightseeing. She said she is curious about the outside continent and would like to visit the Verdyn Empire first. Is that okay, Your Highness?" he said.

Princess Vaeril blinked twice before her expression turned ecstatic again. The sudden shift in her feelings and expressions was truly amusing to Aldrian, making him smile at the princess's reactions. Yet he understood that she sincerely hoped for his visit the Verdyn Empire as soon as possible.

Moreover, with Aldrian's reputation soaring higher because of his recent actions against the devils' invasion force, her expectations for him to visit were high, since the effect would be much greater.

She would be disappointed if he could not visit the empire personally.

But her disappointment could be eased with Sylphia as his representative to come to the Verdyn Empire.

"Ah yes, of course, Your Majesty. We would gladly receive Her Majesty Sylphia in our empire! If Her Majesty Sylphia wants to sightsee our empire, we will prepare everything so that she may enjoy our beautiful empire without any problem," Princess Vaeril said as she also looked at Sylphia.

Although Aldrian had said that Sylphia would only visit for sightseeing, she knew that was only his wordplay, and the real intent was to help her family solve the opposition problem.

She was still happy even though Aldrian could not visit her empire for now, because his substitute held the same status as him, and the message they wanted to send to both the opposition faction and the common people would be the same. No—even more, she could say that by letting his fiancée visit her empire, he showed everyone that he had great trust in the Silvarin Imperial Family to take care of his loved one.

With that kind of trust, it was enough to show anyone that Aldrian, in some way, only trusted and supported the imperial family, especially from the opposition's point of view. They would realize that the imperial family had brought Aldrian the Great into their conflict, something they would not have expected.

It was as if the imperial family were saying, "I have Aldrian the Great's support, so you better behave!"

The effect of Sylphia's visit would not be so simple and would give the same impression as if Aldrian the Great himself had visited the Verdyn Empire.

"Your Highness, you could tell me beforehand when my fiancée could depart to the Verdyn Empire, but I think it will be better to do it as soon as possible," Aldrian said, which Princess Vaeril responded to with a nod.

"Of course, Your Majesty. I will tell my mother after this, and we would like Her Majesty Empress Sylphia to visit our empire as soon as possible." Princess Vaeril then looked at Sylphia and bowed.

"My apologies, Your Majesty, for making you help us with our family's problem. But I am truly thankful that Your Majesty is willing to visit our empire," she said gratefully.

Sylphia showed her smile. "It's okay, Your Highness. I wasn't really lying when my emperor here said that I wanted to sightsee the Verdyn Empire. I am curious about the world outside the Barisan Continent, and the Verdyn Empire would be good for my first destination. While at it, I could also help my fiancée take care of your problem, Your Highness."

Princess Vaeril smiled as she looked at Sylphia. "We are truly honoured then, for Your Majesty to choose our empire as your first destination."

Aldrian, seeing that the discussion on this matter was enough for now, decided to move on.

"Your Highness, I would also like to tell you about the thing I plan to do in the near future, which is why I cannot visit your empire personally. I will also be asking many powers about this matter later."

The princess grew curious about what Aldrian wanted to say, her face showing a look of wonder.

"Two weeks later, I plan to depart for the Fallen Star Cluster. I will begin the operation to cleanse that star cluster from the devils' influence," Aldrian said.

At first, the princess and her guardian were stunned, blinking a few times before their eyes widened in shock as Aldrian's words finally registered in their minds.

To cleanse the Fallen Star Cluster from the devils' influence?

That is not as easy as it sounds, since the devils' strength there cannot be underestimated. If defeating the devils in that region of stars were easy, then that star cluster would already have been liberated long ago.

There are also factors that prevent them from liberating that star cluster. One of them is the lack of spirit and unified effort to retake the region. To reclaim it, they would have to wage another great war, which would require enormous manpower and resources. Such an undertaking would need the united effort of many powers from all the civilizations in the central star cluster.

The problem is that not all powers share the same interest in liberating the Fallen Star Cluster. Each power has its own priorities, its own affairs and problems, and many are unwilling to spend their resources on a great war. It is easier for them to take care of their own problems rather than commit to such a large-scale conflict.

Another issue is the question of who should lead the alliance troops. This is a topic many would debate and even fight over. Some powers would volunteer themselves as the leader of the alliance, but others would not always agree. The sensitive matter of who commands the alliance would only waste time and might even create cracks in their relationships.

Each of them would want to lead the alliance, but if many others objected, and the alliance was forced to form anyway, then only disaster would await when the war began. A leader not chosen or respected by all alliance members would bring chaos to the battlefield, and that kind of mistake could be fatal, costing countless alliance lives.

However, if Aldrian were the one to initiate it, then that would be another matter!

With Aldrian taking the initiative, no one would dare object, and many would even want to join him. This was because of their confidence in Aldrian's strength, which reassured them that the war would bring results, even if they had to spend resources on it. They would also regard Aldrian as the most appropriate leader for the alliance, and only fools or those hostile to him would refuse to accept him as leader.

"Are you sure, Your Majesty?" the princess asked, to which Aldrian responded with a nod. Princess Vaeril's eyes shimmered as her face turned solemn.

"Then, if Your Majesty needs support from my family or from the Verdyn Empire, we are ready to give our best to help Your Majesty in your mission to the Fallen Star Cluster and liberate that region of stars from the devils' influence."

Aldrian smiled upon hearing it. "That is appreciated, Your Highness. I hope that we can maintain a good relationship in the future."

They then conversed for some time before Princess Vaeril and Sylphia walked out of the throne hall together. There were many things they could discuss regarding Sylphia's visit or other matters, and this was also a good chance for Sylphia to build relationships on her own with powers outside the continent.

Thirty minutes later, another guest arrived and met Aldrian in the throne hall.

Ilona looked at Aldrian with respect as she entered the hall. She truly admired his strength and his actions in saving the entire world.

"Your Majesty," she said as she bowed to him. Before she could say more, her eyebrows rose in surprise as another figure with the same face as Aldrian suddenly appeared right beside him.

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## Chapter 786 - 786: Planning

[ 1,577 words ]

Ilona was astonished to see another figure with the same face as Aldrian appear right beside him. From his height and features, the figure was basically identical to Aldrian, and if people did not know anything about him, they might think this was Aldrian's identical twin.

However, she knew that Aldrian was an only child, which meant this figure was either one of his tricks or someone using a perfect disguise technique. She could sense that the figure had the exact same cultivation stage and aura as Aldrian, which left her truly baffled.

At this point, even she began to doubt whether the Aldrian seated on the throne was the real one or if it was the one standing beside him.

Noticing her confused expression, Aldrian on the throne smiled and spoke to her.

"Miss Ilona, because there is something I need to do in the near future which makes it difficult for me to come to your family as soon as possible, I will send my avatar with you to help take care of your parents' problem. Although this avatar has some limitations, such as being much weaker than my real body, I can still help you with this. He is like another living being with his own consciousness, so you can also consider him a separate entity from me."

The avatar beside him nodded.

"Yes, Miss Ilona. Although there are some things I lack compared to the real body, I can still help you, and I will make sure our plan succeeds," the avatar said.

Ilona did not say anything as her gaze lingered on the avatar before she looked at Aldrian.

"May I touch him, Your Majesty?"

Aldrian smiled. "You should ask him. Like I said, consider him a different entity from me, the real body. He can think for himself."

Ilona then looked at the avatar. "Then, could I touch you?"

The avatar showed the exact same smile as Aldrian before walking toward Ilona and stopping right in front of her. Ilona carefully observed the avatar's body in detail for a moment before reaching out to poke him. After that, she began to grab, pinch, and apply different kinds of pressure to his body.

Ilona was truly shocked, as what she felt from the avatar was exactly like touching a normal human being. It was as if she were really touching skin with flesh beneath it, without the avatar showing anything abnormal.

This was a kind of perfect cloning technique that even copied the sensations of a real body. She could not find any difference between the avatar and the real body, and her senses did not detect any distinction at all.

She knew of many kinds of cloning techniques, but none like the one before her. Usually, there would always be a sign that revealed a clone or doppelganger technique. The most obvious flaw was in the body itself. Because a clone was made of gathered energy, it was fragile when exposed to external force.

If she touched it with stronger force, the energy inside the clone could be disrupted, and the clone might even be destroyed.

However, when it came to differentiating a clone from the real body, physical touch was not the only matter. Even without touching, people who understood clones could instantly recognize one because of differences in character.

The most common clones had no personality at all. They acted like soulless puppets, controlled entirely by the cultivator's mind. Those who were sharp enough would notice the strangeness in the behavior of a clone the moment they encountered one.

Because of such limitations, cloning techniques were mostly used as distractions in battle, though in some cases they could assist with limited attacks. They were never used for tasks such as helping with core matters or anything requiring independence.

As far as she could see from this so-called avatar technique, Ilona did not notice any of the weaknesses that should exist in ordinary clones. She was more inclined to believe

that this avatar was a real body with flesh and blood, while also retaining the personality and consciousness of the true body.

"Truly incredible, Your Majesty. This is truly like a different entity wearing the same skin as yours. Even if I said that you are currently creating a functional living being, just like a god, nobody would refute it," Ilona said as she continued observing the avatar.

Aldrian still wore his smile. "Well, it could be perfected in the future. At this moment, this avatar still has many weaknesses. He can fight and unleash my techniques, albeit in a weaker version. If he depletes all of his energy, he will disappear. But the good thing is that I can move my consciousness to the avatar and use my tricks to solve that problem," Aldrian said.

Ilona was once again amazed by the avatar. Even though Aldrian had already listed its weaknesses, it still felt like a perfect clone technique to her. A clone that could also fight and unleash all of the real body's techniques was one of the dreams of cultivators.

Ilona sighed and looked at Aldrian.

"Well, if Your Majesty says that sending the avatar is enough, then I will follow Your Majesty's arrangement. Munez has also begun asking me to meet Your Majesty as soon as possible to find out your reaction toward me—or rather, toward the Barevisk family. He has seemed quite restless since yesterday." She sighed again, and at this moment she showed a hurt expression.

"It seems that whatever his spy—which I finally discovered to be one of my party members—reported to him in the past has worried him, which made him really want to find out Your Majesty's opinion toward the Barevisk family after the devils' invasion attempt two days ago." Ilona's eyes became firm again.

"I think what Your Majesty said is true. I think he has something to do with those devils."

Aldrian nodded. "I see. Then I think it's a good time for you to return to your family as soon as possible. I've just come up with a plan that could take care of Munez. You can say this to him..." Aldrian then explained his plan to Ilona, outlining how they would proceed. Ilona, who kept listening carefully, raised her eyebrows and nodded in understanding throughout his explanation.

After a few minutes of discussion, they finally concluded the plan.

"Thank you, Your Majesty, for your help. Then I will depart immediately after I leave the palace," Ilona said as she bowed to him.

Aldrian nodded. "Take care of yourself, Miss Ilona. I hope no problems befall you and that our plan succeeds."

Ilona nodded, and Aldrian turned to his avatar. "You too, take care of her. Once you arrive at Akares, inform me."

The avatar just shrugged. "Well, even without you telling me, I would do it anyway."

Ilona and the avatar then left the palace to carry out what they needed to do, leaving Aldrian alone. Once they were gone, Aldrian stood up and stretched his body to relax his muscles.

"Ah, there is still much I need to do. To have high status, fame, and strength truly comes with its own problems and responsibilities," he said. He truly missed the days after he defeated Tarius and before the Barisan Continent opened to the world. Those times had been the best for him because he had a long time to relax and gather with his family.

A few hours later, he summoned many organization leaders from outside the continent who were still on the continent. Sylphia and Princess Vaeril also entered the hall at this time to join the discussion.

Aldrian finally announced his intent to liberate the Fallen Star Cluster from the devils' influence. The leaders were truly shocked at first. The plan came too suddenly, but most of them soon felt compelled to join his mission.

"Your Majesty, I will follow you on this mission! I will bring many of my people to fight with you," the Dragon King said without hesitation and full of spirit.

"I will follow Your Majesty as well. The Phoenix Clan will help in this war, and we will do our best," the Phoenix Queen said.

"I'm with you, Your Majesty. I will follow and even bring a million troops if necessary. With Your Majesty leading this mission, we can finally retake the Fallen Star Cluster after so long," Emperor Rozwald said.

Many other leaders also voiced their support. Aldrian could not help but smile as he thought that being strong and trusted by many people had its own perks. He did not need to exhaust himself with long speeches to make them follow him. They were ready to help simply because they believed in his strength and his ability to lead the alliance forces.

This was also the most logical and just choice for any power present.

Even if some of them joined only because they wanted to look good in front of him, that was fine. As long as they contributed, he appreciated it.

After discussing the detailed plan of the mission to retake the entire Fallen Star Cluster from the devils for a few hours, the leaders finally departed.

Left alone with Sylphia, she approached him and placed her hands gently on his shoulders.

"Tired?" she asked with a smile.

"Not really physically, but my mind that is always working truly needs to be refreshed. And my way of refreshing is already in front of me," Aldrian replied as he wrapped his arms around her waist and inhaled her scent deeply.

Sylphia giggled and said, "I will depart to the Verdyn Empire tomorrow. Would you like me to bring back something from that place?"

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## **Chapter 787 - 787: Giving Gift Before Departing (R-18)**

[ 1,662 words ]

Aldrian thought for a moment before he shook his head.

"No, I don't think I need something from that place. However, I think you should visit the Tree of Life. You might gain great benefit from it, and you could bring the fruit of the Tree of Life that was given by Princess Vaeril."

Sylphia nodded before she hugged his head. They stayed like that for a few moments before Aldrian spoke again.

"I will give you a gift before you depart tomorrow."

Before Sylphia could think of anything, Aldrian teleported them to their room, and in the next instant they were already on top of their bed. With quick movement, Aldrian grabbed both of Sylphia's hands, and Sylphia, who did not expect anything, could only be shocked.

Her eyes widened as she looked at Aldrian's face looming over hers. His gaze lingered on her sensually for a moment before he suddenly sniffed and kissed her neck.

"Ngh, that tickles," she said as she giggled.

Aldrian did not say anything and kept kissing her neck, even starting to create small hickeys. Sylphia also began to feel arousal with every touch of his. She started to rub her legs together while one of Aldrian's hands already touched her breast.

"Nghh." She wanted to release her moan, but Aldrian had already moved from her neck to her lips. He kissed her deeply, and she reciprocated, opening her lips to let him invade her mouth. He did not waste any chance and instantly slipped his tongue inside, dancing with hers.

Aldrian released both of her hands, and she hugged his head while he created a mess inside her mouth. One of his hands was already playing with her breast while the other supported his body so he would not fall on her.

They continued their warmup for a few minutes until Sylphia felt her slit under her underwear grow soaked with arousal.

Then suddenly, she felt cold across her body. Without realizing it, she was already entirely naked. Not only that, but Aldrian was also completely naked, which left her astonished. How could he do that?

However, he did not entertain her shock or wonder. He kept attacking her with his touch and lips. He would not tell her that he had already learned how to use his teleportation technique to teleport only someone's attire. That technique was truly useful in this kind of case.

His hand that had been playing with her breast started roaming down her body before reaching her holy slit. Her body trembled, but he kept kissing her and gave her reassurance while his fingers began to stroke her slit.

The sound of their erotic kissing resounded across the room as they continued, his hand never stopping its strokes against her slit.

After a few minutes, she finally lost herself and slowly opened her legs, allowing his fingers to explore deeper into her crotch. He, of course, accepted the invitation and moved to fulfill it. His middle finger kept stroking her slit before slipping into her most sacred hole.

"Nghgh."

She wanted to moan, but her lips were blocked by Aldrian's. She could only release muffled sounds as he continued fingering her. The hands she used to hug his head grew tense as waves of pleasure coursed through her body.

After a few minutes of foreplay, Aldrian could feel that Sylphia was about to climax, which made his fingers move faster and faster. Sylphia could only moan into his mouth as his onslaught grew more intense. After another moment, she finally could not hold it.

"Nghh!"

Spurt! Spurt!

She finally climaxed, her liquid drenching his hand. Her body trembled for several moments while Aldrian's finger, still buried in her pleasure hole, stayed still, being showered by her yin essence. He finally lifted his head, releasing her lips, and looked at her face, which at that moment was overflowing with extreme pleasure.

Her eyes rolled back as she kept releasing. The bed was soaked with her holy water, but neither of them cared.

Aldrian did nothing except watch her face as she climaxed in ecstasy. Even the hand that had been playing with her breast stopped. He could not help but savor her expression of pure pleasure. After nearly thirty seconds of release, Sylphia finally returned to the mortal world after visiting the heavens.

She gasped for breath, and in that moment she thought she might die from the overwhelming pleasure. Aldrian's technique was still as great as ever, always striking her G-spot and leaving her with nothing to do but surrender to the extreme pleasure.

Her eyes were half-closed, but through her haze she saw Aldrian positioning his hard dick toward her slit.

Her eyes widened slightly. "Honey, my love... could you give me time to rest? I still feel sensitive," she said nervously.

But she already knew how he would respond. She had experienced this many times before. She only said it in the hope that he would give her a little time to prepare for the pleasure that was about to come. Deep down she knew that after this, the real battle would begin. It was a losing battle, where he would completely dominate her.

He was truly like a machine, and with his incredible stamina, he would hardly stop in giving her extreme pleasure.

She could only plead for leniency and a short reprieve to prepare herself. But would he grant it?

Aldrian showed a lewd smile and said nothing, but without hesitation he pierced her hole with his spear. His trusted spear, the one he always relied on to give his women satisfaction, drilled deep inside her.

"Ahh~!"

She could only moan loudly as his dick entered her, her tongue slipping out as she threw her head back from the sudden sensation.

Seeing her reaction, Aldrian began to thrust his waist—first slowly, then faster and faster. Without giving her time to regain herself, he sent her into another wave of pleasure.

Pak! Pak! Pak!

The sound of flesh meeting flesh echoed through the room. At the same time, he played with her breasts, fondling them while his hips pounded into her. It was an attack on two fronts, and Aldrian's way of claiming victory, forcing her body to surrender for another climax.

"Ah, ah, ah!"

Pak! Pak! Pak!

He deliberately let her moan out loud, never blocking her lips. Even when she tried to cover her mouth with her hand, he grasped it and kissed it instead. Her moans were truly like music to him. Despite his relentless thrusts, he also showed his own pleasure, groaning softly as he kept moving faster and deeper.

If he had been just a normal cultivator, he would have ejaculated long ago, overwhelmed by how beautiful and hot Sylphia was. Her vagina had already molded perfectly to his dick, and although he had explored that place many times before, he still felt its incredible tightness. It forced him to hold back, resisting the urge to release too early.

After more than twenty minutes of continuous thrusting, he sensed that Sylphia was close, and he decided it was time to let himself go as well. After another minute, he finally felt her on the verge of release, and at that same moment, he unleashed his seed.

"Receive my seed, my love," he whispered beside her ear before claiming her lips in a deep kiss.

She could only respond with muffled moans as he released his seed inside her.

Spurt! Spurt! Spurt!

His yang essence flooded her womb, mixing with her yin essence. Aldrian's expression twisted in pleasure as he kept pushing his dick deep inside, sealing her pleasure hole completely to make sure nothing spilled out.

As for Sylphia, she looked as though she were in the highest heavens, her face contorted in ecstasy. Her body trembled nonstop during the climax, leaving her unable to focus on anything except the overwhelming pleasure that felt as if it might kill her.

When both of them had finally finished releasing their load, Aldrian stopped and lay beside her, pulling her into his arms and holding her close. Sylphia simply let him do as he wished, too exhausted to resist. Sweat covered her entire body, and she struggled to steady her breathing as though she had just gone through long, grueling training.

Aldrian still had the stamina to continue, but he knew when to stop and let Sylphia catch her breath. If he pushed too far, he might break her instead of giving her pleasure, and that was something he never wanted.

He understood that she would always try to accept everything he gave her, doing her best to match his rhythm. But for now, it was impossible. Because of that, he had to restrain himself and control his desire.

After a five minutes of silence, Sylphia finally turned her head to look at Aldrian's face.

"Are you trying to make me not go tomorrow? I don't think I can even leave this room until tomorrow," she said, pouting in a way that made him kiss her face because of how adorable she looked. He instantly hugged her tightly, as if he never wanted to let her go.

"Of course not. You can still go later, and I'll make sure your condition is the best it has ever been... even if I pound you for hours," he said, which made her flush red and turn her head away with another pout.

"No, I don't trust you."

Aldrian could only smile warmly before his hand found her breast again.

"Now, I think the break is over. Let's continue," he said.

For the next few hours, they indulged in pleasure until Aldrian finally stopped. He refreshed her with his golden energy, erasing her fatigue and restoring her condition completely.

The next morning, as the sun rose, Sylphia finally departed from the Barisan continent with the group from the Verdyn Empire. Aldrian smiled as he watched the big cruiser soar into the horizon. He could not help but feel proud of his Sylphia for stepping out from the Barisan continent and even taking on official matters of the empire.

After sending her off, he returned to his normal activities. Nothing much happened—until a few hours later, when he received an unexpected visit from a group.

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## Chapter 788 - 788: Randolph's Thought

[ 1,507 words ]

Aldrian was in his throne hall with several leaders from other stars who had come to visit him when he received an incoming communication from the elder guarding the teleportation portal to the central region.

"Your Majesty, there is a group from the Valroy family of Akares star, led by their young master, requesting an audience."

Hearing the group's origin, he was surprised. He would finally meet face to face with members of the Valroy family. Until now, he believed they had not dared to send anyone to meet him because they were being cautious. They, who were most likely the masterminds behind the scenes of some problems his empire was experiencing, had chosen not to approach him, and that was expected.

But now, what was their motive for finally daring to come before him?

However, after thinking, he realized that they must not yet know he had already marked them as one of the hostile families. They must have come without knowing that he already had his own opinion regarding them, and they thought that because they had never met him before, they could act normally in front of him.

He smirked at how confident they were and how wrong they were for delivering themselves to him like this.

The other guests, who saw Aldrian fall silent after receiving the incoming communication through an artifact, also waited. They did not disturb him, as he seemed to be deep in thought, until Aldrian finally looked at them.

"My apologies, but I must end our conversation here. There is another matter I need to attend to," he said.

"Ah, yes, of course, Your Majesty. Instead, we must apologize for taking too much of Your Majesty's time, and we would like to excuse ourselves. I hope that we can build a good relationship with the Aster Empire," one of the men said. The others also offered their farewells before leaving the palace.

After Aldrian was left alone in the throne hall, he thought to himself,

'Now, let's see our special guests.'

He spread his domain sense toward the teleportation station near the Xin family secret realm.

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At the teleportation station near the Xin family secret realm, a group of six men had gathered. The group was led by a handsome, black-haired young man in noble attire. If other characters from different stars were to see them, they would immediately recognize who they were because of the young man's fame and his family's reputation.

Who else could they be, if not the famous Valroy family from the Akares star?

They had arrived on the continent last night and finally came to the palace today. Randolph, who had already learned everything he needed to know about his visit, did not take long to decide to meet the emperor.

Thanks to the many visitors to this empire, information about it was no longer so rare.

Just as with those who had first set foot on the continent, they were truly surprised by the sights they saw here. Although they knew the reason behind the weakness of the average cultivators of the continent, they were still surprised. That was because what they sensed from the land was a quite rich energy, just like in some places outside, enough to propel many people to the Immortal Transition Realm.

What kind of large formation could prevent the entire populace of the continent from breaking through to the Immortal Transition Realm? This same formation also sealed the continent, making it a mysterious place since ancient times, which was truly baffling for them.

However, Randolph knew that this kind of formation could only be created by beings from higher heavens. And he knew who stayed on this Barisan continent—the two god-rebels, the ones his god and their alliance were still hunting to this very day. Personally, he truly wondered where their existence lay.

He could sense many traces of divine existence on this continent, yet he could not sense their presence directly.

"To think we have to wait just to visit someone. I never imagined there would come a time like this," one of the men beside Randolph, an elder of the family, whispered. With their reputation, they had never once waited in line to meet even an emperor anywhere. Because of that reputation, any power would at least show a measure of respect and not dare to underestimate their visit.

"Although he is strong and might have his own business, isn't this too much? We already came, yet we still have to wait for whatever reason," that person added.

"Shh, be careful with your words. We must be cautious, especially with those rumors saying Emperor Aldrian could know everything happening inside this continent. Although it sounds ridiculous, it is far better for us to behave, even if we are not standing before him," the other elder replied.

The first elder sighed. "I know, I was only saying what's on my mind and nothing more."

Randolf did not say anything. Instead, he thought about the moment he would finally meet the person who had become the hindrance to his path. His gaze lingered on the floating land in the distance, and he instantly knew that place must have been built by those god-rebels. To make such a vast land float so high could only be the doing of gods.

But though he was now in potential hostile territory, he was not overly worried. Those gods were indeed powerful beings, and even weakened by the laws of causality they could still kill him easily if they discovered his true identity. Still, he had many tricks that made him confident he could escape this place.

However, if he were exposed, Emperor Aldrian, whom he suspected of being an apostle of a god, would surely regard him as an enemy. That was something he wanted to avoid for now, because his true intent here was to build a relationship with Aldrian and learn his secrets.

He wanted to find any of Aldrian's weaknesses and exploit them later. The best outcome, of course, would be to use Aldrian to fight the devils so he would not have to do the hard work himself.

After thinking it through, he also considered the possibility that one of those rebel gods might be Aldrian's god. If so, he could use that to his advantage.

He could sit back and watch Aldrian cleanse the devils from the First Heaven while he quietly spread his god's influence.

After waiting for a few moments, the Xin family's elder finally spoke to their group. "Esteemed guests, allow me to bring you to His Majesty."

They stepped onto the teleportation formation, and in the next instant they appeared within the palace complex beneath the floating land. They were amazed by the grandeur of the palace, and even Randolf, upon finally entering the central region, could not help but feel a surge of surprise.

'This place is truly like the higher heavens—the rich heaven and earth energy, and even the dense divine energy.'

It was the first time he had found a place in the lower heavens that contained such abundant divine energy. It was no different from when his past life had visited the higher heavens.

This made him wonder, had those rebels created this place simply to sustain their lives, or was there another purpose behind it? From what he could see, the way this place was built did not seem intended for themselves, but rather for someone else.

This palace was far too grand and excessive to exist solely as their dwelling or as the base of the rebels.

Randolf put those thoughts aside as the group was led to another teleportation formation inside the main palace. A moment later, they were already standing on the grounds of Aldrian's Palace.

They had seen the palace from afar and already knew how vast and grand it was. Yet, standing before it now, they could not help but once again feel admiration.

They had seen many palaces across many stars, but the one before them was truly on another level. Its grandeur, its immense size, and the richness of the energy—the densest they had ever felt in their lives—made this place seem more like a true heaven.

"This way, esteemed guests," the Xin family elder said as he guided them into the palace. Along the way, they looked around, unable to hide their awe. Even Randolph himself was surprised, for he had never seen a palace like this. Compared even to those in the higher heavens, this one was still far too excessive.

This only strengthened his belief that this place had indeed been built by the god rebels for someone else, and not for themselves.

'Is it for Emperor Aldrian himself?' There were still many things he did not understand regarding Aldrian. If those gods had truly built this place for him, then some questions arose.

Why would they do that?

Why would they need to do that?

Was it necessary to grant all of this to a mortal?

Even if Aldrian was an apostle of one of them, was it truly necessary for them to build all of this for him?

Why?

After passing through many places and long hallways, they finally arrived at the throne hall, where they saw Aldrian seated upon his throne.

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

## Chapter 789 - 789: Finally Meeting Him

[ 1,623 words ]

A few moments earlier, before Randolph arrived at the throne hall, Aldrian was spying on him using his domain sense and the system. After scanning Randolph's entire group, Aldrian couldn't help but narrow his eyes at the information he read from Randolph.

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Randolf Valroy

Age: 15,294 years

Race: Human

Cultivation: Low Pseudo Immortal Establishment Stage

Cultivation technique: Heavenly Emperor's Destiny of White Sky

Attack techniques: [Open to see the List]

Defense technique: [Open to see the List]

Movement technique: Spatial Technique Teleportation, Spatial Movement Void Breaker, Void Steps, Steps of Illusion.

Supporting technique: [Open to see the List]

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The information shown to him reminded him of Zhang Haoran, the apostle of Tarius. Because they had too many techniques obtained from the system's rewards, the information screen had to use [Open to see the list] so it would not completely fill his system screen.

This made him wonder if this young man, the young master of the Valroy family, was the same as Zhang Haoran. But if that were the case, then several questions arose in his mind.

Why is there another apostle in the first heaven?

From the memories he saw from Zhang Haoran, there was nothing that indicated the presence of another apostle besides him in the first heaven. From his understanding, even the invaders' alliance had already agreed on the division of territories within this universe.

The nine heavens were already divided among those gods, and they seemed to have reached an agreement not to interfere with each other unless certain circumstances arose.

Now, if there truly was another apostle in the first heaven, why did Zhang Haoran not know about it? And why had Tarius done nothing regarding this matter? Was he allowing it to happen? If that were the case, then Zhang Haoran should have at least communicated with Randolph at some point.

Yet nothing of the sort appeared in Zhang Haoran's memories. It was as if Zhang Haoran himself had no knowledge of Randolph's existence. Tarius also seemed not to have warned him about Randolph, leaving Aldrian with more questions than answers.

What was the real situation? Had Tarius knowingly allowed Randolph to exist in the first heaven, or not?

Aldrian then considered another possibility—that Tarius himself was unaware of Randolph's existence in the first heaven. If that were the case, it could only mean one thing.

'Those invaders are not as united as they seem. At least one of them must be moving behind Tarius's back,' he thought.

After reaching this conclusion, he couldn't help but smile. Although it was good news for him, he first needed to confirm whether his assumption was correct or not. The most important thing now was to find out if Randolph was truly an apostle. If he was, then he would be using a system, right?

After waiting for a few more minutes, the group from the Valroy family finally arrived at the throne hall. When Aldrian saw them entering and laid eyes on them directly, he inwardly frowned, though his expression outwardly remained calm. That was because he felt the same irritation he always experienced when standing before devil cultivators.

However, these people were not devil cultivators, and because of this, he finally understood the true cause. His irritation might come from anything connected to the invaders who had come from beyond this universe.

From this sign, it became clear that they had some connection to the invaders, which further strengthened his belief that Randolph was indeed an apostle.

Randolph, who also finally saw Aldrian directly, observed him for a moment as he continued approaching the throne. He did not recklessly try to inspect Aldrian with his system, because if Aldrian truly was an apostle, he would notice the system screen appearing. That could provoke Aldrian into taking immediate action against him.

'But doesn't he seem too focused on me?' Randolph thought, noticing how Aldrian's gaze lingered on him.

'Does he realize something? No, impossible. We have never met, and everything I've done until now has always been through other hands.' He then pushed the thought aside.

As they drew closer, the elder from the Xin family bowed respectfully before Aldrian.

"Your Majesty, I have brought the envoy from the Valroy family of Akares Star."

Aldrian gave a small nod. "Alright, thank you. You may return," he said, dismissing the elder. After the man left the throne hall, Aldrian showed a faint smile.

"We greet the great emperor of the Aster Empire, Aldrian the Great. I, Randolph Valroy, young master of the Valroy family, am humbly thankful to Your Majesty for sparing some of his time to meet us," Randolph said as he and his group bowed deeply before Aldrian.

"I have already heard of the renowned Valroy family of Akares Star, the strongest family of that world. Many even claim that your family are its true sovereign. Young master, I also heard of your fame among the central star cluster's most notable figures. It is truly my pleasure to receive a visit from someone such as yourself," Aldrian replied as Randolph and his group straightened their posture.

Randolph maintained his polite smile, slightly lowering his head in acknowledgment.

"I do not deserve such high praise from Your Majesty, who has already achieved far more than I could ever hope to. All of my so called achievements and fame are nothing compared to Your Majesty, the one many hail as the strongest cultivator in the central star cluster, and even under the heavens."

The two of them continued to praise each other excessively, yet to an outsider, nothing seemed unusual.

Still smiling, Aldrian rose from his throne and walked toward Randolph.

"Would all of you mind accompanying me for a walk? I suddenly feel like stepping outside," he said as he came to stand before Randolph.

Randolf was slightly stunned, but quickly composed himself, smiling as he lowered his head again.

"It is our honor to accompany Your Majesty."

The others felt a faint strangeness at the emperor's sudden request, but none voiced it. From what they had learned, the emperor occasionally invited guests to converse in the palace gardens while enjoying the scenery, so they assumed this might be one of those moments.

Aldrian walked ahead, leading them out of the hall toward the palace gardens. The group remained silent, and Aldrian himself said nothing. At last, Randolph secretly activated his system, his gaze fixed on Aldrian's back. He thought he would at least uncover some of Aldrian's secrets, but then his eyes widened in astonishment.

He kept walking as if nothing had happened, but his attention remained locked on the system's screen, which displayed—nothing

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The system showed only garbled symbols, a clear sign that it could not read anything about Aldrian.

"System error. System error. Cannot read the target's information. System error."

The mechanical voice echoed in Randolph's mind, audible only to him, or so he believed.

The system, which usually displayed a person's information without fail, even when he had faced other apostles in his past life, now show nothing but errors.

This was truly shocking to him. For the first time, he was unable to read someone's information.

If the system, a gift given directly by his god as a divine blessing, could not function against Aldrian, then that could only mean Aldrian possessed something capable of preventing the god's power itself.

However, because this was the first time he had experienced such a thing, he could not be certain whether it was even possible.

'Maybe he really is an apostle, and his god gave him something that hides his information from others. Yes... that would make sense,' he thought positively. That was the only possibility he could imagine, for there was no way Aldrian could block the system's probing without the aid of another god's power.

He tried to calm his mind. Although he could not see Aldrian's information, he had nearly confirmed that Aldrian truly was an apostle.

Up ahead, Aldrian continued walking, but unbeknown to Randolph, he was smiling. He had been focusing his senses on Randolph the entire time, carefully reading his thoughts and every subtle movement. The moment Randolph activated his system, Aldrian knew it instantly. Now he was certain, Randolph was indeed an apostle.

Randolph's system had failed against him, just as Zhang Haoran's had when he had tried to check his information.

Now that he had confirmed it, Aldrian could begin planning what to do with Randolph. If his assumptions were correct, then this situation could be turned to his advantage. He might even be able to exploit it to create cracks within the invaders' alliance.

After a few minutes of walking, they finally arrived at the palace gardens, where Aldrian at last spoke.

"I truly like this place. Its beautiful scenery always gives me peace of mind. Don't you agree, young master?"

Randolph, who had already closed his system's screen, nodded.

"I agree, Your Majesty. To be honest, from the very first moment I set foot on this floating land, I was instantly amazed and deeply admired the palace's grandeur. Its

beauty is unmatched by anything I have ever seen. It is no wonder that the rumors say this place was built by divine beings in the past."

Aldrian maintained his smile as Randolph deliberately touched on the subject of divine beings. He could not help but find Randolph's attempt to appear innocent, and his effort to gauge Aldrian's reaction to the mention of divine beings, rather amusing.

Still, Aldrian gave him an answer.

"Well, that is not a mere rumor. When I first entered this place, there were many traces left behind by divine beings. I felt truly fortunate that I was the one who could enter it. You could even call it my fortune."

Randolph inwardly snorted, unwilling to believe Aldrian's words.

"Anyway," Aldrian continued, "speaking of divine beings, I suddenly remembered someone from this continent who was truly devoted to one. Would you like to hear his story?"

As he spoke, Aldrian's gaze fixed directly on Randolph's eyes.

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## **Chapter 790 - 790: Contradiction and Confusion**

[ 1,620 words ]

Randolph kept his smile and nodded.

"This makes me curious, Your Majesty, to bring up this person's story. If this person could leave such an impression even on Your Majesty, then he must be remarkable. If Your Majesty wishes to tell me the story about this person, I would like to hear it," he said.

Although inwardly he was confused as to why Aldrian suddenly brought up this unknown person in their conversation. Why did he want to tell the story of another? He wondered where their conversation was heading.

Aldrian smiled as he looked at the garden.

"Remarkable? Well, you could say that. This is the story of a mortal who was saved by a god and decided to become the god's follower, spreading his faith and influence. This was the person who later brought a 'great change' to the entire continent." Aldrian then started walking slowly toward one side of the garden.

"Let's just name this person Zhang. He was merely an unnoticeable mortal among countless mortals. There was nothing remarkable about him. He simply lived the life offered to him, doing his job and so on."

"One day, a series of unfortunate events befell him. He lost his only family member at the hands of his enemy, and then he was trapped inside a realm filled with powerful beasts. As a mortal, normally he would have died in that place, right? Wrong. He survived because of his determination and his desire for revenge." Aldrian then touched one of the leaves of the plants.

"As time passed, one god took notice of him, and because he was impressed by his determination and luck, he decided to grant him power, which then allowed him to accomplish extraordinary things compared to other common cultivators."

"From that moment, he, once a mere mortal, finally gained the power for his revenge. But before doing that, he needed to fulfill what his god had ordered of him before he could return to claim it. The order was simple." Aldrian then looked in another direction, where two small birds were flying as if playing with each other.

At this point, Randolph could no longer maintain only a smile. He slightly narrowed his eyes as memories of a past he thought he had already forgotten resurfaced. Hearing Aldrian's words brought the past back to him, and his frown deepened. He forced himself to remain calm. He did not want Aldrian to notice anything unusual about him.

Fortunately, Aldrian seemed not to notice and continued telling the story.

"The pure destruction, filled with death and devastation. The world had to be saturated with negative energy so his god could fulfill his plan. There was not even a fragment of peace like the scenery before us, where the continent basked in calm surroundings."

"And so his journey of destruction began. He used both his mind and his strength to achieve what his god desired. He truly spread destruction, corruption, death, and every form of negativity across the continent. Many people suffered because of his machinations, and his god's plan drew ever closer to success..."

Aldrian continued his story, but Randolph was no longer fully listening. His hand trembled slightly, though he managed to stop it in time.

Randolph realized what Aldrian was speaking about, and his heart shaken before he narrowed his eyes. He knew that Aldrian was actually telling the story of a devil

cultivator, with all that destruction and ruin. What made his heart shaken, however, was he could guess who the person in this story truly was.

A servant of a god, carrying out his mission, spreading his faith—was that not the very definition of an apostle? That was exactly what apostles had always done. And who else could be called the apostle of the devils named Zhang, if not Zhang Haoran? He did not know if Aldrian's story about Zhang Haoran was entirely true, but everything said so far matched Zhang Haoran's image.

He did not care nor wish to know whether Zhang Haoran was still alive or not. The point was that, at this moment, he realized Aldrian already seemed aware of the apostle's existence, and this only made him more certain that Aldrian himself might also be an apostle.

Although Randolph continued walking behind Aldrian and listening to his story, his mind was already turning toward a possible plan B for the current situation. He thought that Aldrian suddenly bringing up the devils and Zhang Haoran had to hold some hidden intent directed at him.

He considered that, if Aldrian somehow discovered he was also an apostle, then there would be no choice but to eliminate him at this moment. Yet in his heart, doubt lingered. What was Aldrian's true purpose in telling the story of Zhang Haoran?

Randolf convinced himself that Aldrian was speaking without knowing his own identity as an apostle of another god. Even the devil god had no idea he was here, so there was no way the other gods would know, much less Aldrian, who was still mortal.

If he made a wrong move and exposed himself because of a foolish misjudgment of the situation, it would be the gravest mistake, one that could cost him his life. Just because Aldrian knew of the existence of an apostle like Zhang Haoran, it did not mean he knew about him.

Finally, he decided to wait and see, while staying wary of Aldrian's next move after this.

"And then, fortunately, I was able to prevent the disaster from happening. Thanks to my fortunate fate, I could stop the worst from befalling the continent. I heard this story from his own mouth after I defeated him, and I could not help but lament the fate that had led him down that path. If we had met under different circumstances, we might have become friends." Aldrian sighed before looking at Randolph.

"I am not only telling this story to you, young master, but also to others who have visited me. Why am I telling it? Because I fear there may be more people like him out there. I suspect this is the reason the devils are able to slowly encroach upon our territory, and why both orthodox and unorthodox cultivators have suffered defeat. They have many such figures as their leaders, each with strange abilities, which makes the devils a truly formidable force."

Hearing this, Randolph once again narrowed his eyes in doubt. Was that really the case? He did not know Zhang Haoran's true character, but would he truly have told Aldrian about his past and all of that?

From the looks of it, Aldrian knew there were many existences like Zhang Haoran, but he did not seem certain how many were out there. His knowledge might have been limited to what Zhang Haoran had told him. Perhaps he had tried to peer into Zhang Haoran's memories, but the system would have prevented it.

An apostle's soul and memories were protected by the system itself, with safeguards to stop any entity from peering into them, even other apostles. If Aldrian's consciousness had entered Zhang Haoran in an attempt to see his memories, the system within Zhang Haoran would have retaliated, which could have badly damaged Aldrian's soul.

At worst, if Aldrian had forced his way in, he might have ended up crippled in mind, his soul so heavily injured that he would be reduced to a retard. The system was not something that could be bypassed easily, and he had never heard of anyone who managed to break through another's system.

But what left him confused was Aldrian's information. Wasn't Aldrian himself an apostle? If he was, then he should already know that apostles were rare, and none of them resided in the same area, or even the same heavens. So why was he acting as if many apostles could be out there? Was he simply putting on an act, hiding his true intent?

There were many contradictions in Aldrian's words compared to his own understanding, which left him confused. His conclusion was that Aldrian was indeed an apostle, but he did not seem to know the extent of how many apostles from the alliance existed. This struck him as strange, since Aldrian's god should have already told him such information.

Even if his god belonged to the side of the rebels, he should still have been informed about his enemies and given the knowledge he needed as an apostle.

"I see. If that is the case, then it will indeed be troublesome if higher beings, such as divine beings, were to intervene in the affairs of the lower realm. This is truly a serious matter that should be given attention in the future," Randolph said, appearing to agree.

Aldrian nodded. "Yes. I share this information so that others can realize that such existences do exist, and I hope all of you will plan with this in mind. They are truly cunning, and with their unwavering loyalty to their god, they will not easily yield and will continue to bring destruction according to their god's will."

Randolph nodded. "I will keep that in mind, Your Majesty."

After that, they spoke about other matters for nearly thirty minutes before Randolph and his group excused themselves. Once Aldrian finally saw Randolph leaving the floating land, he smirked and walked back to the throne hall.

'That man must be confused by now. Let his mind keep turning, forcing him to chase after a conclusion of his own—a wrong conclusion that will only confuse him further,' he thought.

What he had told Randolph was a mixture of truth and lies, carefully woven to leave him in confusion.

This was the long game he intended to play. If he succeeded, then once he ascended to the Second Heaven, those invaders would see each other as enemies. In the end, that would only make his path to reclaim this universe far easier.

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

## Chapter 791 - 791: Festive Welcome

[ 1,554 words ]

A week later, nothing noticeable happened across the continent during that time. Aldrian continued his normal activities and kept receiving many visits from various powers across the star cluster even beyond. For the first time, there were also some who came from other star clusters after hearing the news about him and wished to meet him.

They came from a nearby star cluster, about five days' journey away using warp. They had already heard rumors about the appearance of a cultivator who had shaken the Ancient Blue Gate World and even the Central Star Cluster not long after his battle with Tarius.

However, many of these people did not see it as necessary to visit him or make the journey simply to build a relationship. They considered Aldrian just another strong cultivator in the Central Star Cluster, which already had many powerful figures compared to other star clusters.

But the latest news, that he had battled millions of devils by himself truly shook them. It made them decide to visit, for such news could not be underestimated. They felt they needed to establish ties with someone capable of fighting devils on the scale of a great war.

They had their own problems with devils, and the Fallen Star Cluster was one of their greatest concerns.

The Central Star Cluster stood at the forefront, being the closest to the Fallen Star Cluster. They knew that if the devils waged another great war against the Central Star Cluster, they would also be affected. That was why the devils' threat had become a common problem for the surrounding star clusters.

Building a relationship with a cultivator strong enough to destroy millions of devil troops, and they had heard was even supported by forces from the central region of heaven, was a necessity. They needed to form good relations with such a man, as they might require his help in the future.

At this moment, Aldrian sat upon his throne while five visitors from the nearby Whale Star Cluster stood before him. They had arrived only a few hours ago, yet in that time, they had already learned much about Aldrian and the continent before requesting an audience.

"We are truly thankful for Your Majesty's willingness to establish cooperation between our two empires. We hope to continue strengthening this relationship in the future," said the leader of the group, a man with a blonde moustache, as he bowed along with the others.

Aldrian smiled. "Of course, I am awaiting the future cooperation with the Arehlin Empire, as I can already see great potential in the bond between our two empires."

A few moments later, the group left the palace. However, not long after they departed, Aldrian received an incoming voice transmission, and he instantly knew who it was.

"I've already arrived at the Verdyn Empire." The voice came from one of his avatars who was accompanying Sylphia on her journey to the Verdyn Empire. Alongside them were three members of the Dark Saber group, with Vars among them.

At that moment, they had just arrived on the Continent of Elves, where their large cruiser had landed in the designated zone outside the capital city of the Verdyn Empire, Reviras City.

Aldrian's avatar stood beside Sylphia, dressed in a black robe and wearing a mask and behind the mask, he used a disguise technique. The only ones who knew that he was an avatar were Sylphia and the members of Dark Saber.

Aldrian had already ordered the avatar to report upon arrival at their destination, the same command he had given to another avatar who was at Akares Star with Ilona. That avatar had reached Akares Star a few days earlier and had already begun slowly carrying out their plan.

As for Princess Vaeril and her group, they did not know that Aldrian had sent an avatar. They only assumed that the masked figure was another of her imperial guardians. They could not sense any aura from him, but they did not underestimate him. In their eyes, he might be a hidden master secretly dispatched by the emperor to protect his woman.

After disembarking from the cruiser, they were greeted by many imperial troops of the Silvarin family along with several luxurious carriages. Sylphia entered the central carriage together with the avatar, Princess Vaeril, and her personal guardian. The other nobles in Vaeril's group, as well as Vars and his men, boarded separate carriages.

Moments later, the horned horses began pulling the carriages forward, entering the city. Their destination was the imperial palace, which stood beneath the colossal world tree—far larger and taller than any world tree on the Barisan Continent.

The sight left Sylphia in awe, for the tree was many times greater in scale, its towering crown giving the illusion that it reached into the upper atmosphere.

However, she was not overly surprised, for she had already seen something far greater than the world tree of this place. It was the tree within her past dream, where she had met the mysterious woman, whom she later discovered to be the spirit of the Heavenly Tree of the World, or in other words, her god.

The Heavenly Tree of the World was of a size she could not fathom. Its top could not be seen, as though it pierced the heavens, while its roots might well reach into the underworld. It was the tree of god, the sacred tree that all elves revered and worshipped.

As the convoy entered the city, the road had already been cleared. People lined both sides of the street, their eyes fixed on the approaching carriages with a glimmer of excitement, as though awaiting the arrival of someone famous.

The news of the visit of Aldrian the Great's fiancée had already been spread throughout the empire and even beyond by the imperial family. Many eagerly anticipated seeing the woman of the hero of the Ancient Blue Gate World. It was also the first time they had heard of someone from the Barisan Continent visiting their land.

"Look, that must be her! She's Aldrian the Great's fiancée—how pretty!"

"It's Her Majesty Sylphia, the hero's fiancée!"

"How beautiful. No wonder Aldrian the Great fell in love with her."

Such comments spread among the crowd as they watched the convoy pass by. Sylphia's carriage had been specially prepared with clear glass windows, allowing those outside to see in and those inside to see out. Normally, this was not done, as it could endanger those within the carriage and compromise their privacy.

However, this occasion was different. By Princess Vaeril's arrangement and with Aldrian's agreement, the carriage had been prepared this way to show everyone that Sylphia was truly present, traveling in the same carriage as the princess.

It was a deliberate message to the people and, more importantly, to the opposing factions, Aldrian openly supported the Silvarin imperial family as the rightful sovereign of the empire. Even if discontent toward the imperial family lingered among many, Aldrian's clear stance would compel them to reconsider in light of his recognition.

Aldrian's reputation at this moment was at its peak, as he alone had been able to block the devils' surprise invasion. That fact by itself was enough to make most people reconsider their stance in the conflict between the imperial family and the opposition faction.

The imperial family had also prepared extensive security to ensure nothing would happen during Sylphia's stay on this continent.

As the carriage continued moving, Sylphia looked out the window with a smile. From time to time, she waved her hand to the people, which only made the atmosphere more festive as the crowd grew even more excited by her acknowledgment.

Observing the city since their entry, Sylphia was truly surprised by how different it was compared to the capital of the Ivory Kingdom, Evergreen City.

This city, in comparison to Evergreen, was far grander and far more modern, leaving Sylphia in awe. She had not expected this. In her mind, she had imagined the elves' capital to be more conservative and more "blended with nature" than Evergreen city, yet the reality was the opposite.

What she saw were many brick buildings seamlessly combined with the forest's vegetation, giving the city a unique and striking scenery. Various races could be seen here and there—dwarves, humans, spiritual beasts, and even spirits. The closest city she could compare it to was Balin City, where many races mingled together and the architectural styles were just as varied.

"How is it, Your Majesty? The scenery of the city," Princess Vaeril suddenly asked.

Sylphia turned to look at her. "It's really beautiful, but to be honest, I'm surprised. This city is not what I imagined. What I had imagined was... well, I would say something more conservative, much like the capital of the Ivory Kingdom in the Barisan Continent."

Princess Vaeril smiled and nodded. "I understand why Your Majesty would think that way. But because we maintain connections with many races and powers across the world and even from other stars, we must accommodate their needs so they can live comfortably here. Over time, our lifestyle also began to adapt to that."

Sylphia nodded in understanding, then turned her gaze back to the scenery outside.

While the convoy continued its journey toward the imperial palace, in another place, a group of elves sat within a luxurious room. They had gathered for a discussion, and one of them was reporting to the elf seated in the central chair.

"They are already on the street and approaching the imperial palace."

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## Chapter 792 - 792: Planning to Turn the Situation Around

[ 1,694 words ]

"They are already on the street and approaching the imperial palace." One of the elves gave a report to the middle-aged elf sitting in the center seat. There was nothing particularly noticeable about the elf in the center seat, except that he possessed cultivation at the middle pseudo-immortal stage.

His middle-aged face still retained its handsomeness and youthful appearance, without much sign of aging. All of the elves inside the room looked at him, waiting for his response and instruction, because he was their leader in the movement against the Silvarin imperial family.

He was the opposition faction's leader, and the future emperor if they could seize the throne—Grand Duke Freindor lyn Valian.

"I see. To think that the imperial family could really bring Aldrian the Great into our problem. It is truly surprising that they managed to convince Aldrian the Great to even send his fiancée. I suppose the imperial family must have given something so valuable that it made Aldrian the Great decide to choose Verdyn empire. This is truly a dangerous development for us," Freindor said with a frown.

The others also wore worried expressions, and one of them, a female elf, spoke.

"With Aldrian the Great's fiancée actually coming here for real, I can guess that after today our support from the populace will reduce drastically. Aldrian the Great's fame and reputation are truly high at this moment, and even his name alone carries heavy weight. Everything that seems to be acknowledged by him will also be acknowledged by others."

"Damn it, it's only a matter of time before all of us are swept away by the imperial family. With the reduction of support from the populace, we have nothing to depend on to go against the imperial family. Shit! As expected from those bastards, we really can't trust them. Where the hell did those devils actually go?! After offering to work together, they suddenly disappeared," another elf said in frustration.

Grand Duke Freindor's frown deepened, as he had thought about this many times. He shared the same frustration as this elf and had cursed the devils countless times because they suddenly disappeared after everything they had done.

In the past, their plan had seemed smooth sailing. They only needed to take advantage of the chaos created by the so-called devil god and seize the throne. He would become the ruler of the continent of elves, and the devils would not disturb them as long as they continued working together.

However, the appearance of Aldrian the Great truly messed their plan. The so-called god had not created enough destruction and distraction for the entire world, and was even defeated by Aldrian the Great. The devils, who had always reassured him that the plan would absolutely work, were themselves confused, and that made him truly furious.

The golden time for their plan to work had already passed without much happening. The imperial family still retained their strong power because of the existence of the World Tree. In their plan, they had intended to weaken the World Tree with the help of the devil god.

However, with the devil god defeated and the world quickly returning to normal, they could not simply barge into the imperial palace and wreak havoc. That would be a foolish thing to do, nothing more than suicide.

With the plan gone awry, and with the devils not even certain about what had really happened to their god, all of them finally decided to take a more frontal approach. They still had much of the populace's opinion leaning toward them, and they could use that. With the growing dissatisfaction among the populace, the imperial family—whether they wanted it or not—would have to concede to public pressure.

That was, if they did not want a civil war that would take the lives of many innocent people. If the empress stubbornly clung to her position, then civil war might truly be inevitable, and he would likely win because the people's power was leaning toward him.

With the devils also helping behind the scenes, he was sure that although their initial plan had gone awry, they would still reach their destination. With him, the Grand Duke, becoming an emperor, there would be nothing to disturb him or threaten his position.

As emperor, he could erase any connection between himself and the devils, and no one would be able to investigate him because of his status. The fact that he had ties to the

devils would be buried forever, while the devils would gain their own benefit from him becoming emperor.

But then another disaster occurred. All of the devils who had helped him suddenly disappeared, most likely dead after those strange heavenly lightning strikes. He could not find any of them, nor could he contact them anywhere, and when he visited their secret place, only destruction remained.

At first, he thought that the devils had escaped and abandoned him and his faction. But after thinking thoroughly and analyzing the phenomenon and its traces, he concluded that the devils might already be dead—all of them.

This was truly shocking to him. Still, he did not care about how or why the phenomenon had happened, what mattered was that the devils who had supported him were gone. With the devils dead, he had lost a great source of strength, leaving his faction weaker than ever.

He had also lost many connections that the devils seemed to have built for so long with some hidden powers, and this hindered their operations. There was also the potential that someone might discover their connection because of the strange lightning strikes, the cause of which he still did not know. And beyond that, there were other matters weighing on his concern.

He was already too deeply involved with the devils for it to be possible to wash his hands clean. He knew that even the imperial family already suspected him of having ties with the devils, but since they had not found anything yet, they had not made a move.

However, he knew that once they discovered proof of his involvement with the devils, they would not hold back and would attack him. No matter how strong the populace's support for him and his faction might be, once it was revealed that he had worked with the devils, all of that would be for nothing.

With the devils gone, it did not mean proof could not be found. Their traces were everywhere because of those strange heavenly lightning strikes, and the imperial family was already investigating the sites. They seemed to already know about the presence of the devils in many parts of the empire.

It was only a matter of time before he was found out, and because of that he decided to act more openly, even desperately. With the support of the populace and the strength of his faction, he even tried to incite rebellion in many parts of the empire to force the empress to abdicate.

This was his last chance.

But then another challenge appeared. The imperial family had brought outside influence into their struggle, and it was the strongest factor that could overturn the result overnight. The imperial family had actually convinced Aldrian the Great to send someone as important as his fiancée to this empire.

This infuriated him deeply, and he wanted to lash out, but he knew that would not solve the dire situation they were in. What he needed now was a way to turn the situation around.

"What are we supposed to do, Lord Freindor? We will end up on the execution platform if things do not change," one of his supporters asked. But Freindor did not answer immediately. He only frowned, thinking hard about how to escape this crisis, when his eyes suddenly widened in realization. Seeing his expression, the others knew that the Grand Duke had found an idea.

Grand Duke Freindor finally showed a smile as he spoke.

"I think we could take advantage of the current situation. Maybe the visit from Aldrian the Great's fiancée could be a blessing in disguise for us."

The others looked at the Grand Duke in confusion, and one of them asked, "Do you have a plan in mind, Lord Freindor?"

The Grand Duke kept his smile and met their gazes. "Let's kill her. Kill Aldrian the Great's fiancée."

At once, all of them widened their eyes in shock and horror. Kill Aldrian the Great's fiancée? Was Grand Duke Freindor out of his mind?

"Are you serious, my lord?"

Freindor did not change his expression. "I am entirely serious. I know what you are thinking after hearing my words, but listen to me first. If this works, perhaps we will not have to remove the imperial family ourselves."

The others were not entirely convinced and looked at him with doubt, but the Grand Duke continued.

"Do you know what would happen if Aldrian the Great's fiancée were killed inside the imperial palace? You must already be able to imagine what would follow."

One of them still frowned. "I know. Aldrian the Great might hold the imperial family accountable, and the people's image of the imperial family will only get worse because they will be seen as failing to keep her safe. It would cause an uproar across the empire and even the world because this would be a huge incident," he said.

"However, we would also be implicated and could be dragged into hell by Aldrian the Great himself. He must know that we and the imperial family are at odds, and he would include us on the suspect list if his fiancée were killed, because I believe he suspects it could be our machination as well."

The Grand Duke nodded, and then his eyes glinted. "I know that. That is why I will make sure the imperial family is the only one that takes the brunt of Aldrian the Great's fury. Let them burn, and we can watch and reap the results later. Here is what I have in mind..." He then explained his plan to the others, and when he finished, their expressions eased, although some doubts remained in their hearts.

The plan the Grand Duke had devised was the only thing that might turn the situation around, so after much consideration they agreed.

"All right then. Let us use this plan," Grand Duke Freindor said with a smile.

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## Chapter 793 - 793: Meeting the Empress

[ 1,539 words ]

The imperial family convoy finally reached the imperial palace, and along the road, Sylphia was always accompanied by the cheers of many people. She felt as if she were in the Barisan continent, where she was accompanied by festive lines of populace when she rode in a carriage on her journey in the past.

It was just like the time she rode a carriage to the main church of the Heavenly Direction Church during the marriage of Aldrian's parents.

At this moment, she could feel and see for herself Aldrian's image in the people's hearts and his influence. Even in a distant continent, his name still resounded and carried a weight that made even her arrival seem like the arrival of Aldrian himself.

The carriage finally stopped at the front gates of the palace, and the door of her carriage was opened. Yet before she could even step down, she was stunned to see a mature elf standing before the doors, elegantly poised as though waiting for someone.

With long golden hair, clear blue eyes, and dressed in green and white imperial robes, she was truly stunning. Her mature beauty reminded Sylphia of her own mother back in

the Barisan continent—a motherly beauty with its own unique charm. Even as she looked at the woman, Sylphia felt a gentle, maternal aura.

From the attire she wore and the crown upon her head, Sylphia instantly guessed who the woman was, leaving her astonished.

Princess Vaeril also seemed astonished when she saw the elf and could not help but call out.

"Mother."

The empress had actually come out herself and was even standing in front of the palace doors, which was truly out of the norm. The moment Sylphia and Princess Vaeril stepped out of the carriage, Empress Vilena showed a warm smile, and the princess quickly walked toward her mother.

"Mother," she said as she gave a slight bow before straightening again.

Empress Vilena nodded as she looked at her daughter with a smile.

"You must be tired after such a long journey. You have done well, Vaeril," the empress said.

"Not really, Mother. But why are you here? If the people see you waiting, it would not look good," Princess Vaeril replied.

"We are receiving an important guest, so I thought at the very least I should be here to show my sincerity in building a good relationship," the empress said before turning her gaze to Sylphia beside her daughter.

"It is truly a pleasure for me to finally meet you, Your Majesty, Empress Vilena. To be honest, I am truly surprised to see Your Majesty standing here waiting for my arrival. It makes me feel guilty, yet at the same time, I feel deeply honored. As the representative of the Aster Empire, appointed by Aldrian the Great, I sincerely hope we can build a mutual relationship that will last for a long time," Sylphia said.

Sylphia was actually quite nervous inside. The way she spoke to the empress felt too casual for her, which made her feel bad. In front of her stood the empress of a great empire on another continent.

Her strength and influence were great, and her age was far greater than Sylphia's. In a normal situation, Sylphia should have been the one to lower her head in respect.

Yet as Aldrian's representative and his fiancée, she had to maintain her dignity and her status as the future empress of the Aster Empire. If she showed too much deference to the leader of another power, it would diminish Aldrian's image.

That was something she wanted to avoid at all costs. At this moment, she had to act her best not only as Aldrian's representative but also as the future empress, so as not to bring shame to him.

Still, it felt somewhat strange to her. She was much weaker and younger than the empress, yet she had to carry herself and speak as if they were equals in age and status.

"The same goes for me, Your Majesty Sylphia. I am truly honored that His Majesty, Aldrian the Great, has chosen our empire as the place for Your Majesty's first visit among the many powers beyond. This is our greatest honor," Empress Vilena replied.

She glanced at the masked figure standing behind Sylphia for a moment and could not help but frown inwardly. She could not detect any cultivation from him, and she assumed he was Sylphia's personal imperial guardian.

She could sense the cultivation of Sylphia and the others in her group, but not this masked man. It surprised her that there is someone that she could not read.

The avatar, noticing the empress's gaze, only smiled behind his mask. She must be curious about him, yet he did not mind. His attention was focused elsewhere. From earlier, he had sensed someone observing him intently.

There was no ill intent from the observer, and the presence came from only one person. Judging from the direction, it seemed to originate from the World Tree. If he could use the system and his domain sense as his real body could, he would have already known who it was. Unfortunately, he could not. Still, he did not mind. As long as there was no hostility, he would simply let them be.

After glancing at Aldrian's avatar, Empress Vilena then turned to look at the other nobles within Princess Vaeril's group, who stood not far from them.

"You all must also be tired after the long journey, so I have prepared rooms for you to rest in before you return to your family's manor. However, Young Master Luren, I received a message from your father. He asked me to tell you that once you arrive, you should go directly to your manor."

"We are thankful for Your Majesty," the others answered with bows. Luren, slightly stunned, also bowed as he replied.

"Thank you for the information, Your Majesty. Then, I will excuse myself," he said politely, though inwardly he was infuriated. He knew the empress's words were nothing but an excuse. She had essentially told him to "fuck off" in the most polite manner. There was no way his father would have left such a message with the empress.

Yet he could not deny her words or lash out, especially not in front of Aldrian the Great's fiancée. So he simply turned his body and walked away.

He wanted to return to the carriage to ask the coachman to bring him to one of his family's properties in the capital, a manor. But before he could get close—

"My apologies, Young Master Luren, but I think the carriage is off limits for now. It must undergo maintenance, and the horses need to rest. So I'm afraid you will have to walk for a while. I have already informed your family of your arrival, and they said they would send another carriage to pick you up outside the palace grounds," Empress Vilena said.

Luren nearly shouted in rage, his head feeling as if it were about to explode. He knew he was being played. Her intent was only to humiliate him. Because he was the only one here belonging to the opposition faction, she chose to show her dominance and trample his dignity—especially in front of Aldrian the Great's fiancée.

He struggled to calm himself, his face already red as he held back his fury. Inwardly, he cursed the empress countless times, but still he turned toward her. He forced a rigid, awkward smile, which made Sylphia smile in amusement as she found it funny.

"I see. Thank you for the information, Your Majesty. Then excuse me," he said in a polite, steady voice, though everyone could tell he was fuming inside while desperately trying to keep his composure.

Without even looking back at Luren, Empress Vilena turned to Sylphia.

"Your Majesty, let us go inside. It is not good to remain standing outside after such a long journey. You should take a rest, and we can converse further within."

Sylphia nodded, and together they entered the palace. Inside, she noticed little difference from the palaces of humans, grand, luxurious, yet nothing that particularly interested her. She was already accustomed to the unmatched splendor of Aldrian's palace, which had long since numbed her sense of admiration for luxury.

The other nobles were guided by imperial maids to their accommodations, while Sylphia was led to the empress's private chamber for a more relaxed conversation.

Once they arrived, only Sylphia and the avatar entered the room with Empress Vilena and Princess Vaeril. After the imperial maids served them drinks and excused themselves, the empress finally spoke in a more comfortable tone.

"How was Your Majesty's journey? I hope your travel here was without trouble, and that you were able to enjoy it."

"I'm well, Empress Vilena, truly well. In fact, I was very comfortable along the journey and enjoyed every part of it. This is my first time leaving the Barisan continent, so it has been quite a new experience for me," Sylphia answered.

"I'm glad that Your Majesty could enjoy it," Empress Vilena said with a smile before lifting her cup and taking a sip of tea. Afterward, her expression turned slightly solemn.

"By the way, Your Majesty, there is something I truly wish to ask and discuss after I heard about it from Vaeril. Is it true that His Majesty, Aldrian the Great, truly intends to retake the entire Fallen Star Cluster?"

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## Chapter 794 - 794: Meeting Another One

[ 1,541 words ]

"Yes, Your Majesty, Aldrian was serious about retaking the fallen star cluster. If he said he will do something, then he will do it, even if he has to do it alone. If he said he would retake the fallen star cluster, then even without any support from anyone, he would still do it."

Hearing Sylphia's answer, even Empress Vilena and Princess Vaeril's hearts trembled. Those were truly powerful words. They knew that with the incomprehensible ability Aldrian the Great possessed, he might indeed be able to accomplish that impossible task alone. After all, they still did not know if Aldrian the Great had already shown them the full extent of his ability.

If Aldrian the Great could accomplish retaking the entire fallen star cluster, then his name would truly be engraved in the history of this part of heaven forever. This was a historic and world-changing event for the future, and Empress Vilena could already imagine what the leaders of other powers had in mind.

Of course, they would join Aldrian in his mission. Whatever their reasons, be it moral obligation, creating a favorable image in front of Aldrian the Great, or seeking glory for their family's future history, they would not pass up the chance to join Aldrian the Great.

All of them were people moved by their own interests, and they would not act until they felt assured, even certain, that they could achieve something in this mission. It was not like in the past, when they had a thousand reasons to avoid partaking in the effort to retake the fallen star cluster.

At this time, there would be many who wished to join the mission because they were confident in Aldrian the Great's strength.

And Empress Vilena was no exception. Helping Aldrian the Great was in her interest, and joining this mission was her way of securing a closer relationship with him in the future. Moreover, with him already giving special attention to the Verdyn Empire, she would not leave Aldrian the Great alone in his endeavor to retake the fallen star cluster.

"I see. I also do not doubt that His Majesty will have a high chance of retaking the entire fallen star cluster," Empress Vilena said. As if she were pondering for a moment, though in truth she was not, she then looked at Sylphia. "Then my decision is the same as Vaeril's. We would also like to join His Majesty in his mission to retake the fallen star cluster. If His Majesty needs anything, then I will gladly give it to him."

Sylphia smiled upon hearing that. She knew that Empress Vilena had already decided what she needed to do even before Sylphia arrived at the empire. She expressed it in this way only to show her resolve and determination to join Aldrian, and to leave a good impression to her. The avatar standing behind her thought the same, but he did not say anything.

After that, they continued conversing about the mission to retake the fallen star cluster before moving on to other topics. They spoke for another hour and a half before the empress decided it was enough.

"Oh my, look at how fast the time passes. I truly feel bad for making Your Majesty converse with me this long when you have just arrived on the continent. I think this is enough for now. Your Majesty must be tired, and I have already prepared a few rooms for Your Majesty's entourage to rest."

Sylphia smiled and nodded. "Then, I truly thank Your Majesty for this." Sylphia and Aldrian then left the room, guided by an imperial maid to their quarters.

Once Sylphia's voice could no longer be heard, Empress Vilena turned to Princess Vaeril.

"After meeting Aldrian the Great, how is he as a person from what you saw? Were the reports from others true?" she asked.

The princess wore a thoughtful expression. "Well, how should I put it... he seems to be a man full of mystery and confidence. Every word he says always reassures me because of that confidence. He is far too mature for his age. Speaking with him feels as though I am conversing with someone who has lived a long life and gathered much experience, which is all the more shocking since he has not even reached twenty yet."

Hearing this, the empress was astonished. She had already read the reports about Aldrian's age, but because of how absurd it seemed, she could never fully believe it. Yet

hearing her daughter say it made her belief grow stronger. The only thing left was to meet Aldrian the Great herself to confirm it.

"I heard from many sources that Aldrian the Great is also a man full of affection. He truly loves his family and will do anything for them. He also a figure that never disappoints his allies. If they reach an agreement, he acts accordingly, treating others as they treat him," the princess continued.

"The worst is if someone becomes his enemy. From all the stories I have heard, every one of his enemies met a terrible end. It is useless to run from him, because he always finds those who against him, no matter where they hide. His reputation for uprooting evil wherever he sets foot is already known throughout the entire Aster Empire."

"He also seems to harbor a special hatred for the devils, as though he has a personal vendetta against them. Well that is a good thing."

"In conclusion, he is a good man to his friends, family, and allies, but a nightmare to his enemies."

The empress nodded at her daughter's conclusion, but Princess Vaeril was not yet finished.

"However, still, even now, after meeting him a few times, I sometimes ask myself, 'How could someone like that exist? Did the heavens create him directly within his mother's womb or what?' Everything about him is too grand, too exaggerated, too extraordinary. It feels as if the heavens gave him all their best—his fate, his strength, his looks, everything." Vaeril finally stopped and let out a sigh.

The empress nodded and turned her gaze in another direction, as if looking into the distance.

"Well, perhaps his very existence truly has a purpose. For the heavens to allow someone so perfect to be born, then he must be carrying the heavy weight of fate on his shoulders. This makes me want to meet him face to face even more. Perhaps I should follow him to the fallen star cluster later?"

Princess Vaeril raised her eyebrows. Her mother wanted to leave the continent? That would be the first time in so long. With her mother joining, the alliance troops would surely be strengthened.

While the empress and her daughter conversed, Aldrian's avatar, Sylphia, and the Dark Saber group walked toward their accommodations, guided by the imperial maids.

As they walked, the avatar sent a sound transmission to Sylphia.

"How do you feel, finally speaking face to face with someone of that level?"

Sylphia smiled slightly. "Well, I was quite nervous, but I managed in the end. I can't embarrass you, right?"

Hearing her answer, the avatar smiled.

"Good work, Your Majesty. I'm truly proud of you."

His praise filled Sylphia with pride. Though he was only Aldrian's avatar, it felt the same as if the words had come from Aldrian himself. His demeanor and the way he spoke were exactly how Aldrian would praise her if he were here at this moment.

Not long after, they finally arrived at their rooms. The rooms were close to each other, an arrangement personally made by Empress Vilena. Before Sylphia could enter her bedroom, the avatar sent another voice transmission.

"After this, I will go somewhere to check something."

Sylphia nodded. "Alright, be careful."

"Yes."

Aldrian's room was right beside Sylphia's. It was a luxurious chamber, furnished with every necessity for a guest and filled with comfort. Yet he paid little attention to the luxury. His focus was instead on the world tree itself. The presence he had sensed observing him since earlier had not stopped, and that constant scrutiny stirred his curiosity to find out who it was.

After making sure there was nothing strange in the room, he activated his stealth technique and teleported outside. He appeared high above the palace, right beside the world tree's trunk. Then he teleported again, until he reached one of the branches far above the clouds.

He nearly reached the very top of the tree, but stopped there, sensing that the presence observing him was already nearby.

"Would you like to come out and talk to me? I know you are here, and I would also like to speak with you," Aldrian said as he turned toward one direction, and canceling his stealth technique.

From one part of the branch, a figure slowly emerged. At first it was transparent, then it solidified into the form of a beautiful woman, her features revealing that she was not entirely human.

Seeing her, the avatar could not help but recall some figures his real body had encountered in the Barisan continent, Olivia, Alice, and Vireline, the spirits of the world tree.

He could already guess that this woman too was a spirit of the world tree. She looked at him calmly, yet there seemed to be many questions within her mind as she continued to observe him.

Before the avatar could speak more, the spirit suddenly moved, lowering herself in a deep kowtow.

"My lord."

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## Chapter 795 - 795: Conversation About Her Past

[ 1,570 words ]

"My lord," the spirit said to the avatar.

The avatar observed the spirit with elven features standing not far in front of him. She was a mature beauty with long green hair, dressed in a green and golden gown. Her aura revealed her extraordinary cultivation at the peak pseudo-immortal stage.

However, seeing how she suddenly acted in submission, he guessed this spirit must have already sensed his unique quality when she looked at him directly, just like the other world tree spirits had sensed his real body for the first time.

His golden energy was captivating for spirits and spiritual beasts, making them the ones most drawn to him whenever they sensed it.

He then removed his mask and canceled his disguise technique.

"I guess you are the spirit of this world tree, right? Do you know me, since you called me my lord? Earlier, I could sense your observation of me, which made me curious," the avatar asked.

The spirit straightened her body and looked at him directly.

"I don't know you personally, my lord, but your energy... that energy is like what I sensed in the vision I received long ago, a vision that came from the first ancestor of the empire. In that vision, I saw a beautiful phenomenon in the sky, and there would be someone with a special energy likely to appear. If that figure came, the first ancestor left me a message that I must serve him to the best of my ability," she said.

"My apologies if my observation disturbed you, but the moment I sensed my lord for the first time, I was truly astonished and curious. You triggered something deep within me, something I have only felt once in my life. I could say that this is like an innate attraction to you, my lord, which is why I kept observing you. With your unique quality and with my instinct and soul also telling me to serve you, I believe you are the one mentioned in the vision."

Aldrian nodded. It was the same as with the other spirits, and he knew her attraction was not a kind of romantic one but an attraction toward his very being. His golden energy was what made them feel this attraction.

She said that the first ancestor of the Verdyn Empire gave her a vision about him. His real body had already guessed in the past that the first ancestor was Seralis. The phenomenon in the sky must have referred to the aurora that appeared after he absorbed the golden orb in his palace, which was the sign that he had already broken free from the Barisan Continent.

This place was also the location of the Tree of Life, after all, and Seralis must have given that vision to prepare in case he ever visited this place.

"I see. Do you have a name? It would not be good if I just call you 'you'," he asked.

"I don't have any name, my lord."

"Do you want a name?"

"If my lord would give me a name, then it would be my honor," she replied.

The avatar thought for a moment before he found one that he felt was a good name for her.

"How about I call you Viona? That sounds good, right?"

"Viona... Viona..." she muttered it a few times before finally showing a smile and nodding.

"I like it, my lord. Thank you for giving me a name, and from this moment my name shall be Viona."

The avatar smiled and nodded. "I'm glad you like it. Anyway, I would like to ask you some questions. Would you mind accompanying me in conversation?"

"It would be my pleasure, my lord," the spirit replied.

"How old are you? I mean, your spirit form."

"My apologies, my lord, but I no longer count my exact age. However, I am already more than a billion years old. My spirit form was born even before the Verdyn Empire was established. As for the world tree itself, it is far, far older. I do not even know the true age of my real body, but from my understanding, this tree may have grown not long after the Ancient Blue Gate World was created."

The avatar was not truly shocked upon hearing her age. Spirits were beings born from nature itself, taking form in many shapes. Known spirit races, such as the Celestial Night Spirit, in the ancient past were not as they are now, when they could reproduce like other beings. They were born directly from the universe, from nature itself, just like Viona.

After their birth, they will have extremely long lifespans. As long as the place they were born from is not destroyed, they will continue to live. They can cultivate simply by naturally absorbing the surrounding heaven and earth energy without using any specific technique, much like spiritual beasts in their beast form.

But then a question arises, doesn't that mean they could live forever even without high cultivation?

The answer is no. As time passes, a spirit will undergo transformation. They will become more "physical." They gain the characteristics of normal cultivators and become much freer, no longer completely bound to the place they were born from.

Spirits like Olivia, Alice, Vireline, and Viona, cannot remain far away from their birthplace forever. In this case, the world tree. If they are gone for too long and too far, they will lose control of themselves. They will grow weak, and their existence could even disappear, as their connection to the place of their birth becomes too distant and severed.

The only way for them to overcome this weakness is to wait. Wait until the time comes when they undergo the change to become like other beings. However, the problem is that they never know when that time will be, as each spirit has a different cycle. It could be hundreds of years, hundreds of thousands of years, or even billions of years, no one knows.

That is why it is only a matter of time before a spirit of the world tree changes to become more physical. But even now, Aldrian did not know how long it would take. The avatar thought that perhaps, because the spirit of the world tree was a special existence, born from the sacred tree revered by many beings, they would have to wait much longer.

Seralis, as a god, had already undergone the change in his past life, though even he could not remember how long it had taken.

Remembering Seralis, Aldrian asked again,

"Hmm, I want to ask about the first ancestor of the Verdyn Empire. Is she the one who placed the Tree of Life beneath your real body?"

Viona nodded. "Yes, my lord. I saw it with my own eyes, she brought the Tree of Life here by herself from somewhere. To be honest, my lord, I don't really know much about the first ancestor of the empire. However, what I do know is that she was an extremely powerful cultivator, and she was able to flourish this place into the sanctuary of the elves."

"She was truly a great cultivator, and when she came, I felt something I had never felt before. The comfort and reverence I felt toward her were immense." Viona let out a sigh.

"However, one day she suddenly disappeared after giving me that vision. That truly made me feel sad, but life had to go on. Moreover, she had already given me that vision and the message to keep waiting until you arrived, my lord, and to serve you."

Aldrian nodded in understanding. Just as he had guessed, the first ancestor, the founder of the Verdyn Empire, was Seralis. He suddenly found himself thinking about how this world contained so many traces of his past followers, or at least those who had been connected to them.

This empire, the three great sects, the countless treasures, and all the signs they left behind truly made his heart feel warm. It strengthened his will to reclaim the universe. He could not disappoint them after they had already done so much for him.

Aldrian then continued to converse with Viona for the next few hours before returning to his room. The sun was already close to setting, and tonight there was an event he needed to attend with Sylphia.

Tonight, the Silvarin imperial family was holding a welcome banquet for Sylphia, and many nobles would be present. Even the opposition faction would have to attend, as they needed to maintain their image as subjects of the empire in front of her.

Even if they did not wish to attend, they would not risk shaming themselves or creating a bad impression before Sylphia and many people, by refusing to appear at the welcome banquet. Such an absence would be seen as disrespect toward Sylphia, which in the end was no different from disrespecting Aldrian the Great himself.

As the sun finally went down and the sky turned dark, one side of the imperial palace lit up where the hall for the banquet had already been neatly arranged, and many people had begun to arrive. Even though the banquet had not yet officially started, they already seemed eager to attend.

Many carriages passed through, carrying nobles from across the empire to the palace hall.

Inside one of the carriages, Grand Duke Freindor, already dressed in his noble attire, was also on his way to the hall. As he looked at the scenery outside, he couldn't help but smile along the road while thinking about tonight's event.

'Let's see how you will get out of this, Empress Vilena,' he thought.

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

## Chapter 796 - 796: The Gathering of the Nobles

[ 1,518 words ]

On one side of the palace, at the hall where the banquet was being held, carriages came and went as they dropped off the nobles one by one. The carriages were then taken to a special place where the coachmen could wait for the event to finish comfortably.

Elves dressed in lavish noble attire could be seen entering the hall. The elves themselves were already blessed by the heavens with their handsome and beautiful looks, but with fine attire added, their charm reached even higher.

All of them went about their own business once they arrived inside the hall. Besides meeting with Sylphia, this was also a chance for each noble to chat and build closer relationships.

However, the atmosphere could be said to be quite strange. If someone looked at the entire hall in detail, they would notice that the guests were divided into two groups. One of them was the faction that supported the imperial family, while the other was, of course, the opposition faction. From one of the balconies on the higher floor, where the entire hall could be seen, the separation was obvious.

The nobles interacted only with others within the same faction, and the tense relationship between the two factions could also be seen, as they seemed unwilling to interact with each other.

At one side of the hall stood Luren, the young master of the Cloris family, a house led by Duke Cloris. He was together with other young nobles from the opposition faction, conversing among themselves. Yet one could see that Luren still seemed upset about something, and these young nobles knew the cause.

"Hahaha, to think that Empress Vilena did that to you. Luckily, I'm not the one tasked with following Princess Vaeril," one of the young masters said with a slight mocking tone. He was also the son of a duke's family, so he could say such things without restraint.

As for the others, who did not hold status as high as these two, they could only remain silent. One of them was Luren, son of Duke Cloris, and the other was Urais, son of Duke Demin. If they offended even one of them, their families could be impacted, and none of them wished for that.

Luren gritted his teeth as he looked at the young man beside him who mocked him.

"Quite funny, huh? Let's see if you can still laugh like that after my family rises in status once Grand Duke Freindor takes the thro—"

"Shh! Are you an idiot? Don't say something like that here, not at this time," Urais quickly hushed Luren with his hand, whispering in an irritated tone.

"I heard that we are already in a very disadvantageous situation with the visit of Aldrian the Great's fiancée. If someone hears your words here, it could trigger an unknown and undesirable situation for our already bad position. Fool!" he added in an irritated whisper.

Luren snorted, realizing that because of his emotions he had almost slipped and said something outrageous in the middle of enemy territory. They still needed to maintain a good front before Sylphia and not cause any disturbance during tonight's event.

Suddenly, the nobles in the hall turned their heads toward the entrance as someone stepped inside. The moment they saw the figure, two very different expressions appeared between the factions. The supporters of the imperial family seemed far more confident, while the opposition grew tense.

That was because the one who entered was the grand duke supporting the imperial family—Grand Duke Vreiris, a middle pseudo-immortal stage existence. He was a famous figure in the Verdyn Empire and one of the three grand dukes of the empire.

As one of the empire's revered figures, it was only natural that wherever he went, he received respect, even from the opposition.

At this moment, he came with his son, Orlan lyn Vreisis, a handsome elf with silver hair and cultivation at the low pseudo-immortal establishment stage. The young ladies in the hall looked at Orlan with glimmering eyes, admiring him for both his appearance and his reputation. A genius cultivator and the successor of his father, there was nothing lacking about this young man.

As the two walked inside the hall, another voice suddenly resounded from behind them.

"To think that I have to see someone unpleasant the moment I arrive at this place."

Grand Duke Vreisis and Orlan turned their heads and saw Grand Duke Freindor entering with a young man at his side. The young man wore a calm expression, yet his gaze locked onto Orlan with clear battle intent. Orlan did not shy away, he looked back with confidence on his face. The young man beside Grand Duke Freindor was his son and successor, Brein lyn Valian.

Grand Duke Vreisis's expression did not change much upon hearing Freindor's words.

"Is that so? Then you could take another path. For example, that small door over there. Maybe you wouldn't have to see anything unpleasant," he said, gesturing with his head toward the side doors near the main entrance of the hall. If the main doors were prepared for nobles to pass, the small doors were meant for the imperial staff or anyone other than nobles.

Those from the imperial family's faction who heard it almost burst out laughing but held themselves back. By suggesting that Grand Duke Freindor use those doors, Grand Duke Vreiris was basically telling him to lower himself to the level of imperial staff.

Hearing the jab from Grand Duke Vreiris, Freindor frowned, but then his expression eased, and a smile even formed on his lips.

"Sharp and irritating as always, I see. But that's fine. It would not be good to lash out on such an occasion. We don't want to embarrass our empire in front of Aldrian the Great's fiancée, do we?" he replied as he walked past Grand Duke Vreiris. Brein said nothing more and did not look at Orlan again as he followed his father.

Grand Duke Vreiris narrowed his eyes as he glanced at Grand Duke Freindor passing by. He could not help but feel that something was wrong with Freindor's reaction. Normally, that man would be more expressive after being humiliated. At the very least, he would grit his teeth and his face would turn red, as if he were about to explode with rage.

The much calmer reaction, of course, raised Vreiris's suspicion and concern. Was Freindor truly being sensible tonight because of Aldrian the Great's fiancée's visit? Or was he planning something?

"Father, I think there is something strange about him," Orlan said beside him, which made Vreiris nod.

"I know. I will keep an eye on him, while you keep an eye on Brein. If he does anything suspicious, tell me immediately. This occasion is far too sensitive for something to go wrong, and we cannot allow the imperial family to be affected by it," he said, to which his son responded with a nod.

"I will, Father."

"Oh, Grand Duke Vreiris and young master Orlan, it's good to see you here," another voice suddenly came from behind them. When they looked back, they saw another elf enter the hall. He wore even more lavish noble attire than the others, and though he was smiling, it was a cunning smile that left others with a sense of unease.

Seeing this man, Grand Duke Vreiris smiled back and nodded.

"Grand Duke Iskar, you are here. I thought you would not attend this event, as usual."

The one before him was Grand Duke Iskar. As one of the three grand dukes, Iskar held immense influence. Unlike the others, he was an elf who specialized in commerce. His family focused on developing business across the empire and beyond, which made them the most powerful force in driving the empire's economy—even more so than the imperial family itself.

In the conflict between the imperial faction and the opposition, Grand Duke Iskar maintained a neutral stance. That was only natural, for as a businessman he would choose only the winning side. If he saw that one faction had a certain chance to prevail, he would likely make his move.

Securing his support would greatly strengthen either faction, which was why his backing was so crucial.

"Of course I had to come. This is the welcome banquet for Aldrian the Great's fiancée, after all. I would be a fool not to attend and try to build a connection with her. It would also not look good if I stayed away without a reason, that would be disrespectful to Aldrian the Great himself," Grand Duke Iskar said.

Grand Duke Vreiris nodded. "Well, that's true."

They entered the hall together. Vreiris understood that the man beside him now seemed closer to him because he saw a great chance for the imperial family to emerge as the victor after the visit of Aldrian the Great's fiancée.

Grand Duke Vreiris smiled at this development.

"Ladies and gentlemen, please pay attention. Her Majesty will be arriving shortly."

Suddenly, a voice from one of the imperial staff echoed across the hall. He stood on the balcony that connected to the two curved staircases leading down to the hall's floor.

The guests instantly fell silent and after a few moments, the staff's voice rang out again.

"Her Majesty, Empress Vilena lyn Silvarin, entering the hall!"

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

## Chapter 797 - 797: Surprise

[ 1,527 words ]

After the imperial staff announced the arrival of the empress, Empress Vilena came from behind the main balcony. Once her figure could be seen by all of the guests, every one of them without exception bowed to her.

"We greet Your Majesty."

All of them said it simultaneously. Even if the opposition faction members felt reluctant at this moment, they had to do it. Empress Vilena smiled as she saw all the opposition faction members, especially Grand Duke Freindor, bow his head to her. That man was the only one who dared to openly show disrespect to her in normal settings.

Because of the people's support, he seemed much bolder and did not worry that she would do something to him.

However, it seemed he could still think clearly for his own best interest today, which was unfortunate for her, as she had hoped he would create a commotion in front of Sylphia. That would have made it easier for her to get rid of him.

"Raise," the empress said, which made all the guests straighten their bodies.

"I would like to thank all of you, as you could spare your time to fulfill my invitation for this banquet." She swept her gaze across the guests below.

"This welcome banquet for Her Majesty, Empress Sylphia, is my way to show our sincerity in building a good relationship with the Aster Empire. With all of you here showing your support, I believe we can forge a bright future with the Aster Empire." She looked for a moment toward Grand Duke Freindor before turning her gaze elsewhere.

The grand duke, of course, knew she was looking at him, but his expression did not change.

'Let's see if you can act arrogant after tonight,' he thought.

"Well, without further ado, let us greet our main guest today, the Empress of the Aster Empire, Empress Sylphia," Empress Vilena said as she glanced behind her. From her

rear, Sylphia, followed by Vaelir, approached the balcony, the avatar also walked not far behind them, following their pace.

A few seconds later, Sylphia's figure finally stood upon the balcony where everyone could see her.

Many were mesmerized by Sylphia's beauty, regardless of gender. At this moment, she wore an elegant green-and-gold dress, and her long golden hair was tied in a ponytail, showing her smooth neck. Her clear blue eyes captivated anyone who looked at them. The aura around her, enhanced by the changes brought by Seralis, made her appear like a sacred figure.

Although Vaelir stood behind her and was also beautiful, Sylphia's presence at this moment was so overwhelming that it overshadowed her beauty. Princess Vaelir wore an elegant white-and-green dress that added to her charm. Her long hair was tied in a bun, showing her smooth white neck that could tempt any man to kiss it. Normally, she would be the one to attract attention in this kind of setting.

Looking at Sylphia, many thought that Aldrian the Great was one of the luckiest men to ever live for having someone like her. It was no wonder that Aldrian the Great had chosen her as his wife, and they could not help but also feel pride because he had chosen someone from their race as his main wife.

Sylphia swept her gaze over all the guests below before she opened her lips.

"This is truly an honor, for all of you esteemed figures of this great empire to attend this welcome banquet."

As Sylphia began to speak, the imperial butler brought out many glasses of wine on trays to serve the guests.

"Although I haven't been here for long, I have already received an extraordinary experience when I was greeted so festively by the people of this empire. Her Majesty, Empress Viena, also showed me her generosity and goodwill, which makes me not want to leave this place too quickly. Perhaps I would even like to stay here for a long time."

Many of the guests smiled and even chuckled at Sylphia's joke, especially those from the imperial faction. If Sylphia stayed here for a long time, wouldn't that mean the opposition faction could only wait in silence and act like obedient boys? Just imagining it was already quite funny for them.

For the opposition faction, however, Sylphia's words were bad news, since that would halt all of their movements. With their actions stalled, they would lose more momentum and support, and in the end, they would no longer have any power to pursue their final goal, which was to dethrone the empress.

"So that is why I would like to thank all the people of this empire, including the esteemed guests here, and the imperial family, for inviting me to this empire and for the warm welcome." Sylphia then looked back as an imperial maid brought her a glass of wine and handed it to her. Empress Vilena and Princess Vaelir also received their own glasses.

Sylphia took the glass and lifted it to show all of the guests below.

"This is for the bright future of the Verdyn Empire and for the everlasting cooperation between our two empires," she said.

"For the bright future," many responded before all of them drank the wine. Sylphia also drank, and after a few moments another announcement resounded.

"Ladies and gentlemen, we have already prepared a great feast for you to enjoy. Please feel free to partake while the Imperial Music Corps performs. For those who wish to dance, we have prepared the dance area in the middle of the hall."

The guests then began to scatter according to their interests. Some enjoyed the feast, others continued their conversations, while some decided to begin with dancing. Sylphia, accompanied by the empress and Princess Vaelir, finally came down from the balcony to the ground floor of the hall.

As soon as Sylphia stepped onto the floor, she was instantly approached by a number of nobles. They eagerly wished to introduce themselves, and she seemed quite overwhelmed, but Aldrian, who stood behind her, helped her manage and control the crowd.

He did not care about their feelings as he firmly told them not to speak all at once and not to get too close to Sylphia. He even pushed some of them back.

These nobles frowned at Aldrian. At this moment he was dressed in white noble attire that emphasized his fit build. His long black hair, combined with the mask he wore, gave him a mysterious aura.

They could not sense any aura of cultivation from him, but the moment he pushed some of them, they understood immediately that he was a strong cultivator. Still, they thought this guard was truly presumptuous to treat them as if they were nobodies.

However, they did not dare voice their displeasure, since this guard seemed to be Sylphia's personal protector, and Sylphia herself did not seem to mind his actions. They could only swallow their dissatisfaction while she spoke with those in front of her one by one.

Grand Duke Vreiris also came to speak with her while introducing his son. Sylphia had already learned about the important figures of the empire, so she would not appear awkward in front of them and could act accordingly.

As they were still talking, Grand Duke Freindor approached from the side with his son. Sylphia, noticing them, turned her attention toward the pair.

When they drew near, they gave her a slight bow.

"I greet the Empress of the Aster Empire, Empress Sylphia," Grand Duke Freindor said.

Grand Duke Vreiris and his son remained silent while Sylphia responded,

"This must be one of the three grand dukes of the empire, Grand Duke Freindor. I have already heard much about you from some people, and I must say, you seem impressive, just as they described."

Grand Duke Freindor smiled. "That is only an exaggerated assessment from others. I am not that great compared to his majesty, Aldrian the Great. Anyway, Your Majesty, this is my son, Brein. He is my successor."

He gestured to the young man beside him, and Brein slightly lowered his head.

"Your Majesty," Brein said, to which Sylphia responded with a nod.

"I see. I can tell that he is truly Grand Duke Freindor's son. He seems incredible as well, just like you."

"Thank you for the compliment, Your Majesty," Brein answered.

"Your Majesty, I hope you will be willing to visit my territory. We would be glad to welcome you with the utmost sincerity. There are many things you could explore, and you would not find yourself bored there," Grand Duke Freindor said sincerely.

Grand Duke Vreiris, hearing this, could not help but snort inwardly. Trying to entice Aldrian the Great's fiancée and build a good image in front of her?

He doubted that Sylphia, who knew the situation of this empire, would ever visit his territory. She would hardly go to the territory of someone who stood in opposition to the imperial family that Aldrian the Great had chosen to support.

"Hmm, is that so? That truly makes me curious. Perhaps if I have time—"

Whoosh!

Suddenly, from among the nobles standing near Sylphia, one of them lunged forward and attacked her with a dagger!

The blade shot straight toward her heart, its speed far too great for her to follow or evade.

Because of the close distance and the surprise, those around her were unprepared and too slow to react.

Stab!

Blood splattered across the floor.

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

## **Chapter 798 - 798: Assassination Attempt!**

[ 1,666 words ]

Aldrian's avatar, who saw a dagger directed toward Sylphia, already wanted to intercept it using his space laws. From his point of view, the attacker's speed could still be followed, and he could block it.

However, there was someone even faster than him, as that person blocked the dagger with his palm.

Stab!

The dagger pierced through the palm, causing blood to splatter on the floor. Some of it nearly stained Sylphia's beautiful face, but the avatar instantly used space laws to shield her surroundings. The blood froze in midair the moment it touched the spatial barrier.

The attack happened so quickly and so unexpectedly that everyone nearby was truly shocked.

"Father!" Brein shouted worriedly at his father, who had taken the dagger for Sylphia.

Grand Duke Freindor moved swiftly after blocking the dagger and instantly apprehended the attacker. He struck the man in the gut with a punch and threw him to the floor before he could react.

His speed was so great that the attacker had no time to escape or retaliate. Even if he tried, it would have been useless, since the attacker was only a cultivator at the low pseudo immortal establishment stage.

"Close the hall! Block anything from going outside or inside the palace!" Empress Vilena shouted in fury.

She had been in the middle of speaking with someone five meters away from Sylphia when the incident occurred. The suddenness of the attack left her genuinely shocked, for she had not expected anything of the sort. For someone to dare such a thing right in front of her, inside her own palace, and before so many eyes, her rage was inevitable.

In less than two seconds, the imperial guards had already carried out her order, securing the entire perimeter surrounding the hall. Imperial troops also closed the palace gates and took their positions to completely isolate the palace.

But then, without warning, the ground shook violently as though a massive earthquake had struck the palace. In fact, the entire city felt the tremor, leaving all of them shocked.

What had just happened? Their city had never known earthquakes, yet suddenly one had struck.

The shaking lasted only two seconds, but it was enough to throw everyone into panic. There was only one figure who did not lose his composure, for he already knew where the quake had come from. Aldrian's avatar stood firmly in front of Sylphia, shielding her from any harm, while she grasped his arm to feel secure.

Knowing the source of the disturbance, the avatar instantly sent a voice transmission to someone.

"Calm down, Viona. You don't have to act aggressively."

"My apologies, Your Majesty, but I could not control myself. To think that someone dared to do that to Her Majesty right under my nose truly made me angry. Once again, I am deeply sorry, Your Majesty, that someone like that could slip past my attention," Viona replied.

The cause of the earthquake had been the World Tree. Its sudden movement alone was enough to shake the entire city. This spontaneous reaction, which no one had expected, made those inside the hall believe this might be part of a larger conspiracy. They began to suspect that another attack could soon follow.

"Everyone, stay in your places and do not move! Anyone who leaves their position will be considered an accomplice and dealt with accordingly, regardless of their identity!" Empress Vilena shouted.

The atmosphere grew even more tense. Everyone grew wary of those beside them, their eyes scanning the surroundings with suspicion. The imperial troops remained on edge, prepared for anything that might unfold in the aftermath of the quake.

"Are you all right, Your Majesty?" Princess Vaeril asked worriedly as she arrived at Sylphia's side.

"Hmm, I'm fine," Sylphia replied with a faint smile before turning her gaze toward Grand Duke Freindor.

Grand Duke Freindor, still restraining the attacker, continued to observe his surroundings as if making sure nothing else was amiss. His eyes then shifted to the dagger still lodged in his palm. Without hesitation, he pulled it and cast it onto the floor.

"Father, swallow this healing pill to close your injury faster," Brein said anxiously, taking a pill from his storage ring.

But the Grand Duke looked solemnly at his hand. The stab wound had already begun to rot, and black patches were spreading around the injury.

"This is a lethal venom, the venom of the giant Purple Tail Scorpion," he said, shocking those who heard him. The venom of the Purple Tail Scorpion was infamous not only in the continent of elves but across the entire world as one of the deadliest venoms known. The venom of an adult Purple Tail Scorpion was even said to affect cultivators at the pseudo immortal stage.

Their habitat lay in the northern part of the continent of elves, surrounded by harsh valleys and treacherous mountain ranges, preventing them from spreading to other regions. Because of their existence, that area had long been marked as one of the forbidden regions of the continent.

Upon hearing that the dagger carried the venom of the Purple Tail Scorpion, many from the opposition faction began to panic. Those of the imperial faction also looked at him with conflicted expressions.

The fact remained that Grand Duke Freindor had been the one to save Sylphia from the sudden attack. Without his intervention, she might have already been dead before anyone could react.

Her cultivation, still at the Marquess stage, was nowhere near enough to resist the venom for even five seconds, let alone survive a dagger piercing her heart. If she had died, they could only imagine the consequences for the Verdyn Empire. The catastrophe that would follow was beyond measure.

Not only would it cause powers across the world and even those from other stars to criticize them, but Aldrian the Great himself might punish them personally. Just

imagining such a future sent shivers down their spines. Fortunately, Grand Duke Freindor had prevented it from happening.

Empress Vilena, also felt conflicted as her attention then shifted to the man held firmly in Grand Duke Freindor's grasp. The imperial troops had already surrounded them, ensuring no other attacker or collaborator could take advantage of the chaos and making the attacker could not escape.

With an angry expression, Empress Vilena stepped closer and glared at the figure.

"You... why did you do this, Baron Stargis?" she demanded fiercely.

The attacker was indeed a baron, and what pained her most was that he was a member of the imperial faction. It shocked her deeply, for it was something she had never expected. The one who had nearly killed Sylphia was from her own faction, the very group meant to support her.

What he had done had nearly brought doom upon her entire family.

Baron Stargis said nothing, but his fierce gaze fixed on Sylphia as if he bore a private grudge against her.

Sylphia, meeting his eyes, felt tense, she had truly come close to death! If that man had succeeded, she might not even have realized the dagger had already pierced her.

Even so, she reminded herself that Aldrian or rather, his avatar would never allow anything truly terrible to befall her. Calming her heart, she imagined that even if Grand Duke Freindor had not intercepted the attack, the avatar would have blocked it.

Whispers began to spread among the nobles. Empress Vilena, receiving no answer from Baron Stargis, finally gave her command to the imperial guards.

"Take him away! Interrogate him for further information."

"Yes, Your Majesty," the guards replied. Grand Duke Freindor rose to his feet before the guards dragged Baron Stargis toward the deeper parts of the palace.

From outside the hall, a group of physicians entered, and several of them hurried toward Grand Duke Freindor.

"I heard that the venom of a Purple Tail Scorpion was used here. Swallow this, and let me begin detoxifying the venom from your body. If this venom comes from a scorpion more than fifty thousand years old, your life will be in danger within five minutes. It is better to be safe than to regret later," one of the physicians said urgently.

Grand Duke Freindor did not hesitate. He took the pill from the physician's palm and swallowed it at once. The physician immediately began channeling his technique, working to heal the Grand Duke's wound and suppress the venom spreading through his bloodstream.

The venom had already spread quickly, and the physician, upon sensing it within the Grand Duke's body, instantly recognized it as the venom of a Purple Tail Scorpion more than fifty thousand years old.

"This is truly the venom of at least a fifty-thousand-year-old Purple Tail Scorpion," the physician confirmed grimly. "Perhaps even older, over seventy thousand years, given how swiftly it spreads through his body."

Brein and the members of the opposition faction looked on with growing anxiety as they witnessed the treatment.

At that moment, Sylphia, with Aldrian beside her, stepped forward and approached Grand Duke Freindor.

"Thank you for saving me, Grand Duke Freindor," Sylphia said softly, which made the Grand Duke look at her with a faint smile.

"No worries, Your Majesty. It was only a reflex. I happened to notice him draw the dagger, and since no one else seemed to see his intent, I simply acted on instinct. It was nothing more," he replied.

"Even so, the fact remains that you are the one who saved me. I must at least express my gratitude," Sylphia answered.

Those who overheard their exchange felt a mix of emotions. For the opposition faction, this was truly a blessing in disguise, while the imperial faction could only feel bitterness. In their eyes, Grand Duke Freindor's image in Sylphia's eyes had certainly risen, and if this news spread, it would inevitably sway the populace's opinion.

There was no question the news would spread, for too many eyes had witnessed the commotion for it to be hidden. The imperial family, who had only just regained momentum with Sylphia's visit, now risked facing harsh criticism from the people, and perhaps even from powers beyond the empire.

Aldrian's avatar kept his gaze fixed on Grand Duke Freindor. His expression remained calm behind the mask, leaving no one able to guess what thoughts were stirring within him.

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## Chapter 799 - 799: One Big Conspiracy

[ 1,601 words ]

Not long after the assassination attempt, Empress Vilena decided to abruptly stop the banquet. All of the guests were checked before they could leave. Normally, they would protest, especially those from the opposition faction. If there was a sudden inspection of their belongings, that would be the same as exposing some of their secrets.

However, they knew that this occasion was a special case, and if they protested or said anything, they would likely be seen as accomplices of the attacker. This was a sensitive situation, and they did not want to be considered as one of the attacker's accomplices.

Grand Duke Freindor's healing and detoxification process was also successful, as the poison had not spread for too long and the ones who treated him were the best physicians in the Verdyn Empire. After making sure there was no problem with his body, the physician excused himself.

Not long after, Grand Duke Freindor himself also excused himself. Empress Vilena did not say anything and simply let him go. After making sure there was nothing strange and all of the guests had left, Empress Vilena came to Sylphia and bowed to her, followed by Princess Vaelir.

"I truly apologize. I truly did not expect that something like this could happen. I did not expect that a noble from my faction would be the one to try to assassinate you. This is truly my negligence for letting down my guard, and I have nothing to say if Your Majesty is angry. This incident was partially because I did not prepare enough for your protection," Empress Vilena said in a regretful tone.

Sylphia knew that the empress truly felt self-blame and regret for the incident that had occurred during the supposed festive welcome banquet. Her life had almost been taken, and even the one who saved her was supposed to be her enemy. She must have felt terrible at this moment.

However, despite all of that, Sylphia showed her smile as she approached Empress Vilena and stopped her from bowing.

"Your Majesty, it's okay. The most important thing is that I am still alive and well. To be honest, I do not really care about my own safety because I have my trusted guardian here. I believe that even if Grand Duke Freindor had not saved me, that attacker's dagger would not have reached me because of him," she said reassuringly.

Empress Vilena still felt self-blame, but she looked at the avatar more curiously. She finally sensed that this man had a low pseudo immortal establishment cultivation, which in her opinion was still lacking as a personal guardian for Sylphia. For someone like Sylphia, her personal guardian should at least be at the pseudo immortal stage.

However, if Sylphia said that she trusted this man, then she had nothing more to say. Her reassuring words also gave her some relief, as Sylphia did not blame her for the assassination attempt.

"I will make sure to look into this matter until it is finished. From what I know, Baron Stargis is someone who would not do such a thing because he has no reason to do so. If he moved according to someone else, I will pursue them. I will not let anyone target Your Majesty again, and I will punish them regardless of their identity or faction," Empress Vilena said firmly.

Sylphia nodded. "Thank you for the effort, Your Majesty. If you need anything for your investigation I would gladly help. Or you could ask my guardian here to assist with the investigation. I must say that any problem could be solved if this man is involved."

Empress Vilena and Princess Vaelir raised their eyebrows and looked at the avatar again. To think that Sylphia had given such high praise to this guardian. If she said it like that, then there must be something special about him. Someone trusted by Sylphia and even by Aldrian the Great to guard his fiancée must be extraordinary.

They realized they could not measure his ability by cultivation level alone; this guardian might possess something greater.

"I see. Thank you for the offer, and once again I apologize for tonight's event. If we truly need Your Majesty's help, then I will inform you. And if Your Majesty wants anything from me, I will do my best to fulfill it," Empress Vilena added.

After that, Sylphia returned to her room with the avatar following closely behind. On the way, the avatar asked her,

"Scared?"

Sylphia raised her eyebrows and looked at the avatar beside her with a smile, shaking her head.

"No, I'm not. Although I was quite shocked by that sudden attack and felt tense, I was not scared. I believe that you will protect me from anything, no matter how great the problem is. With you beside me, why should I feel afraid?"

Hearing her words, the avatar couldn't help but smile warmly. He was Aldrian's avatar, carrying the entirety of his character and personality, so of course his love for her was

also real. Sylphia's words truly warmed his heart and made his stomach flutter. They greatly eased the fury he had been storing inside since earlier.

"Anyway, why did you inject your energy into me earlier after I almost got stabbed? Is there something wrong with me?" Sylphia asked curiously.

When she had nearly been stabbed, the avatar had instantly raised a spatial barrier and stood in front of her to shield her from harm. He had touched her hand, both to comfort her and to check with his senses if anything was wrong with her body.

He simply wanted to make sure the attacker had not hidden any trick aimed at Sylphia in case the initial strike failed. At that moment, he finally sensed something, and it made him inject his energy into her.

They kept walking as the avatar replied to her.

"When I checked inside your body to make sure there was nothing wrong, I sensed something spreading within you. Inside your body, there is actually a potent poison that could truly kill you. It is a type of poison that only takes effect after some time, and from my estimation, you will feel its effects around midnight."

This was also the reason why fury burned inside his heart. The fact that the poison had entered her body without him noticing meant that it must have been taken in through food or drink.

The only time he had seen her consume something after arriving at the empire was during the discussion with Empress Vilena, and later at the banquet where she drank wine. Whatever the case, the suspect was likely someone working with the imperial family. Combined with what he had sensed from the attacker and from Grand Duke Freindor, he was certain this was one big conspiracy, all tied together.

Sylphia was truly shocked upon hearing the avatar's answer.

"A poison? I never ate or drank anything that seemed suspicious from—" she suddenly stopped as it finally dawned on her. "I see. There must be someone inside the palace who mixed my drink with poison. There are rats even Empress Vilena does not know about," Sylphia said, her expression turning thoughtful.

"Is this also connected to the assassination attempt at the banquet? If that is the case, then they truly want me dead in the palace. I can only think that the ones who want me truly dead are either those who want to give a bad impression of the elves as a whole, or those who specifically target the imperial family."

"This could also be the machination of the opposition faction, as they are the side that could gain the most benefit from the situation if I were to die in the palace. The imperial family would likely come under heavier pressure than ever before if I died, and they

could take advantage of it to get rid of the imperial family." Sylphia's eyes narrowed as another thought crossed her mind.

"The attacker is from the imperial faction, and Grand Duke Freindor was the one who saved me. The real perpetrator's target seems to be the imperial faction, or specifically the imperial family. Is this a case hidden beneath the surface? Is this also part of a conspiracy from Grand Duke Freindor or someone else?" she said in confusion.

The avatar smiled behind his mask. Sylphia was truly smart for thinking through all of that, and what she had deduced was not wrong.

"You are truly smart. Your guess hit the nail. However, whatever the case, whether this is the plan of Grand Duke Freindor or someone else, it is a fact that he is involved in this play," he said, which made her raise her eyebrows.

"He's really involved? How do you know that?"

"Earlier, I could sense the feelings and a little of what was inside the minds of Baron Stargis and Grand Duke Freindor. What I sensed from Baron Stargis was a mix of fear, fury, and regret, while from Grand Duke Freindor I felt excitement, anxiety, and hope. From your opinion, why do you think they would feel that way?" Aldrian asked.

Sylphia widened her eyes as she finally understood something.

"I see. So that's why you know that Grand Duke Freindor is involved in this. With those kinds of feelings, he is more likely to be the real perpetrator, while Baron Stargis is under some kind of pressure. He is more likely acting under someone's orders rather than on his own, just like Empress Vilena suspected, right?"

Aldrian nodded.

"That's why, at this moment, our target will be to bring down Grand Duke Freindor as soon as possible. I will deliver judgment on those who dared to implicate you and even dared to use your life for their plan," he said, his eyes glimmering.

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## Chapter 800 - 800: Investigation 1

[ 1,482 words ]

After escorting Sylphia to her room, Aldrian's avatar's face returned to its calm expression. He then sent a voice transmission to Vars.

"How is it? Did you find anything?"

"Your Majesty? Ah, right. We already checked some of the places mentioned by Your Majesty, and it's true that there were traces of the devils inside the city. Some locations seem to have already been swept by someone, while others were discovered by the imperial family. Many of the items were taken, but there are still some places where things remain. I think these locations haven't been discovered yet," Vars replied.

"Also, we were lucky. It looks like one of the places we found was storing important documents. It's true that there are signs the devils have connections to some of the nobles of the empire. We found a manifest listing nobles who seem to be doing business with the devils, which also owns properties within the city."

The avatar nodded in satisfaction. "Good. Continue what you were doing and secure everything that points to connections between the devils and the nobles."

"Yes, Your Majesty," Vars replied, but then he continued, "Uhm, Your Majesty, may I ask something?"

"What is it?"

"What happened earlier? Why was there an earthquake?" Vars asked hesitantly. He did not know why, but he felt that the sudden quake meant something had happened where the avatar was. It had come too abruptly, catching them completely off guard. He knew this kind of tremor was not naturally caused but came from someone or something capable of moving the earth on a large scale.

"Well, something happened at the banquet. Someone targeted Sylphia. There was an assassination attempt," the avatar replied, which made Vars widen his eyes in shock.

"What?!" he couldn't help but blurt out.

Someone tried to assassinate this monster's woman? Were they insane? Who would dare to target her life right there, in that place, and right in front of him?!

"You don't have to think about that. You'll know what happened later. I'm sure the news will spread across the empire by tomorrow," the avatar said.

"Alright, Your Majesty." After that, they ended their communication.

Since a few hours ago, the avatar had tasked the Dark Saber group to go outside the palace and head to the locations he pointed out. These were the places where he had once killed many of the devils using heavenly lightning in the past, when he cleansed

the world of them. When he killed large numbers of devils, many others hid in their secret bases, and this city had several of those places.

He ordered the Dark Saber group to visit those sites and check if anything could be found regarding their connections with the nobles of the empire. If there was any evidence, they were to secure everything so he could later use it as proof for the Silvarin imperial family to deal with the opposition faction.

Fortunately, the Dark Saber group managed to find something. It seemed the imperial family had not yet discovered the connection between those nobles and the devils. If they had, they would have already acted on it long before his arrival in the empire.

Now that the Dark Saber group had achieved results, it was his turn to begin his own investigation. He needed to meet Baron Stargis and find the traitors within the imperial family who had placed the poison in Sylphia's drink.

The avatar then created a detection formation on Sylphia's room door and balcony. With this formation, no one could infiltrate the room without alerting him, no matter how skilled their disguise or stealth technique was.

After he finished, he walked toward the deeper part of the palace.

First, he needed to find out who the rats in the imperial family were, and his first destination, of course, was the kitchen. There was no better place to put poison than where the drinks were prepared.

He did not know the way to the kitchen, and he could not be too obvious by spreading his spiritual sense to sweep through the entire palace, as that would alert everyone inside. It would cause unnecessary problems and misunderstandings, which would be troublesome. For this case, he had to observe the palace more "manually."

He was not like his real body, which could use the domain's ability, after all.

At this moment, he walked casually without a specific direction until he saw a lone maid passing by. The moment she was about to walk past him, he canceled his stealth technique, startling her. But before she could scream, the avatar had already used his hypnotic technique. The maid's eyes instantly turned blank.

"Where is the way to the kitchen where all the food and drinks for the guests or banquets are prepared?" he asked.

"You can take this way and keep walking along this hallway. After you reach the junction, turn left and keep walking until you reach the kitchen, which is located in a separate building. You'll see it yourself," the maid answered as she pointed in the direction he needed to go.

Aldrian nodded before asking again, "Who is responsible for preparing all the food and drinks?"

"That would be Sir Frelix. He is the one in charge of everything that comes out of the kitchen and is consumed by the imperial family or any guests visiting the palace."

"Alright, thank you. You can forget this conversation and forget meeting anyone here," the avatar said before disappearing.

A split second later, clarity returned to the maid's eyes. She blinked a few times, looking confused and unsure why she had been standing there. However, she remembered nothing about what had just happened and thought she might have been daydreaming while walking. She did not think much of it and continued on her way to resume her duties.

A few moments later, in another place, the avatar was already standing in front of the kitchen. To reach it, he had passed several guards, but he did not pay them any attention as he was still using his stealth technique. He noticed that there were still many activities taking place both inside and outside the kitchen building.

The avatar also overheard some of the people's conversations, and as expected, they were still talking about what had happened at the banquet.

"How could Baron Stargis do that? To think he would do something so foolish as to try to assassinate Empress Sylphia. We're talking about Aldrian the Great's fiancée here! What he did could truly bring ruin to the entire imperial family," one of the kitchen staff said to his friend, his expression filled with irritation.

"Yeah, I was shocked too when I heard that Baron Stargis tried to assassinate Empress Sylphia. From the outside, there was nothing unusual about him, he seemed like a good person. I guess we never knew the real him. Is he working for someone else, or did he act on his own? I really can't understand why he did that," his friend replied with a sigh.

"Aish, whatever the case, the imperial family will have quite a rough day tomorrow once the news spreads. The people will likely criticize them even more, and their reputation will drop again. Damn it, even the one who saved Empress Sylphia was Grand Duke Freindor. Aish, what a bad day for the imperial family," the man said.

Aldrian no longer paid attention to their conversation as he teleported inside the building. Upon entering, he was greeted by a large kitchen where many staff and cooks were taking a break, chatting among themselves. They had just served a grand feast for the banquet, but all their efforts seemed wasted after Empress Vilena abruptly ended the event earlier.

The staff were still discussing what had happened at the banquet, but the avatar had no interest in hearing about that topic. What he wanted was to locate the man named Frelix—he wanted to know if anyone was talking about him.

He sharpened his hearing, focusing on every voice in the kitchen, and after a few seconds, he finally identified the most likely location of the man.

He teleported to one side of the kitchen, right in front of the door leading to a private room. He checked for any hidden formations on the door before teleporting inside once more.

The moment his figure appeared inside, he saw a middle-aged elf wearing a cook's attire, sitting in his seat and looking rather tired. From what the people outside had said, this man was Frelix, and this room was his private room.

The elf's cultivation was at the peak of the pseudo-immortal establishment, truly strong for someone who was "merely" a cook.

Without waiting any longer, the avatar created a spatial barrier that blocked all sound and prevented anyone from entering or escaping. Once he finished, he took the seat across the table and canceled his stealth technique.

The moment his figure became visible, the elf's eyes widened in shock. He was about to ask the intruder's identity and shout, but the avatar was faster. He used his hypnotic technique.

"Silence."

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