

The Shining Star Above The Heaven

Chapter 951 - 951: To the Bottomless Abyss

[1,597 words]

"Senior Brother, you had better watch how you act. Do not touch Meilan with your hands." Rei said fiercely.

The moment the people behind Luyan heard this, they showed their fury, and one of the women shouted at Rei.

"You bitch! How dare you—"

"I don't want to hear any words from you, bitch from the Rasminov family," Rei said coldly. She then looked at the others behind Luyan. "And all of you." Her gaze was cold, showing nothing like how she normally acted toward Meilan. The easygoing Rei was nowhere to be seen.

The woman slightly flinched under Rei's gaze and felt humiliated that she was actually deterred by her aura and eyes.

Rei's background, coming from one of the most prominent noble families, was also one of the reasons many did not dare to offend her. The woman from the Rasminov family also came from a noble family, but her family's status was lacking compared to Rei's.

However, the woman believed in Luyan's background, trusting that he would be her backing. She was his supporter, along with a few people who were following him now. They all came from noble backgrounds, but the true behemoths in this place were the backgrounds of Rei, Luyan, and Meilan.

The woman gritted her teeth. "You—" She then stopped as a chill ran through her body when Meilan suddenly looked at her with a cold gaze. That gaze seemed to say that if she did not shut up, she would fuck her up.

She swallowed her words and even turned her head away. Meilan's gaze was truly terrifying to her, and she did not dare to look at her directly. Her fury and humiliation were suddenly forgotten, even if only for a moment, and the others who wanted to chime in also hesitated.

"Alright, alright, stop it. I apologize for Lara's behavior, and I also apologize for my sudden movement when I touched your wrist. I only wanted to talk with you for a moment, junior sister," Luyan said to Meilan.

"I don't think we have anything in common to talk about, and you are not even close to me." Meilan replied before she turned her back and walked away.

Rei followed her, but not before giving Luyan and his group one last cold gaze.

Luyan and his group could only silently look at their backs without doing anything. Luyan's followers felt humiliated, but they could not unleash it on the source of that humiliation.

However, Luyan kept his smile as he looked at Meilan's figure. It was as if he did not care about what had just happened.

"Young master, what are we going to do now? Do we still want to meet Aldrian the Great?" one of his male followers asked.

"No, not anymore. Just like Meilan said, it is not good to meet Aldrian the Great at this time. Let us go back for now. Maybe we can meet him tomorrow," Luyan replied before he walked back the way he came from.

"I have already achieved my purpose, so there is no need to push further for now. Meilan, oh Meilan, if only you had obeyed me and become mine long ago, I would not have needed to do this," he thought.

The next day, Aldrian, Meilan, and Rei were already outside the sect, having begun their journey to the Bottomless Abyss. Rei's presence was actually not needed, and Meilan had said that she should just stay behind. However, Rei insisted on following them, so Meilan relented and allowed her friend to go with them.

There was no one else accompanying them on this journey, as all matters related to guiding Aldrian the Great during his time in this world had already been entrusted to Meilan by the sect master.

They simply did not think that Aldrian the Great would choose to visit a dangerous place, so it was acceptable to let Meilan handle everything.

Well, too bad for them, as that was exactly what Aldrian wanted to do.

Aldrian and the two ladies were already wearing white robes that covered their entire bodies and heads to avoid attracting attention. To reach the Bottomless Abyss, they had

to pass through a few cities using warp gates and then head toward the town nearest to the abyss region.

After that, they would need to reach the abyss itself by flying or walking toward it. The challenge came even before they reached the abyss, as they would face a strange, thick fog that had already caused countless cultivators to disappear.

After one hour of travel from the Celestial Lotus Sect, they finally reached the town and, without wasting any time, flew toward the abyss.

A few minutes after they departed, two figures came out of the warp gate and then walked in the direction Aldrian and his group had taken. They were the same people who had wanted to visit the Celestial Lotus Sect yesterday, the ones who intended to assassinate Aldrian.

They blended into the crowd after exiting the warp gate, and the skinny man released a small blue bird. After a few moments, the bird came back to him, and after a few seconds, the skinny man reported,

'This direction... they seemed goes to the Bottomless Abyss.' he said to the burly man through voice transmission.

Hearing this, the burly man looked surprised.

'Why the hell are they going to such a dangerous place? Is that bastard already out of his mind? Even if he is strong, this is the mysterious Bottomless Abyss we are talking about. Why would he want to visit that place?' the skinny man asked in confusion.

The burly man was also confused. Was there something Aldrian the Great knew about that place, or did Aldrian the Great simply want to visit it out of curiosity? Was he seeking some kind of challenge?

'Whatever the case, I think this will be a good chance for us to ambush him. Even if we cannot do anything to him, there is still the sword maiden and the young miss of the Si family. It is a rare chance for them to be alone in such a place. We can take advantage of that,' the burly man said, a smile forming on his face.

'That kid from the Bai family is interested in the sword maiden. We can take advantage of that and even create conflict between families to weaken the power of this world if our mission to assassinate Aldrian the Great fails.'

The skinny man nodded in agreement.

'Tell the others to be ready. We will follow them. We need to make sure first that they really are going to the abyss,' the burly man added as they continued walking normally among the crowded streets.

While some people were already planning their next step to assassinate Aldrian, the man himself was still flying toward the abyss.

Aldrian could already see the white fog on the horizon. His mind could not help but think that the fog itself was another trick created by his follower to conceal the abyss, where the hidden faith-gathering place was located.

This was his purpose in visiting the most dangerous place in this world: to search for the faith gathering place. Although adding one more world to his domain no longer greatly boosted his cultivation, it still granted him more power and wealth.

There was also the matter of faith energy, which became much stronger inside his domain.

Any effort that could make him stronger was something he would pursue. There was no harm in it anyway.

They flew above the forest region for about forty five minutes before finally arriving at the edge of the white fog. The fog engulfed the forest, and Aldrian landed at the area right before they entered it.

"We are here, Your Majesty. From what I have heard, if you enter the fog and keep moving straight, then you should be able to reach the abyss," Meilan said.

Aldrian nodded and closed his eyes for a moment before opening them again. He stayed still for a few moments before a slight smile appeared on his face.

'It seems to be the right place. The faith energy moves in that direction,' he thought.

He then closed his eyes once more when suddenly the ground beneath them shone with light, and many symbols appeared, causing Meilan and Rei to be astonished. They thought they had fallen into some kind of trap, but then the light and symbols disappeared.

Nothing happened afterward, which only left them confused. Then they heard Aldrian speak.

"I will enter now, Miss Meilan and Miss Rei. You should stay here and not move from this area. It is for your safety. I am afraid we are being followed by devils who have already set their target on us. I have already built a strong illusion and concealment formation surrounding this area to hide you."

"With this formation, even peak pseudo immortal stage devils will have difficulty locating both of you as long as you do not move more than three meters from your positions. As long as you stay within this range, even if peak pseudo immortal stage devils stand nearby, they will not detect or see you."

Hearing this, both ladies were shocked. They had not sensed anyone or anything that made them feel they were being tailed by devils.

"The devils are tailing us? How is that possible? How could the devils know about our journey when we departed from the sect without many people knowing?" Rei asked in astonishment.

"Well, I believe we have a traitor in the sect. The devils might have been following us through you, Miss Meilan. Your right wrist has been marked with a kind of invisible substance that leaves a trace. The devils are using a trained blue sparrow to track it."

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Chapter 952 - 952: Entering the Fog

[1,508 words]

Meilan and Rei raised their eyebrows, then Meilan looked at her right wrist. Rei also looked at it to observe, but they truly did not sense anything from her wrist. Still, they believed what Aldrian had just said, as they could not think of any reason why Aldrian would lie or make up stories.

The only question in their minds was, since when did she get marked? They did not need much time before they looked at each other.

"Wait, don't tell me..." Rei wanted to say something, but Meilan already seemed to know what was inside Rei's mind. Meilan nodded.

"Luyan." Both of them said it at the same time. He and Aldrian were the only people who had touched her wrist since yesterday. But of course, they put Aldrian aside, because that did not make any sense.

He touched her during training, and their relationship was quite amicable, so they did not see why Aldrian would do such a thing, especially when he was the one who told them about it.

The only suspect left was Luyan, a man they had disliked for a long time. If it was him, then everything made sense. This made Rei grit her teeth.

"Luyan is working with the devils?! As I thought, that man is so unlikable and irritating. He is bad news!" she said angrily.

Meilan's gaze also turned cold. She clenched her fist, feeling like a fool for not knowing better, that there was a traitor within the sect. That traitor had even managed to do his trick on her without her knowing, if not for Aldrian telling her.

She bit her lip in frustration, then opened her mouth.

"We have to tell my master. There is a traitor in the sect."

But then Aldrian shook his head. "That wouldn't do. We do not have strong proof that he is working with the devils. If we just point a finger at him, then you will only bring harm to yourself. Also, we still do not know whether he is the only traitor or if there are more. It would be a bad idea to inform the sect without knowing the entire situation."

"Moreover, Sect Master Huang is in seclusion. We simply cannot disturb him when he might be in a critical phase of his advancement to the sword heart."

"And you cannot go back to the sect either, as the devils might also be targeting you now. From my feeling, those devils are mostly targeting me, but you and Miss Rei could also be dragged in this, since both of you are important figures. I can already imagine that is what they are planning."

Meilan and Rei knew that what Aldrian had just said was reasonable, but thinking about Luyan's face still made their blood boil. They wanted to do something to punish him, to the point that they forgot about every other detail. But then Meilan calmed herself.

"Then what are we supposed to do, Your Majesty?"

Aldrian smiled. "Wait until I return from the Bottomless Abyss. At most, I will be back within a day. As I said before, do not move more than three meters from your place. I can sense that there are two devils at the peak pseudo immortal stage tailing us, and there might be more later. It will be much safer for both of you to stay here rather than wandering somewhere else."

Meilan and Rei widened their eyes. Peak pseudo immortal stage devils, just to tail them? From the composition, it seemed true that their target was Aldrian.

There was no need to send someone as strong as peak pseudo-immortal stage devils if their target was only Meilan and Rei.

However, thinking that the devils could track Aldrian's position because she had been marked made Meilan feel guilty and full of self-blame.

'If only I were more decisive, then Luyan would never dare to even touch me, and I would not have to give His Majesty a probl—'

"Miss Meilan, I know what you are thinking right now, but you do not have to worry about it, as I am also the one who let this happen." Aldrian said, cutting off her thought, which made both her and Rei stunned.

Aldrian was still showing his smile. "If I can sense your mark and the devils tailing us, then what do you think is the reason I did not do anything until now? I could have simply erased your mark and killed those devils, but I did not do it."

Meilan and Rei finally realized it.

"I see. Is Your Majesty waiting for the devils to make their move so you can wipe them out in one place?" Meilan asked, which was answered by Aldrian with a nod.

"That is right. The devils must have already gathered many forces to try to kill me now. With my reputation, I doubt that those devils would feel that two peak pseudo-immortal stage devils are enough. I imagine that they have already gathered their strongest forces and plan to kill me in this place."

"This is also a good chance for us to gain much information regarding the devils' power in this world. As we know, the devils in this world are hiding in unknown places, and this has caused headaches for the powers of this world, since they never know the devils' locations."

Meilan and Rei nodded in understanding, and Rei could not help but let out a sigh.

"In the end, we could not help Your Majesty in any way."

Aldrian looked at Rei, still wearing his smile. "Please do not feel discouraged, Miss Rei. You must understand that my enemies have to use their very best just to harm me, so they must be extremely strong. For now, they are outside of your league." Then his expression turned apologetic.

"Instead, it is me who should apologize to you and Miss Meilan for dragging both of you along with me. I am the one who asked Miss Meilan to guide me here. If I had not asked her, then both of you would not have fallen into this current situation."

Hearing that, Meilan and Rei were stunned, but then they raised their hands and waved them hurriedly.

"Please do not think that way, Your Majesty. We are truly glad that we could help you in any way. Please do not feel bad for us," Meilan said.

"Yes, Your Majesty. Please do not feel bad or anything. We are voluntarily accompanying you," Rei said, but Meilan glanced at her.

"Well, you forced yourself to follow us when I alone would have been enough."

Rei looked at Meilan with a pouted expression. "Really, Meilan? Do you have to break the mood right now?"

Meilan just smiled, while Aldrian chuckled at their interaction.

"Anyway, just stay here until I come back. I will make sure both of you are safe until we return to the sect," Aldrian said.

"Please be careful, Your Majesty. If the situation turns too dangerous, I hope Your Majesty does not push yourself too hard," Meilan said in a worried tone. Rei did not say anything, as she also wanted to say the same thing to him.

Aldrian nodded. "Alright, then I will go." His figure suddenly disappeared.

After his figure vanished, Rei sat down and stretched her body.

"Now we just need to wait for His Majesty," she said as she looked at the thick white fog not far from them. "I wonder why he has to visit this place."

Meilan also looked at the fog. She wondered as well why Aldrian wanted to visit this place.

Aldrian had already teleported deep inside the fog, and the moment he entered it, he could sense it clearly. The fog was not a natural fog, and there was a pattern on the ground that showed this was a large-scale, nature-based formation. This further strengthened his belief that he was in the right place.

There was also a disturbance in space, which caused any space laws abilities to be limited here. That also meant that things like escaping talismans based on space laws would be useless in this place.

After teleporting outside of his domain, Aldrian did not want to waste any time, so he created another domain and sensed the direction of the faith energy before teleporting toward it.

While doing so, he released his energy to protect himself from any harmful substances. He kept teleporting, and he began to understand why many people were lost within this fog.

He could sense many illusion and hidden teleportation traps. Their number was truly numerous, and they were located in many places, including the air. All of them were connected to each other, creating a complex, large-scale formation that covered the abyss region.

He did not know where the teleportation traps sent their victims, and the illusion traps were enough to trap even peak pseudo immortal stage cultivators. He thought that those who could see the abyss and return to tell the tale were truly the lucky ones, because they had not stepped into these traps.

As he drew much closer to the abyss, he could even sense the faith energy without using his domain.

He kept following the energy for more than five minutes before he finally reached it—

The Bottomless Abyss.

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Chapter 953 - 953: Unexpected

[1,538 words]

Aldrian stood on top of the long abyss, with white fog partially obstructing the view of the darkness below. He tried to look into the abyss, but he could not see the bottom because of the fog and, of course, because of how deep it was.

The abyss also stretched far, and from what he had heard, it was more than a thousand kilometres long. As for its depth?

Even his domain still did not touch the bottom. His domain, which had a diameter of eight hundred kilometres in all directions, still could not reach the true depth of the abyss.

'Just like its name, the bottomless abyss,' Aldrian thought.

It was as if the abyss itself could reach the world's core, and he wondered if that was truly the case. He also wondered what caused those who had entered the depths of the abyss to never come out again.

He sensed everything using his domain sense, and he did not detect any trapping formations within the abyss. There was no hidden danger from formations, as far as his domain could reach.

Without waiting any longer, he decided to start his descent. He teleported to the edge of his domain that covered the abyss. The moment his figure reappeared within it, darkness was the only thing he could see.

However, he ignored it and built another domain before teleporting again. Then he built another domain and teleported once more. He repeated this process several times. He could sense that the faith energy kept getting clearer, which was a sign that he was getting closer.

But as he kept descending, it truly made him curious.

How deep was this abyss?

What made this abyss?

There was also another thing that he found out. He stopped his descent and then tried to stretch his hand out of his domain. His palm was already outside his domain, and when he tried to use his comprehension of laws to control the elements around his palm, what he received was... nothing.

He could not use any pure, normal elemental energy. Not only elemental laws, but he could sense that anyone in this place could not do things that should have been easy for a cultivator, such as flying or releasing energy to strengthen or protect their body.

He could sense that something was restricting the body, making anyone unable to release their energy and utilize it like a normal cultivator. Any energy inside the body could not get out, and they also could not use any surrounding energy.

Basically, anyone who reached this place would be rendered a normal mortal, unable to utilize any energy inside or surrounding their body.

The only exception was his golden energy or when he was inside his domain. He could still release his golden energy, which meant that whatever caused this phenomenon could not suppress his use of golden energy.

Also, when he was inside his domain, he was already within his own world, one that he could command at will. His domain also had its own rules, all of which made him truly like a god, meaning that he could not be suppressed inside his domain.

This strange phenomenon made him curious. What caused this kind of phenomenon? Was this some kind of hidden formation, or was there something else that made this possible?

From what he knew from his memories, there were two possibilities for this phenomenon to occur. One was a formation, and the other was a natural material that could cause this kind of effect.

As for a natural material, he could think of one called the Iron of Punishment from the Dark Sovereign Realm. If anyone came near this Iron, they would lose their ability to utilize energy for anything. Even gods would be affected by it, which was why it was one of the most feared materials in the universe.

As for formation, there were some gifted formation masters in his memories who could create formation that produced the same effect as the Iron of Punishment. They used formation to seal all energy within it, leaving no energy that could be utilized by any cultivator inside.

Because of how complex and difficult the requirements to create such a formation were, only a few could accomplish it. If the entire abyss was covered with this kind of formation, then the one who created it was someone who was truly a master among masters. He could not help but think of one person from his memories and wondered if that person was the one who built this formation.

As he continued descending for another minute, he finally could sense the bottom. He teleported to it, and once he reached it, he created flames to visually check his surroundings.

There was nothing noteworthy, aside from insects, anthropods, and arachnids that lived in the depths, along with special moss capable of growing in such an environment. He then looked in one direction when he sensed faith energy flowing nearby and walked toward it.

After some time, he finally saw something other than moss or the abyss's inhabitants. There were skeletons scattered in many places. He thought that these skeletons must have been those who tried to reach the bottom of the abyss but, unfortunately, did not know that there was a phenomenon that caused them to lose control of their energy.

With the height of the abyss, even a peak pseudo-immortal cultivator would be dead if they fell, or, even if they had trained their body through body cultivation to the extreme, they would still be fatally injured.

If they somehow were still alive in this place, they could only be trapped here forever, as they could not climb back up in their condition and could not use energy.

After walking for fifteen minutes, Aldrian finally found what he was looking for. The flow of faith energy led toward the place in front of him.

However, he was surprised because he found something very different from what he had imagined. What he saw was actually a large mansion. A mansion in the depths of the abyss, surrounded by darkness, something that looked as if it had come from a hallucination.

But, the mansion in front of him was real, and the moment he saw its style, Aldrian fell into confusion. That was because the mansion reminded him of another person, and not the formation master he had thought of.

In fact, this person was not a formation master at all, but a master of something else, alchemy. The mansion reminded him of an alchemist from the past who also had this style of mansion as his home in the higher heavens.

The presence of this mansion here made him confused. Who was the one who truly shaped this place? The formation master, or an alchemist?

He raised his eyebrows at the possibility that both of them might have worked together.

Aldrian then entered the mansion grounds, passing through the main gate. He looked at his surroundings, and although there was almost no greenery here except for moss, all the style and shape of the garden were the same as that person's mansion.

After a few minutes of walking, he finally reached the main double doors of the mansion, and there was a small symbol on the doors. When he saw the symbol, he smiled and almost confirmed the identity of this person.

He observed the doors for a moment and could sense that there was another hidden, extremely complex seal formation spread throughout the entire mansion. The formations were connected to the ground itself and covered the entire mansion grounds.

Their purpose was to ensure that even if someone could reach this place, they would never be able to enter the mansion.

With the strength of the formation, he did not doubt that even someone stronger than a peak pseudo immortal cultivator would be unable to break the seal.

Aldrian was truly amazed and nodded to himself as he became more confident about the identity of the one who created this formation. He simply smiled and then looked at the doors once more.

He needed something to open the sealing formation, and he did not need to think for long. There was one thing that his followers would always make sure of, that this kind of place was accessible only to him.

He injected his energy into the sealing formation, and the moment he did, light shone from the doors and across the entire surface of the mansion. Even the whole garden shone for a moment before the light dimmed.

Then, a few seconds later—

Click! Crack!

The sound of the door's locks opening could be heard, and the doors slowly opened with a crackling sound.

Aldrian, already curious about the mansion, finally could see the inside of it.

While Aldrian entered the mansion, outside the abyss fog area, Meilan and Rei were still in their positions as Aldrian had left them. They were obeying Aldrian's instruction to stay within three meters of their current location.

Meilan was cultivating, while Rei looked at their surroundings, guarding her and also enjoying the unusual scenery of the dense forest and the dangerous fog not far from her.

As her gaze seemed focused on the greenery of the forest, she suddenly sensed something and looked toward the opposite direction of the fog. She narrowed her eyes for a moment before widening them in shock.

She hurriedly looked at Meilan.

"Meilan, they are coming," she said in a hush.

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Chapter 954 - 954: Nerve Wracking Situation

[1,612 words]

Meilan opened her eyes as she sensed many people approaching their position. Rei's expression was already tense, and she positioned herself closer to Meilan.

Meilan had already placed her hand on the hilt of her sword, ready to make a move if those people found them.

But then her heart trembled when hundreds of figures appeared. From their aura, Meilan and Rei did not doubt that they were devils. Most of them were devils at the Immortal Transition Realm, and the ones that landed near Meilan and Rei were mostly at Pseudo Immortal stage.

Meilan and Rei were already so tense that they were afraid to move even a finger. Sweat rolled down their faces and bodies. Surrounding them were Pseudo Immortal stage devils, and there was nothing they could do if these devils noticed them.

Two devils at peak Pseudo Immortal stage landed five meters from them, and one of them looked in their direction. Meilan and Rei's bodies flinched as they thought that this devil could see them.

But then his gaze shifted to another direction, which brought them relief, as it seemed he still could not see them.

Just as Aldrian had told them, as long as they did not move more than three meters from their current position, they could not be seen or sensed.

Even so, they could not feel completely relieved, as they knew who this devil was, as well as the one beside him.

Both of them were among the most wanted devils in this world, especially the burly man, as he was considered to be the leader of the devils' movement in this world.

Erdo Oliard.

The skinny man was the second in command, a devil who had already caused countless deaths and destruction across the world.

Veraz Ilagnus.

With them appearing here, Meilan and Rei knew that, just as Aldrian had told them, the devils were truly serious and had mobilized a large force to kill him. They were in the middle of a devils' group filled with Pseudo Immortal Stage devils, as if they were about to wage a war.

"This is the last place where the mark disappeared. I think they entered the fog. As we know, this strange fog can block the mark," Meilan and Rei heard Veraz say to Erdo.

"But the strange thing is, the mark just disappeared and did not move directly toward the fog. It's as if they simply disappeared here," he added.

Erdo looked at the fog, frowning. "I think they really went into the abyss. But I'm truly curious why they would go to such a dangerous place. What is their purpose?"

"Do you want to send some of our men to check?" Veraz asked, but his question was answered by Erdo shaking his head.

"No, that would be useless. We would only be sacrificing our men. Forget about that bastard's strength, this strange fog is truly dangerous. I don't want to dwindle our forces when we eventually face Aldrian."

Veraz nodded, and Erdo looked around his surroundings, his gaze sweeping over Meilan and Rei. Both girls did not move at all, as they were still tense and afraid that even the slightest movement would expose them.

Although Aldrian had said that as long as they did not move beyond three meters from their current position these devils would not be able to see them, they still did not dare to move.

It was only a natural reaction.

They were standing beside two of the most powerful devils in this world, and they feared that even a smallest movement could cause them to be discovered.

"Let's set an ambush perimeter in this area and spread it across twenty kilometers. If they really can survive and come back, we will ambush them," Erdo said.

"Are you sure they could come back? We are talking about the bottomless abyss here. There is no one who could survive that place. If he dies there, then our waiting would be futile," Veraz responded.

Erdo continued to stare at the fog seriously. "This is just in case. That bastard is truly mysterious, and with his many achievements, he might be able to survive that place. Moreover, knowing the danger of this region, he still chose to enter it, which means he has a certain purpose and confidence in his ability to survive there," he said.

"Even the Sword Maiden and the young miss from the Si family followed him. They continued to follow him despite knowing better than anyone the danger of this place. That means they know something that makes them confident they can come back safely."

Veraz nodded at Erdo's reasoning, finding it quite reasonable. He then began informing the others about the ambush plan. The devils around Meilan and Rei moved to their assigned spots, and their bodies instantly disappeared, as if blending into the surrounding nature itself.

Seeing all of them taking their positions, Meilan and Rei wanted to inform Aldrian. Unfortunately, they had no way to do so. They could only watch as the devils took their positions and waited for Aldrian to return.

However, as they observed the devils taking their positions, they noticed a small detail.

The devils seemed to walk around their position and kept a distance of three meters from them. It was as if there were an invisible wall that made the devils avoid their location. They did not understand how the formation that Aldrian had built worked, but they were truly amazed by its effect.

Even these Pseudo Immortal stage devils could not see or sense them all this time, and they even seemed to avoid their position.

Unknown to Meilan and Rei, the devils who looked in their direction only saw a tree. This was a high level illusion formation that also served as a concealment. The illusion affected the senses of those who entered it and made them believe it was reality.

Even if someone were to walk through the object of illusion or touch it, they would still think that what they crashed into was a real tree and that what they touched was genuine.

Realizing that they were truly safe inside the formation, Meilan and Rei finally managed to relax slightly and move their bodies. Even so, they moved slowly and finally sat down while still warily watching the devils' positions.

They released a small sigh of relief the moment they were able to relax their bodies.

"Fuuh, this is truly nerve wracking. I even forgot to breathe. I never thought we could stand so close to these most wanted devils," Rei said to Meilan through sound transmission.

"I hope His Majesty returns quickly. If not, we would be completely dead if these devils somehow find us," she added. Meilan responded with a nod, her gaze fixed on the fog with worry evident on her face.

While the devils were already waiting for Aldrian to come out of the abyss region, the man himself had already stepped inside the mansion at the bottom of the abyss. The moment he stepped inside, he was greeted by a luxurious hall. The only strange thing was the lack of furniture.

After quickly observing the hall, he moved deeper into the mansion, following the flow of faith energy. He passed through many rooms and inner gardens, and also crossed into different buildings.

He continued walking for more than thirty minutes before finally arriving at a room. The flow of faith energy flowed toward this place, and he could clearly feel that the object used to gather faith energy was inside.

Without waiting any longer, he pushed the doors open, and the moment he saw the inside, towering and expansive bookshelves came into view. From what he could see, there were countless books arranged across many shelves.

The bookshelves were arranged from the lowest floor where he was currently standing, up to a much higher level that forced him to lift his head to take in the entirety of the room.

From the sheer size of this place, he knew that the room did not match the actual size of the mansion, which meant this place was using a spatial formation. This formation placed the room in a different space from the mansion itself.

His eyes glistened as he smiled. These countless books likely contained knowledge gathered from across the universe, and even from the vast cosmos, including information from other universes. That was also one of the hobbies of those two men, whom he believed to be the ones who shaped this place.

He then walked deeper into the room, and after walking for a few minutes, he finally reached the center of the space.

There stood a stone pillar, just like other faith gathering places. Beneath the pillar was a stone tablet, and as usual, it bore an engraved message meant for him.

May the Great Emperor of All Heavens' journey always shine with the light of glory.

We hope that our gift will support the great emperor's journey.

Aldrian smiled as he read the message. Although he had already read this kind of message many times, he still could not help but feel warmth from the support his past followers had given him.

He then looked at the stone pillar and approached it before touching it. He closed his eyes, and then began to create his domain there.

As he successfully created his domain, he felt a fresh sensation flow through his body, and he could sense that his surroundings had already changed. He understood what had happened, as he had experienced it a few times before, and when he opened his eyes, he was already in a different space.

Now he was inside a kind of library, where there were many books just like in the room he had entered earlier. However, he did not focus on his surroundings, as in front of him were two figures who were already looking at him with teary eyes.

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Chapter 955 - 955: The Two Legends

[1,494 words]

Two figures were looking at Aldrian with teary eyes. Both of them were middle-aged men.

One of them was a brown-haired man with a short beard covering his lower jaw. He was wearing a white robe in a style usually worn by alchemists.

The other was a blond-haired man with a mustache. He was wearing a white robe of a different style, but it still showed his status as one of the most genius men, standing beside the alchemist next to him.

Looking at them, Aldrian smiled. One was known as the creator of alchemical knowledge, the one who started the beginning of the alchemy era, the man called the God of Alchemy.

The other was the creator of formation knowledge, a legend who could create any kind of formation no matter the complexity.

Their contributions to the way cultivators carried out many things could not be measured. Because of them, people since ancient times had been able to utilize their knowledge to do many things that supported their lives. Even gods gained many benefits from them, as their creations also affected divine beings.

These two were the pioneers and the first foundation that shaped the world of alchemy and formations.

Finally, Aldrian spoke.

"Finally, I can see you in this life, Hanlie, Xuanji."

Hearing this, the two figures trembled. Hanlie, the brown-haired man, spoke first.

"Your Majesty still remembers us," he said, his voice choking as he held back his tears.

Xuanji, the man beside him, instantly prostrated himself. Hanlie followed right after.

"We greet the arrival of the Great Emperor of all heavens, the absolute ruler of all things," both of them said at the same time.

Aldrian nodded with a smile. "Rise. It's good to see you again."

Both of them rose and wiped their tears. Aldrian then asked them,

"How about your real bodies' situation?"

Both of them were slightly stunned, but then they showed sad smiles at the same time, and Xuanji answered him.

"My apologies, Your Majesty, but it looks like my real body is no more. I cannot sense my connection to it anymore."

"The same goes for me, Your Majesty, but it's fine. Although we are only remnant wills, at least we could see you one last time before dissipating. We are more than satisfied after waiting for so long," Hanlie said.

Aldrian was stunned, and the happiness in his heart turned into sadness in an instant. These two legends were no more, and once their wills dissipated, they would disappear entirely. As he remembered they had reached divinity, there would be no reincarnation for them.

"Please do not be sad, Your Majesty. Although we ourselves are already no more, our creations will always support you. We have already left many things behind so you can use them on your journey," Hanlie said.

"Yes, Your Majesty. I also prepared many things and left them behind so you can use them as you see fit. I hope they can help you on your journey," Xuanji said.

Aldrian took a deep breath to calm his saddened heart and nodded.

"Thank you for all of your work. I will always remember you. This is my promise."

Hanlie and Xuanji smiled upon hearing that, and Aldrian continued.

"By the way, I did not expect to find both of you here. When I was on my way to the mansion at the bottom of the abyss, I thought I would find Xuanji's will. But once I saw Hanlie's style of mansion, I was confused. Then I thought that both of you might have built this place. This is the first time I have found two wills in one faith gathering place."

"Well, because what I possessed was truly valuable, to the point that many gods also desired it, I asked Xuanji to strengthen this place. He could create the best defense using his formations, to ensure that no one could take away my creations other than Your Majesty. But in the end, Xuanji also placed his inheritance here," Hanlie replied.

"With those invaders and their followers having the possibility of reaching this place, defenses strong enough to block those bastards were far more necessary," he added, and Xuanji nodded in agreement.

"That's right, Your Majesty. I decided to create the abyss, as I believed this was an effective defensive measure against anyone who tried to reach this place. I designed the abyss to also become a death trap, with nullified formations that would render anyone who entered the abyss a mortal," he said.

"With the law of causality of the First Heaven, I believe there are no gods or any cultivators beyond the peak pseudo immortal stage who could reach this place, unless they were crazy enough to fight the heavens. The only one who could reach the bottom of the abyss and enter this place is Your Majesty, as Your Majesty's energy cannot be suppressed by anything."

Aldrian nodded in understanding. So that was the origin of this abyss. Even so, for cultivators in the past, being able to reach the point where they could even see the abyss was already considered fortunate.

They did not step into the trap despite the thick fog. He could not imagine how many people had already been sacrificed just to allow those past cultivators to reach the abyss.

"Your Majesty, this subject of yours has already left many of my most precious treasures in this mansion. The books in the rooms contain various knowledge from across the cosmos. Those books are also from countless people who sent their regards to Your Majesty," Hanlie said.

"I also placed my knowledge of formations and most of my wealth in this mansion. There are also many talismans with various functions. I hope all of them can help Your Majesty," Xuanji added.

Before Aldrian could express his gratitude, he saw the two figures begin to grow slightly blurry. Aldrian knew what this meant, and his heart ached.

He instantly lowered his head toward them.

"Thank you for all of your support and help. I will surely put all of your creations to the best use. All of you, including the people who sent their regards to me, I hear you, and I will not disappoint you."

Seeing Aldrian lower his head, Hanlie and Xuanji widened their eyes in astonishment. This was the first time they had ever seen the great emperor lower his head, and it made their hearts tremble. They then bowed to Aldrian.

"Please raise your head, Your Majesty. This is what we are supposed to do to help the great emperor who ruled over us all. We are helping Your Majesty reach your throne once again, and we are glad to do so, even though we no longer exist," Hanlie said with full reverence.

"What you did for us is far greater than what we give to you. You are the reason we became what we were in the past. Without Your Majesty's guidance, there would have been no way for us to accomplish all the things that changed the universe," Xuanji added.

Both of them then raised their heads and looked at Aldrian with reddened eyes filled with tears.

"Your Majesty, when you suddenly disappeared in the past, and when we learned where you had gone, we were truly devastated. You were our teacher, our master, the one who opened the path for us to new knowledge that allowed all beings to prosper. But we could not say any words of gratitude or farewell to you at all," Hanlie said with sorrow.

"All of the titles we gained are not worthy, for there is you, our master. In this last chance of our meeting, we finally could do something that we have wanted to do since long ago," Xuanji added, before both of them kowtowed to Aldrian.

"Thank you for all of your guidance, for all that you have done for us, and for all beings who believe in you. Thank you for bringing light to our lives, to all beings, and for answering all of our curiosity. We are sorry if we disturbed you many times back then," Hanlie said with sobs.

"Thank you for making us what we became, for leading us to glory. We are truly thankful to you," Xuanji said.

At this moment, almost all of their existence disappeared, leaving only their heads.

"May the Great Emperor of all heavens continue to reign sovereign!" both of them shouted one last time before they finally disappeared.

The existence of the two legends entirely vanished from the world.

The entire place then shone with a bright light that blinded Aldrian's sight before it slowly receded. Aldrian was already standing in front of the stone pillar inside the faith-gathering place.

He took a deep breath to steady his emotions and looked at the stone pillar for a moment before bowing to it. For that brief moment, he could sense not only Hanlie and Xuanji's feelings toward him, but also many others. They were the ones who believed in him and regarded him as a god.

He kept bowing for a few seconds before straightening his body once more.

For now, it was time to see what he had gained from Hanlie and Xuanji.

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Chapter 956 - 956: Playing

[1,659 words]

Aldrian then checked the entire mansion using his domain sense, and what he found astounded him. Mountains upon mountains of energy stones and even divine stones were stored within, along with countless pills, potions, talismans, and various ingredients used to create formations.

There were also other artifacts, such as the cauldron that had been used by Hanlie, as well as special artifacts used by Xuanji, like the Flag of the Eye of Formations, which could be used to create special formations.

There were many other items whose value he could not measure.

All of them were stored inside an underground hidden vault. The vault used a spatial manipulation formation similar to the one at the stone pillar location, with a space far wider than it appeared from the outside.

The space was sealed by Xuanji using powerful formations that even a peak pseudo immortal stage cultivator would find impossible to break.

After entering the vault and seeing the mountains of treasures directly, Aldrian could not help but release a sigh of amazement. This was the greatest wealth he had ever seen in his current life, even though the number of weapon artifacts was not as high as in other faith-gathering places.

However, the presence of invaluable treasures such as rare pills and potions personally created by Hanlie made this place more valuable than the place filled with divine grade artifacts. He could even see several six stripe pills among them, and their effects left his mind shaken.

Even gods would desire these pills desperately.

The formation knowledge from Xuanji, along with all of the ingredients that could be used to create many formations, was also something many gods would desire. There were several rare materials that, if used to construct a formation, could create one capable of even killing gods.

He also saw many Irons of Punishment from the Dark Sovereign Realm stored inside special containers, and the sight made his heart tremble. He could use them against his enemies if needed, as he might face many powerful opponents in the future.

He took a deep breath once again to calm himself. Everything inside this place was enough to make gods kill each other. He had expected Hanlie and Xuanji to possess tremendous treasures because of their specialties, but this truly exceeded his imagination.

It was no wonder that these treasures were kept inside a separate space that even possessed preventive measures against the heavens.

Some of the treasures directly violated the heavenly laws, so Xuanji had created this space to hide them from the heavens.

However, now that Aldrian had entered this place, the heavens could finally sense it, and they might send down a heavenly tribulation capable of destroying this place.

But, how could the heavens do that when Aldrian was here and all of this had already been given to him?

Moreover, everything was already inside his domain, and he intended to use these artifacts. Unless Aldrian ordered the heavens to act normally and not give special privilege to this place, they would not dare to act, even according to their own laws.

Once again, he was truly thankful to Hanlie and Xuanji for these treasures, as they could truly help him and his family.

After checking the treasures, Aldrian then checked the mansion and the entire abyss region. He finally understood the placement of the formations that spanned across the region. The formations in this region were the most complex he had ever seen.

Having a formation that covered the depths of the abyss, combined with nullifying formations that could render anyone mortal within it, was already a difficult feat that not even immortals could accomplish.

The fog and the other traps surrounding the abyss were all connected to it as the eye of the formation. The teleportation traps ensured that anyone who stepped into them would have their body appear directly above the abyss, causing them to fall into its depths.

The illusion traps and the fog connected to them could cause anyone who stepped into them to never emerge from the fog-covered area.

That was why Aldrian could sense countless skeletons scattered across the region. The number of victims accumulated over countless eons had turned this place into a suitable location for anyone who wished to comprehend death laws.

He could sense dense death laws permeating the entire region, proof of the countless people who had attempted to peer into the mysteries of the abyss.

He spread his domain sense much farther and finally sensed something he had already expected. Many devils were already waiting for his return from the abyss, and he could not help but smile at the thought.

There were thousands of them, and he was impressed that the devils could move in such numbers within this world. He thought that if the devils were not careful, these numbers could cause a massive uproar, and many powers would immediately strike them down.

He then sensed Meilan's and Rei's conditions and saw that they were still in good shape, safely kept within the formation he had instructed them to remain in. He was glad that they were fine, and after making sure there were no issues, he began thinking of a way to deal with these thousands of devils.

Some of these devils were an important source of information to eliminate the devils and the traitors of this world.

He teleported himself outside the mansion, stopping at a distance of one kilometre from it. After sensing his surroundings, he nodded.

'This is enough,' he thought.

A few moments later, he teleported all of the devils from outside the abyss region to this location. The moment the devils appeared, all of them were stunned and disoriented by the sudden change in their surroundings.

Only darkness greeted their vision, and their bodies suddenly felt restrained.

Erdo and Veraz were also stunned as their vision abruptly plunged into darkness. They immediately tried to observe their surroundings, but when they attempted to spread their spiritual sense, they were shocked to discover that they could not do so.

Many voices from the other devils were filled with confusion and panic, echoing throughout the surroundings, showing that all of them were experiencing the same situation. They were also unable to use their comprehension of elemental laws to unleash any techniques, unable even to light up the dark place.

They could do nothing, as if they were ordinary mortals.

"Where the fuck is this place? Why can I not use any energy?" one of the devils asked furiously.

"Hey, is there anyone who can unleash flames? Light this place up, damn it!" another shouted.

Hearing the commotion filled with panic and confusion, Veraz opened his lips.

"Erdo, are you there?"

"On your right side," Erdo answered.

"Something is blocking our control over the energy outside our bodies, making us unable to utilize anything connected to the surrounding heaven and earth energy. Our spiritual sense is also being suppressed, which means we are no different from sitting ducks here," Veraz said, panic clearly audible in his voice.

"What the fuck is going on? We are outside the danger zone, so why are we—"

Before Erdo could finish his words, blue flames suddenly appeared, surrounding the vast space. The flames formed a massive enclosure, trapping thousands of devils within it, causing shock through the group.

The flames lighting up the space finally allowed them to see their surroundings. However, that did not bring them any relief because of the strange situation they were in. Where were they? What was this place? Why could they not use any energy here?

Amid the panic, one of the devils noticed someone floating above them.

"There is someone there!" he shouted, prompting the others to look in the direction he pointed. They saw the silhouette of a figure and a pair of blue eyes shining in the darkness, silently gazing down at them.

Erdo and Veraz looked at the silhouette with tense expressions.

Who was this figure? Was he an enemy? If this figure was the one who had done this to them, then they were nothing before him.

They could do nothing and were entirely at this figure's mercy.

"Who are you? Are you the one who brought us to this place?" Erdo shouted toward the figure.

As the others waited for an answer, the figure slowly descended, his body gradually entering the illuminated area, revealing his form.

"You know me, do you not? All of you came for me, hoping to kill me after all."

The male voice resounded, and as the light fully touched his face, it revealed a handsome countenance.

The moment Erdo and Veraz saw that face, their expressions turned to horror. Their bodies froze for a moment.

The man they had planned to kill was in front of them, and he seemed to be the one who had rendered all of them powerless.

Aldrian looked at them with a calm expression. His emotionless eyes reflected the thousands of devils, all of whom were showing fear, shock, and panic on their faces.

Seeing the bleak situation, Erdo snapped out of his shock and shouted to the others.

"Everyone, escape! Don't look back!"

The thousands of devils tried to flee, running in any direction as long as it took them away from Aldrian. They believed that they could force their way through the walls of blue flames, and that even if their bodies were burned, they might still survive.

But the moment their bodies touched the flames—

Whoosh!

"Argghh!"

"Uwargghh!"

"No!"

"Help!"

Their bodies were suddenly engulfed entirely in flames, and the fire did not go out no matter how they tried to extinguish it, even as they rolled on the ground in desperation.

Seeing this scene, many devils gave up their intent to force their way through the flames. They stepped back in panic, not knowing what else to do.

Erdo and Veraz gritted their teeth. Aldrian was playing with them. It was as if a predator was toying with its prey.

Looking at the powerless devils, Aldrian smiled. It was a chilling smile that made the devils who saw it feel a deep cold in their hearts.

"There will be none of you who leave this place alive," Aldrian said.

A moment later, screams filled with pain, despair, and horror echoed from the depths of the abyss.

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Chapter 957 - 957: Obsession (R-18)

[1,606 words]

Meilan and Rei, who were still staying inside the formation, did not know what had happened to the devils. They only saw that the devils had suddenly disappeared, and they could no longer sense their presence.

They thought that the devils had used some kind of concealment technique, one that made them unable to detect the devils even at a short distance. Because of that, they did not dare to check their surroundings using their spiritual sense.

They continued observing their silent surroundings, when suddenly another figure appeared right in front of them.

They were stunned at first, but then their expressions turned joyful as they recognized the figure.

"Your Majesty," both of them said as they stood up and approached Aldrian. Their worries and tense feelings vanished in an instant, making them forget that they had been too afraid to even move earlier for fear of being discovered by the devils.

Aldrian showed them a smile. "I'm done with my business here. Let's leave this place."

Meilan and Rei were stunned, then they looked around their surroundings.

"Your Majesty, the devils are waiting for you in ambush. We have been surrounded since earlier, and then they suddenly disappeared. We cannot sense them at all. We thought this might be one of the devils' tricks," Meilan said.

"You don't have to worry about the devils. I already took care of them," Aldrian said, which left Meilan and Rei stunned.

When did he take care of them?

"Anyway, those devils are not a problem anymore, and I even obtained a lot of useful information from them that will cause quite a stir in this world. So, would you like to follow me and help me take care of this matter?" Aldrian asked.

Meilan put aside her confusion and nodded. "Of course, Your Majesty. We will follow you and help. Moreover, this matter concerns the devils, so there is even more reason for us to help in any way we can."

Aldrian smiled. "Then let's go."

After that, they flew back in the direction of the nearest town.

Unknown to Meilan and Rei, deep inside the abyss, a large amount of blood stained the ground, and corpses were scattered everywhere. The conditions of the corpses varied. There were mutilated limbs, burned bodies, decapitated heads, and other horrific conditions.

Various inhabitants of the abyss, emerged to feast on the corpses. Their sizes varied, and the largest among them were far bigger than a human. Centipedes, spiders, and other creatures crawled forth. These were beings of the abyss that lived in eternal darkness.

When Aldrian had walked through this place earlier, they had kept their distance from him, as they felt fear from the energy surrounding his body. They felt suppressed and, by instinct alone, knew not to attack this human.

They only dared to come out once Aldrian had already disappeared and decided to feast on what he left behind. Opportunities like this were extremely rare for them, and with so many corpses scattered around, they could eat freely.

One giant centipede found two decapitated heads, which were the heads of Erdo and Veraz. The centipede began to crunch them in its mouth.

Today, the devils of this world had lost many of their higher-ups, including their leader and second-in-command, in the bottomless abyss.

A few hours later, when the sun had finally set, the Celestial Lotus Sect was still boisterous with many activities. Many disciples were entering and leaving the sect to attend to their own matters. There were also those who were still training and cultivating at this time in various areas of the sect.

However, there was another activity taking place at this moment in one part of the sect, one that would usually be frowned upon if it became known to other disciples or elders.

Inside one of the private pavilions where the direct disciples of the Grand Elder resided, the sound of a woman's moans could be heard echoing within. Repeated erotic slapping sounds followed each moan. In fact, there were two women's voices.

From outside one of the buildings, the silhouettes of three figures could be seen through the sliding doors. There was one man and two women.

The man's silhouette appeared to be thrusting into one of the women from behind while kissing the other. If anyone were to enter the room, they would discover that the man was Luyan, and the two women were those who had followed him within their group.

Luyan was pounding the body of the Rasminov family's young miss while kissing the other woman and playing with her breast.

"Ah, yes, yes, Young Master, faster, harder," the woman said in an erotic voice.

Luyan thrust faster as he felt that he was about to come. He kept deeply kissing the other woman, and after a few more thrusts, he was finally on the verge of climax. At the moment before he came, he pulled the Rasminov family's young miss closer and grasped her breast.

Spurt! Spurt! Spurt!

He came inside her pleasure hole while his kiss grew deeper with the other woman. The Rasminov family's young miss also climaxed, her expression showing extreme pleasure.

After more than half a minute of ejaculation, he pulled his dick out of the woman and stopped kissing. He then laid the other woman down and, without waiting any longer, pushed his dick, still stained with the mixture of his cum and the Rasminov family's young miss's fluids, into her pleasure hole.

The woman moaned in pleasure as Luyan began to thrust vigorously. While he kept thrusting and looking at the woman's face, which was full of pleasure, he could not help but smile and imagine that the one he was pounding right now was Meilan.

Imagining that ice beauty, who rarely showed any expression, moaning with an erotic look beneath his body only turned him on even more. She was already a woman admired by many, and he knew that many noble men had approached her because they were attracted to her.

However, Meilan was difficult to approach, and with her background, along with her master, all of whom were among the strongest powers in this world, no one dared to push themselves if she refused. They did not want to recklessly offend her, and that included him.

Yet his obsession with her made him desire her even more and made him bolder compared to others in pursuing her. Moreover, his backing was not lacking either, as his family stood on the same level as hers, and his master was the strongest Grand Elder of the sect.

He truly wanted to make her his woman, for he believed that she was the only woman worthy of him.

As for these women that he enjoyed, they were merely his subjects of entertainment. They were the ones who threw themselves at him anyway, so he did not refuse. He knew that these women had their own purposes for approaching him, but he did not care. As long as he could entertain himself, he simply accepted it.

It did not harm him anyway.

"Meilan, you are so good, ngh," he unconsciously voiced her name while he kept pounding the woman. The woman who heard it did not care, as she was drowned in pleasure and knew of his obsession with her.

As for the Rasminov family's young miss, who heard his words, she glanced at him and bit her lip. She also knew of his obsession with Meilan, yet she still threw herself at him. She wanted to gain his affection and obsession, to raise both her own status and her family's status.

That was why she hated Meilan, for she was the one who had gained Luyan's obsession.

After a few minutes of pounding, Luyan finally climaxed.

"Meilan, receive my seed," Luyan said as he released inside the woman's womb. He kept his position, his face full of pleasure, as he continued to inject his cum for more than thirty seconds.

Suddenly, before he could even pull out his dick, he sensed something from outside, which made him look in that direction. He narrowed his eyes, then raised his eyebrows.

'This is... this is sword will? No... this is something much more profound.' He thought before he finally realized something, which made him frown.

'I see, Sect Master is making a breakthrough in his sword comprehension.'

In the city located not far from the sect, the atmosphere was even more boisterous, with the number of people far higher than usual. Thanks to Aldrian's visit to the sect, many people from across the continent and even the world had gathered to see him.

As people went about their own business, they suddenly felt something coming from the direction of the Celestial Lotus Sect. This made them look toward the sect, and a moment later, countless swords across the city began to tremble, astonishing many people.

A sharp sword aura surged from the sect, and soon they could see the silhouette of a massive sword floating in the sky.

Once many saw this phenomenon, they instantly knew who was responsible for it.

"Is Sect Master Huang making a breakthrough?" one onlooker said.

"It seems so, but doesn't that mean he will become immortal?" another asked.

"No, it's not his cultivation. This is his sword comprehension. He has finally reached a level that only a few people can attain," a man commented as he looked toward the sect.

Hearing that, the others widened their eyes in shock.

"Did Sect Master Huang comprehend the sword heart?"

"Amazing. Just how powerful will he become now? He was already powerful before, but he might as well take the position of the strongest cultivator in this world," another onlooker said.

"It seems his battle with Aldrian the Great gave him the insight that allowed him to make this breakthrough," a woman said.

"The order of cultivator strength in this world will certainly change after this," she added.

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Chapter 958 - 958: Jealously (R-18)

[1,601 words]

The elders and grand elders of the Celestial Lotus Sect rushed out from their pavilions and looked toward a secluded pavilion complex located on a lonely mountain outside the seven peaks. It was a place that only the sect master could enter, as it was the area where he stayed.

However, the elders and grand elders still swarmed toward this place when they saw the phenomenon in the sky and realized that the sect master was making another major breakthrough in his sword comprehension.

"Sect Master has comprehended sword heart. Finally, one of his dreams has been achieved tonight," one of the female elders said with a smile.

"Yes, Sect Master will become much more powerful, and this strengthens our sect's status as one of the strongest sects in this world. Heck, I even believe we might as well have already become the strongest now that the sect master has comprehended sword heart," another elder answered.

"His battle with Aldrian the Great truly gave him insight. No wonder he asked Aldrian the Great for a spar. He only needed someone who could push him past the wall that obstructed his comprehension of sword heart," another elder commented.

As discussions continued among the elders at the base of the mountain where Sect Master Huang stayed, there was one among them who was looking toward the mountain peak with hidden fury. His gaze was fixed on the phenomenon in the sky, where the manifestation of a giant sword appeared, giving him a sensation similar to standing near a sharp blade.

He gritted his teeth as his gaze burned with ill intent. His aura leaked out as he was a peak pseudo-immortal stage cultivator and the strongest grand elder of the sect, Almund Ezwal.

'Why did he get everything that I could only hope for?' he thought in his heart.

His jealousy burned intensely. His jealousy toward every achievement of the sect master had stemmed from a long time ago, back when he and the young Sect Master Huang entered the sect together. They became friends, normal friends. They started from the same starting line, but unfortunately, he was less talented than Sect Master Huang.

The genius young sect master made a name for himself and achieved many things, while he could only stand behind his shadow. He could not catch up to Sect Master Huang, as the distance between them kept growing wider and wider. Eventually, Sect Master Huang became one of the strongest cultivators in this world and also took the position of the Celestial Lotus Sect Master.

Even in regard to disciples, Sect Master Huang's disciple was more talented than his own. Sect Master Huang was truly lucky to find someone with a special physique. As for him, he had to be satisfied with taking only the second best as his disciple.

He, who had always been able to look only at the back of the sect master, could do nothing but feel jealous of his achievements. Even now, Sect Master Huang had achieved something that he himself had not yet achieved: comprehending sword heart.

He thought about how unfair it was that Sect Master Huang could obtain the best of everything, while he could only receive the second best time and time again.

After the sword phenomenon disappeared, all the elders waited for the sect master's next movement.

After waiting for a few minutes, the doors of the private pavilion opened, and Sect Master Huang's figure emerged.

"Ahhh, what a beautiful night, truly refreshing," he said with high spirits. It could be seen that he was really in a good mood.

"Congratulations to the sect master for the breakthrough!" many elders instantly shouted toward him. Sect Master Huang looked at them and laughed.

"Ahahaha, thank you all for your congratulations. However, I believe I also need to visit someone who truly gave me a huge favor in making this breakthrough possible. Is Aldrian the Great in his pavilion?" he asked.

"His Majesty went somewhere with Disciple Meilan and Disciple Rei since this morning, Sect Master. We do not know where they went," one of the elders answered.

Sect Master Huang raised his eyebrows, then nodded. "I see. It cannot be helped then. I will wait until His Majesty comes back."

He believed they had gone somewhere far away, and with Aldrian the Great present, he had no worries about his disciples' safety.

Grand Elder Almund, who was still looking at Sect Master Huang, suddenly smirked. He suddenly remembered that there was another matter that had occurred without the sect master's knowledge.

The fate of his disciple.

He had no idea where Aldrian, Meilan, and Rei had gone, but he knew the devils were pursuing them. Their full plan remained unclear, yet Aldrian was undeniably their main target.

He did not know whether the devils could succeed in their mission this time, as they were facing Aldrian the Great. However, Meilan and Rei beside him could be exploited, and the devils would surely know it.

Those two women could be used to control Aldrian the Great or even Sect Master Huang. He leaned toward the belief that the devils would not kill them and would instead use them to their advantage.

He also hoped that the devils would also fulfill one of his disciple's requests, which was to help him obtain Meilan. That would be even better for him. His disciple would finally be able to fulfill his obsession and humiliate Meilan, the sect master's disciple.

With the devils' help, they could manipulate the narrative and make the sect master the one who had to bear the shame. As for him and his disciple, they could slip away from the pointed fingers of many people.

He could not wait to hear news from the devils, as he still had not received any information regarding them today.

In Luyan's private pavilion, he still buried his dick inside the woman's pleasure hole. He kept thrusting, giving the woman pleasure, while the young miss of the Rasminov family hugged him from behind.

The young woman kept kissing his neck in hopes of giving him more pleasure, but from his eyes, it seemed that something else occupied his mind. His thrusts were no longer as vigorous as before, yet the two women did not stop trying to please him.

'Master will have much more difficulty taking the sect master's seat in the future. To think that the sect master could comprehend sword heart at this moment,' Luyan thought.

He suddenly felt irritated, as his master's chance to seize the sect master's position had become much slimmer after this. Even with the devils' help, it would not be easy. They had already faced great difficulty when Sect Master had not yet comprehended sword heart, and now that he had, it would become far more difficult.

The only thing they could use to shake the sect master's position was Meilan. This made him quite pissed off, as he had to use the woman he desired, yet it seemed he had no other choice.

Remembering another figure who made his future path even more difficult, his heart suddenly burned with fury.

'It's because of that bastard. If not for his appearance, there would be nothing between me and Meilan,' he thought as he imagined Aldrian's figure.

For the first time, he had seen Meilan show an amicable expression toward the opposite sex, and it was not toward him but toward that Aldrian. He could not help feeling fury

that the woman he obsessed over showed a different emotion to another man besides him.

She was even tasked with accompanying that man everywhere, something she seemed glad to do. Just imagining how close they were when no one else was around made his heart burn with jealousy. His thoughts wandered even further, imagining that Aldrian might actually sleep with her. Meilan, who looked quite amicable and close to Aldrian, might even accept his advances.

That man could enjoy her body while he could only entertain himself with these women. The most irritating thing was that he could not do anything about it.

They were talking about Aldrian the Great, a man with power far beyond what he could oppose. Even the sect master could not stand against him. Heck, he doubted that anyone in this world could directly go against him.

If Aldrian wanted to sleep with Meilan, then there was no one who could stop him.

Moreover, with that bitch Rei also with him, he could not stop imagining that they were having a threesome, just like him at this moment, enjoying two beauties by himself.

He suddenly fastened his thrusts, which made the woman beneath him moan loudly. However, his movements became rougher, and he did not think about the woman's condition at all.

Imagining that the woman of his dreams was sleeping with another man truly soured his mood.

"Angh, young master... ahn, it hurts," the woman said amid her moans, but Luyan did not care and kept pounding.

He thrust a few more times before finally climaxing inside her. He grabbed the Rasminov family's young miss by the hair behind her and kissed her forcefully. He even bit her lips, making her flinch slightly in pain, yet he continued kissing her.

After he was done, he pulled out his dick and stopped kissing. He casually threw the young miss onto the bed before turning and walking toward the door.

He picked up his robe and put it on, intending to leave and look for information about the status of the devils pursuing Aldrian.

Why was there still no news from them even now?

As he walked outside, he suddenly sensed something in the sky and looked toward the direction. His eyes widened when he saw three figures flying past him. Those three were actually Aldrian, Meilan, and Rei.

'They're coming back?!' he thought in astonishment.

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Chapter 959 - 959: Anxious

[1,546 words]

Luyan was astonished to see that Aldrian, Meilan, and Rei had returned safely. What happened to the devils?

He gritted his teeth. With no news reaching him at all, it made him think of the worst possible outcome. The mission had failed, and there were no devils who had followed Aldrian alive.

Although he had already expected this to be one of the outcomes, he still felt frustrated. The devils who came out this time were no joke, with many of their higher ups involved. He knew how powerful they were, yet it seemed that all of them together were still not enough to deal with Aldrian, even with an ambush.

'Fucking useless.' He thought as he watched the three of them fly toward Aldrian's private pavilion in the distance.

But then a sudden thought crossed his mind, making him anxious.

'Do they know about me, or anything about my connection with the devils?'

He was afraid that somehow Aldrian had discovered how they were tailed by the devils. If that was the case, then it could be a sign of his end.

If Aldrian said that he had connections with the devils, even without any proof, it would already be enough for others to cast doubtful gazes at him. Even though he had maintained his image as a man without problems within the sect, if Aldrian spoke up, many people would still listen to Aldrian, given his current reputation.

The sect's higher ups would likely launch an investigation that even his master could not stop.

'No, I have to make sure that they did not point their finger at me,' he thought before he walked out of his pavilion.

There were sect guards who had also seen Aldrian coming back, so they reported it to Sect Master Huang. The sect master instantly made his way to Aldrian's pavilion after hearing the news. The news also reached Grand Elder Almund, and he was astonished when he heard that Aldrian had returned with Meilan and Rei.

The devils failed after all of their preparation?

'So that's why there was no news from the devils' side today. All of them might already be dead.'

He gritted his teeth. At this moment, he was inside his private pavilion, walking back and forth. He could not help but feel anxious. Even with the devils sending many of their ranks to take care of Aldrian, they still failed.

With that, Aldrian must now know that there was someone who leaked their departure outside the sect.

Even if Aldrian did not know how the devils could tail him, the fact that the devils knew he had made a journey outside and were able to tail him meant that he must know someone from the sect had leaked his departure.

There were only a few people who knew about Aldrian's journey, and it would be easy to trace it back to him or his disciple, who had made the devils aware of Aldrian's location.

His disciple's job was only to make sure to mark Meilan. With her as Aldrian's guide, the devils could track them once they left the sect. He and his disciple only needed to inform the devils when Aldrian and Meilan went out of the sect, and the rest was up to the devils.

He suddenly felt as if he were standing on the edge of a cliff. He was trapped and could do nothing other than wait.

He took a deep breath to calm himself.

All of this was still only his guess and had not been proven.

If somehow they found out about his and his disciple's connection with the devils, he could simply deny it. He could even push Luyan aside and make him a scapegoat.

There was no strong evidence pointing at him at the moment, so he was confident that as long as he kept denying his involvement with the devils, he would somehow make it out alive. Even if Aldrian pointed his finger at him, he believed he could still survive, although it would damage his name.

'Yes, calm down. Let's see how things turn out,' he thought.

In Aldrian's private pavilion, he had just landed with Meilan and Rei. They then sat in a small pavilion that allowed them to look out at the night scenery of the sect. Rei could not help but sigh.

"Today was truly a shocking day. I truly did not expect to witness so many things happening, and for the truth to finally come out. It makes me angry just imagining that we actually lived alongside these people."

Meilan nodded. "Today was truly a hectic day. Tomorrow, the world will surely be in an uproar because of what Your Majesty did today. To think that the devils' connections are spread across so many prominent families. It will take quite a while before the world can calm down again."

Aldrian smiled. "Well, that is something this world will have to experience because of the devils' infiltration. A world that has already been infiltrated by them will inevitably have traitors among normal cultivators, as the devils are always enticing the inhabitants of the world to work with them. They are cunning and smart, taking advantage of the negative emotions of living beings."

Meilan and Rei nodded.

Soon, they sensed someone entering the pavilion complex. It was Sect Master Huang. The moment Meilan saw him, she raised her eyebrows and smiled. If her master had come out of seclusion, then it meant he had succeeded in his breakthrough.

Moreover, judging by his expression and good mood, there was no mistake. She and Rei stood up as Sect Master Huang approached them.

"Master, congratulations on your breakthrough."

"Greetings, Sect Master. Congratulations on your breakthrough."

Both of them spoke at the same time as they bowed to him. Sect Master Huang laughed.

"Ahahaha, thank you for the congratulations. But it looks like you all had fun outside, to only come back at this time," he said in a joking tone as he also looked at Aldrian.

"Well, we truly did have fun. But before we talk more, congratulations on your breakthrough, Sect Master. You finally comprehended sword heart," Aldrian said as he also stood up.

"Thank you for the congratulations, Your Majesty. But I would not have made this breakthrough so easily if not for your help. Our spar truly gave me the insight I needed to break through to sword heart. That is why I am the one who should really thank Your

Majesty for your guidance, which allowed me to reach this level," Sect Master Huang said as he bowed.

He did not hesitate to bow, because what Aldrian had done for him was truly tremendous. With him comprehending sword heart, his cultivation had also risen slightly, approaching the stage where he would have to undergo tribulation to become an immortal.

He knew that this time would come much sooner than he had expected, so he needed to start making some preparations before that moment arrived.

"No problem, Sect Master. But still, in the end, your comprehension ability is what matters the most. What I did only sped up the process. From what I could sense, you would have reached the sword heart even without my help, as your sword will have already touched some aspects of the sword heart," Aldrian said.

"It would be different if I helped someone who did not have strong sword comprehension. Even if I helped them, they would not comprehend it as quickly as Sect Master."

Sect Master Huang nodded.

"Anyway, Sect Master, please have a seat. I have something I want to talk to you about. It is better if you hear it as soon as possible," Aldrian said, which made Sect Master Huang raise his eyebrows in curiosity.

He took a seat on a vacant chair before Aldrian continued.

"Today, the devils were targeting me."

Hearing that, Sect Master Huang's expression changed as he frowned, but he remained silent.

"Of course, I was able to take care of them. While doing so, I found some interesting information, and this is also something that Sect Master Huang needs to know," Aldrian said.

"It looks like your sect has some traitors within it, Sect Master, and I know who they are."

Sect Master Huang's eyes widened in shock.

"Really, Your Majesty? Do you know the identities of the traitors?"

Aldrian nodded. From the sect master's reaction, he knew that Sect Master Huang was already suspicious of the existence of traitors within the sect. Meilan had already told him about Sect Master Huang's suspicions because of past events.

There were already some people under his attention, but he could not make a move because he lacked concrete proof. In the end, his suspicions had remained nothing more than suspicions.

"Please tell me, Your Majesty. I have already been suspicious about the existence of traitors inside the sect, but because we never found any evidence, we could not do anything. If Your Majesty knows the identities of the traitors, we will focus our investigation on them to look for evidence," Sect Master Huang said.

"Sect Master Huang does not have to bother looking for evidence, because I already have it," Aldrian said as he took out an information crystal and a few scrolls from his storage ring. He placed them on the table.

Sect Master Huang then took the information crystal first and looked into its contents.

After a few minutes, his aura suddenly flared, causing the space around him to tremble. His expression turned furious as he clenched his fist.

"Fucking bastards!"

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Chapter 960 - 960: Surrounded

[1,551 words]

Sect Master Huang's aura leaked into his surroundings as he showed his fury. The space trembled, and his aura itself gave the sensation of a sharp sword. Meilan and Rei, who felt it directly, grew tense as their souls were shaken by the sect master's powerful aura.

Then, the aura suddenly disappeared, and the pressure was gone. Sect Master Huang took a deep breath to calm himself.

"My apologies for losing control, but to think the number of traitors is greater than I suspected is still irritating," he said. Inside the information crystal was the recording of Erdo and Veraz's confession regarding the traitors within the Celestial Lotus Sect.

This made Sect Master Huang surprised because he knew who Erdo and Veraz were and how difficult it was even to capture them, let alone force out their confession.

Forget about making them speak, those devils were stubborn motherfuckers, especially the high-ranking ones. Even if they were tortured, he doubted they would confess anything and would instead choose suicide.

Yet inside the information crystal in his grasp, he could see the sorry state of the two peak commanders of the devils. They seemed to have already been tortured and were clearly traumatized, as they kept answering anything Aldrian asked.

He did not doubt that Aldrian had given them a hell, one that even those devils could not withstand, forcing them to speak.

After the initial shock of seeing the two leaders of the devil movement in this world, he focused on what they had said. After hearing everything, his fury only grew stronger.

He was furious at the traitors and also at himself for looking like a fool who had let these traitors roam freely within the sect.

"It's alright, Sect Master. I know it is truly infuriating, and it is difficult to hold it in," Aldrian replied.

Sect Master Huang then picked one of the scrolls and read its contents. After reading it, he gritted his teeth. The scroll contained the report sent by the traitors of his sect to the devils. The devils had taken note of their reports and stored them in their main hideout, which at this moment had already been ransacked by Aldrian, Meilan, and Rei.

He then picked another scroll, and then another. He read all of the scrolls, and all of them contained a large amount of information provided by the traitors.

Sect Master Huang instantly rolled up the scrolls, stored all the evidence, and stood up. He cupped his hands toward Aldrian with a slight bow.

"Thank you, Your Majesty, for once again helping me and our sect. However, I must apologize, as I have to leave now to take care of this matter. Just thinking that those traitors are still walking freely at this moment is enough to make my blood boil."

Aldrian smiled. "Please go ahead, Sect Master. This is an important matter after all, so it is better to take care of it as soon as possible. In fact, I believe that at this moment, those traitors might already be anxious and may have even tried to escape in desperation."

Sect Master Huang nodded. "Please excuse me." He then flew off in one direction. Meilan and Rei looked at the Sect Master before turning their gaze to Aldrian.

"Your Majesty, we would also like to excuse ourselves. We wish to follow the Sect Master," Meilan said.

"You may go, Miss Meilan and Miss Rei, and thank you for helping me today," Aldrian answered with a smile.

"It is our pleasure, Your Majesty. Instead, we are truly thankful to Your Majesty for everything you have already done for us and for our sect. We will always help Your Majesty if you need anything from us," Meilan said.

Aldrian nodded. After that, Meilan and Rei left. Aldrian, who finally had some time for himself, looked at the beautiful night view of the sect.

'It looks like there will be a commotion after this,' he thought.

Inside Grand Elder Almund's private pavilion, he was still anxious, thinking about what he should do in the future while waiting for any movement from Aldrian or the Sect Master.

Knock! Knock!

"Master, it's me." Suddenly, the voice of his disciple resounded from outside the room.

"Come in," he said. A second later, the sliding door opened, and Luyan entered the room before closing the door again. Looking at his disciple's restless expression, he knew why Luyan had come.

"Master, I think we are in danger at this moment. Aldrian the Great and those two women actually came back safely. It is safe to say that the sect will launch an investigation after this, and there is a high possibility that we will be found out," Luyan said.

Grand Elder Almund did not say anything, and Luyan continued.

"Master, I think it would be wise for us to start planning our escape before they can sniff out our involvement with the devils. With Aldrian the Great here, I don't think it is wise for us to keep staying in the sect."

Grand Elder Almund frowned. "If we escape, it will only make them instantly focus their attention on us. That would be the same as a death sentence. It would be better if we stay within the sect and do what we can to deny any involvement with the devils," he said.

"Moreover, I believe they still don't have any evidence regarding our connection to the devils. Let them conduct their investigation, and we can erase anything that might cause them to point their suspicion toward us."

Although Grand Elder Almund said that, deep inside he had already decided to make Luyan his scapegoat.

'Well, sorry, disciple, but it looks like you will have to be the sacrifice for me.'

However, unknown to him, Luyan had the same thought.

'Sorry, Master. You should go with those devils. I still have many things that I need to achieve.'

But while they were thinking of stabbing each other in the back, suddenly—

"ALMUND, GET OUT NOW!"

The booming voice of Sect Master resounded from outside the pavilion, shocking both the Grand Elder and Luyan. Their hearts were shaken by the sudden shout, and a chill ran through them as they sensed the Sect Master's fury.

Their chests grew cold as they thought that the Sect Master must have already discovered something for him to personally come here.

But was this not too fast? Aldrian had only returned not long ago, yet the Sect Master had already come for them.

'Master, what should we do?' Luyan asked Grand Elder Almund through voice transmission, his voice filled with panic.

Grand Elder Almund gritted his teeth. 'Let us meet the Sect Master first. If he points his finger at us, all you need to do is keep denying our connection with the devils.'

"If you do not come out, I will barge in and drag you out. I will count to three!" the Sect Master's voice resounded again.

"ONE!"

Knowing they had no time to think further, Grand Elder Almund stepped out of his room and into the garden of his pavilion complex, followed closely by Luyan. The moment they stood in the garden and looked up at the sky, they saw that their pavilion complex was already surrounded by a group of cultivators wearing red robes.

Grand Elder Almund and Luyan recognized them at once. They were from the Hell Pavilion, the department of the sect that specialized in apprehending criminals,

especially those who had committed severe crimes. Everyone who became a member of the Hell Pavilion was among the chosen, as they had to be powerful cultivators capable of apprehending dangerous criminals.

They could see that some of the prominent figures of the Hell Pavilion were among the group. The Sect Master stood at the highest position, looking at them with cold eyes. Luyan also saw Meilan and Rei, who were looking at him with cold gazes, as if they could not wait to kill him.

Looking at the situation, he knew that it seemed they no longer doubted that both he and his master were traitors.

"What is the meaning of this, Sect Master? Why are you shouting like that and even bringing the Hell Pavilion to surround my place?" Grand Elder Almund asked. His voice and expression made it seem as though he truly knew nothing and was completely surprised.

Sect Master Huang did not change his expression.

"Don't act ignorant, Almund. I believe you know why I came here personally, and I want to hear it directly from you and that disciple of yours beside you. Do you confess your crimes, or do I have to force you to confess?"

Grand Elder Almund frowned. "What crime do I have to—"

Before he could finish his sentence, he saw the Sect Master take out a scroll from his storage ring and open it toward him, allowing him to see the writing inside.

"Leaking our information and the movements of our forces when we hunted the devils. For example, the incident a year ago when we lost several talented disciples after they were ambushed by the devils on their hidden route. You must know what I am talking about."

"Providing information about our disciples and elders, causing them to fall into danger. This led to several kidnapping incidents, leaving some disciples still missing until now, and some families unable to find their family members."

"I could go on and on listing everything you have done. Do you want me to say all of it?!"

Sect Master Huang's voice boomed once again, echoing across the sect.

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Chapter 961 - 961: Purge Operation

[1,470 words]

Hearing the past events that had been said by Sect Master Huang, Grand Elder Almund and Luyan's bodies turned cold. What Sect Master Huang listed was true. It was because of their information that the devils could take advantage of the situation and do so much to evade pursuit or execute their plans.

Grand Elder Almund and Luyan thought that Aldrian was the one who had given that list to the Sect Master. They did not know where Aldrian got that list, but one thing was for sure.

They were doomed.

From the looks of it, whatever they said would be seen as an effort to evade punishment, which would only worsen their fate. But then, what could be worse than death? They would likely be tortured before being killed.

Seeing that there was only silence from Grand Elder Almund and Luyan, Sect Master Huang continued.

"No more talking? Good. Take them away! Put them in the seventh gate of hell," he said fiercely.

Hearing the order, the group from the Hell Pavilion approached the Grand Elder and Luyan. When Luyan heard that he would be brought to the seventh gate of hell, he wanted to run away.

The Hell Pavilion had a dungeon to imprison criminals, and the dungeon was separated into seven levels. The lowest one was called the seventh gate of hell, where the conditions were the worst. There were rumors that no matter how strong a cultivator was, if they were confined in the seventh gate of hell, they would eventually go crazy.

Everyone confined there would end up dead, whether from the harsh imprisonment conditions or a death sentence.

"I see, it finally comes to this," Grand Elder Almund suddenly said as he saw the group from the Hell Pavilion approaching him. All of them were at the pseudo-immortal and pseudo-immortal establishment stages.

He suddenly smiled and began laughing.

"Ahahaha!"

The members of the Hell Pavilion who were approaching him paused slightly, but then instantly appeared beside the Grand Elder to apprehend him. They sensed that Grand Elder Almund wanted to do something, and whatever it was, it would be bad.

But then wind barrier blocked them, making it impossible for them to touch Grand Elder Almund.

At that moment, Grand Elder Almund had already activated his defensive technique. At the same time, he injected his energy into the escape talisman he had prepared beneath his robe. Simultaneously, he sent his energy into the ground, intending to destroy the entire pavilion.

'Shit, we are too late,' one of the members of the Hell Pavilion thought. They wanted to destroy the defensive barrier, but they knew they did not have the time. Grand Elder Almund would escape by that time.

"Too late. Goodbye!" the Grand Elder said, believing his escape was imminent.

But then—

"Not so fast, traitor," the Sect Master said as he unleashed his technique. Seven swords appeared around him and flew at terrifying speed toward the area surrounding the Grand Elder. The seven swords instantly shattered the defensive barrier and embedded themselves into the ground, forming a formation.

When Grand Elder Almund thought he had already disappeared to the place he had designated, he suddenly felt his teleportation stop and found himself reappearing in the same place. He was shocked, but then he instantly understood what had happened as he sensed the formation created by the seven swords.

The formation sealed the surrounding space, preventing any space-law abilities from escaping it. The swords also cut off the process of destroying the pavilion, which could have heavily injured everyone present.

After his escape failed, it did not take even a split second before a slash energy struck his arm and cut it off. His eyes widened as sudden pain assaulted him, and his right arm dropped to the ground.

"Arghh!" Grand Elder Almund shouted in pain as he clutched his severed wound.

Ignoring his agony, he found his body bound by several red chains as the members of the Hell Pavilion caught him. The chains were connected to each member of the Hell Pavilion, as this was one of their techniques.

The chains had a sealing ability. Anyone bound by them would lose the ability to control the flow of energy within their meridians and dantian. The members instantly pulled the chains, completely incapacitating the Grand Elder.

Luyan, who had already been captured earlier, could only watch the entire scene in despair. Even so, he still thought about how to get out of this situation.

'Yes, I could use my family,' he thought as he looked toward Sect Master Huang.

"Sect Master, did you already tell my family what you will do to me? Even if you put me in the seventh gate of hell, you need to hear my family's opinion." But after he finished speaking, his body was suddenly pressed down by a heavy pressure, forcing him to kiss the ground.

"Disciple Luyan, I did not expect you to be involved in this betrayal. I know that you are interested in Meilan, but to think that because of your obsession you would work with the devils. I do not want to hear anything from you. Do not ever think that because you are from the Bai family you can bring your family's name to threaten me. Believe me, that is useless. Even if your family sides with you, I will still make you face punishment according to the sect's laws. I do not mind if I have to visit your family personally," Sect Master Huang said fiercely.

Luyan gritted his teeth as he endured the immense pressure that kept his head pressed to the ground. He was utterly humiliated at this moment.

Meilan and Rei looked at Luyan with disgusted expressions. After knowing that Luyan had worked with the devils, they hated him even more. But after learning his intentions toward Meilan, which had driven him to cooperate with the devils, they truly wanted to kill him personally.

He had always gotten everything he wanted, which shaped a character that could not accept rejection. That was why Meilan's rejection and her unapproachable nature became his challenge and obsession.

"Take them away. I do not want to hear any of their words any longer," Sect Master Huang said.

After that, the members of the Hell Pavilion dragged Grand Elder Almud and Luyan out of the pavilion.

"Huang Zhanfeng! Even if I die, my ghost will hunt you! I will curse you and your entire family! Huang Zhanfeng! You will die—Umph!"

"Sect Master, Sect Master! Please have mercy on me! I was wrong to work with the devils, but it was because of Grand Elder Almud! Sect Master, please hear me! It was because of Grand Elder Almud! Meilan, Meilan! Please ask your master to—Umph!"

Both the Grand Elder and his disciple shouted at the same time, but the members of the Hell Pavilion sealed their lips. Only muffled sounds could be heard throughout their journey to the headquarters of the Hell Pavilion.

At this moment, across the sect's grounds, many such scenes unfolded. The members of the Hell Pavilion, with the support of other pavilions, apprehended the traitors of the sect. All of them were caught during this night operation.

Thanks to the quick and coordinated execution, they did not give the traitors any time to escape. This caused uproar and unease among the disciples and elders who did not know the full situation.

Why were there suddenly so many traitors working for the devils within the sect? Were there still more traitors among them? What was the true situation of the sect?

After the purge operation, Sect Master Huang made a personal announcement, telling everyone not to worry and instructing all disciples and elders to remain calm. The situation had already been handled, and all traitors had been captured.

Unbeknown to the people of the Celestial Lotus Sect, at this moment, the upheaval caused by the devils and traitors was not experienced by them alone. Across the Arantes Star, many families, sects, kingdoms, and empires were also carrying out purge operations.

This was what Aldrian, Meilan, and Rei had been doing all day. They traveled to many places to warn various powers about the existence of traitors. With the Arantes Star already having become his domain, their journey was easy.

As for the purge operations, Aldrian let these powers handle them on their own.

He only needed to deal with the devils still hiding across the world, which he had already done. With this division of roles, the purge of both devils and traitors would be more effective and faster.

While various parts of the world fell into upheaval because of the purge operations, Aldrian remained in his pavilion, enjoying his tea while looking at the beautiful night view.

His task in this regard was more or less complete in this world, and he could enjoy his spare time. He thought that he might stay for the next three days to look around this world before he had to attend to another matter in the Blue Pearl World.

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Chapter 962 - 962: Watching the Three Beauties' Teamwork

[1,571 words]

For the next three days, the Arantes Star was still in upheaval because of the devils and the matter of traitors. The reason the problem became so severe was because many of the traitors came from prominent families or organizations.

This led to a large-scale purge operation carried out in a single day, which also caused unrest among the people.

They began questioning how major families or organizations could have traitors working for the devils within their ranks. Were there more traitors? Was this truly all there was to it, or was something much deeper happening behind the scenes?

This caused the rise of distrust between the people and the nobles or the sovereigns of the territory. Various powers also understood this situation, and they took action to minimize the resulting setback.

That action was to bring the name Aldrian the Great into the matter. It was because of his warning that they were able to carry out the purge operation in the first place, and they also gave him credit for exposing who the traitors were.

Moreover, he had successfully killed Erdo and Veraz, the two key leaders of the devil forces in this world.

The moment the people heard that Aldrian the Great was the one who made the purge operation possible, the doubts in many hearts receded. They knew that Aldrian the Great had visited the Celestial Lotus Sect, so it made sense that he could help this world deal with the devil problem here.

If all of this was under the watch of Aldrian the Great, then it might be a good sign and a sign of the end of the devils' threat. Those nobles would not dare to play any tricks or hide anything from Aldrian the Great, right?

That was what was in the people's minds.

Thanks to this, the various powers of this world did not face much difficulty in containing the setback caused by the traitors problem. They were still able to gain the trust of the people, and instead, the people came to understand their situation due to the devils' cunning nature.

During these days, Aldrian spent most of his time taking strolls through various places around the world to have a look around. As usual, Meilan and Rei also accompanied him, guiding him and showing him many places.

Besides that, Aldrian also gave lectures to all the members of the Celestial Lotus Sect, which caused their comprehension to rise, and many of them made breakthroughs in their cultivation.

On the fifth day after Aldrian's visit, it was finally time for him to return to the Ancient Blue Gate World. In the morning, he already stood beside the interstellar vessel, and many people were present to see him depart.

"Thank you, Your Majesty, for what you have done for us. We, the Celestial Lotus Sect, will never forget Your Majesty's kindness in helping us and even this world. We are truly grateful." Sect Master Huang said as he cupped his hands and bowed. The others also followed him.

Aldrian smiled. "No problem, Sect Master. This is only my duty. Helping others get rid of evil is something I must do."

The sect master and the others straightened up and smiled toward Aldrian.

"We truly feel fortunate that Your Majesty was here to help us," he said. Aldrian nodded, then looked at Meilan and Rei, who were standing beside Sect Master Huang.

"Thank you for these past days, Miss Meilan, Miss Rei. I apologize if I took your time by having you act as my guides."

"Ah, no, Your Majesty. We are truly glad that we could help you. Instead, we should be the ones thanking you. We have received many things from you during this time," Meilan said.

"Yes, Your Majesty. We are the ones who should truly thank you," Rei added.

Aldrian nodded with a smile. "That is a relief to hear. Well, I think it is time. I will be going now. See you in the future."

He then entered the vessel. A few moments later, he departed from Antares under the watch of many people.

Meilan's gaze remained fixed on the sky where the vessel had already disappeared, and inwardly, she could not help but feel a slight sense of loss. Now that Aldrian had departed, she would return to her normal activities.

Over the past few days, she had felt thrilled by the experiences she gained with Aldrian, and her spirit burned with excitement from being able to spar with someone like him. It was precisely because of that that she felt a sense of loss now that he had finally left.

"What is it? Already feeling lost after His Majesty is gone?" Rei's voice suddenly resounded beside her. Meilan unconsciously responded by nodding. However, she quickly realized what she had just done, which caused her face to flush as she looked at Rei with an embarrassed expression.

Fortunately, the others were no longer paying attention to this place and had already begun to disperse. Otherwise, they would have noticed Meilan's unusual reaction. Rei only grinned at first, but then she froze when Meilan spoke to her in return.

"Are you the same? Do you also feel lost already?"

Rei truly did not expect such a comeback. In the past, she did not remember Meilan responding to her teasing this way. Her face could not help but flush, but she held it in and cleared her throat.

"We... well, I admit that I feel a bit lost after what we experienced together over these past few days."

They kept looking at each other, then sighed.

"Aish, why are we acting like this? It is not as if this is our last meeting with His Majesty anyway. We can still visit him in the future," Rei said.

Meilan then showed a smile and nodded.

Yes, they could still meet Aldrian again, so why should they feel so lost?

Aldrian, who was already in the middle of his journey toward the Ancient Blue Gate World, decided to return using his domain ability. He instantly teleported back to his palace and planned to stay for a few hours before setting out on another journey to the Blue Pearl World.

He walked toward one of the training rooms, where he sensed Sylphia, Baek Jimin, and Angelica, who seemed to be in the middle of their training. At times, they trained together to sharpen their skills against one another or to improve their teamwork.

In some of the training halls, there were also illusion formations that allowed them to face various enemies. The sensations were so real that they still had to be careful during training. After all, if they were badly injured inside the illusion, the sensations could leave lingering pain even after the illusion disappeared.

At this moment, the three women were trapped within an illusion, their bodies moving here and there. Aldrian, seeing their movements from outside the hall through his domain sense, grew curious about the enemies within their illusion.

He could not see what they were facing and could only observe their movements as if they were fighting invisible foes.

Aldrian decided to take a look directly. He teleported into the training hall they were in and concealed himself. With his comprehension of formations and illusions, he easily infiltrated the illusion shared by Sylphia and the others.

His surrounding environment changed into a desert. The three women were facing tens of enemies clad in black robes, their average cultivation at the duke stage. One of the enemies, at the low grand duke stage, stood aside as if waiting.

Baek Jimin, who had already reached peak marquess stage at this moment, could face even middle duke or high duke stage cultivators. Her elemental attacks were powerful and precise, and she could kill many enemies when she used wide-area attacks with excellent timing.

Sylphia stayed behind, using her arrows to attack from a distance to kill or obstruct enemies that tried to overwhelm Baek Jimin. She also defended herself and Angelica near her whenever enemies approached them, using her elemental techniques.

Angelica acted as support, using various supporting techniques such as Heavenly Blessing to boost the power of Baek Jimin and Sylphia. At the same time, she used her defensive technique, Heavenly Sanctuary, to strengthen their defenses against enemies who wielded darkness based laws.

With Angelica as support, Baek Jimin became the spear, attacking and killing enemies at the very forefront. Sylphia attacked from a distance while also protecting Angelica. Their teamwork was solid, with very few gaps.

When only the lone grand duke enemy remained, their teamwork became even more solid, and their attacks grew much more powerful as their focus narrowed to a single target. This time, Sylphia became the spear, as she was the strongest among them in terms of offensive power because her cultivation had already reached the high duke stage.

Aldrian nodded, satisfied with how they adjusted their attack and defense according to the enemies they faced. He felt truly proud as he watched the three of them work together like this, and he felt genuinely fortunate to have them as his harem.

How could he not? As their man, watching how the three beauties moved in sync and supported one another made his heart feel warm.

Although Angelica had not officially joined his harem yet, he had already considered her as his.

After a few moments of fighting, Aldrian could tell that the lone enemy was on the verge of defeat, and he could see that the training was about to end.

But then, suddenly, a thought crossed his mind, and he could not help but smirk.

He had an idea to surprise them.

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Chapter 963 - 963: Pranking Them

[1,598 words]

Sylphia used her elemental technique, which made a wood dragon appear from the ground, and it instantly bit the last enemy. Blood splattered as the body of her opponent was destroyed by the powerful bite, and the wood dragon buried itself underground again, bringing the enemy's body with it.

Seeing that they had succeeded, Sylphia, Baek Jimin, and Angelica smiled. They looked quite tired after the battle, with sweat already rolling across their bodies. It made sense, since they had adjusted the difficulty of the illusion to not only face more numerous opponents, but also ones that were overall more powerful than them.

They could battle across levels, so they needed challenging training that required facing many stronger opponents.

The results were satisfying for them, and it made them proud.

"Nice, sister Sylphia. That was a truly nice attack," Baek Jimin said.

Sylphia smiled. "Well, thanks to our teamwork, I did not have to unleash too much of my energy earlier, so I could release a much more powerful technique against this last enemy. It was also thanks to sister Angelica's support that my attack power became stronger."

Angelica walked toward them with a smile. "That still depends on the cultivator's ability. Even if I strengthen someone, if they cannot use their power effectively, they still cannot win the battle. Sister Sylphia and sister Jimin could use the power boost effectively,

which is why, despite the overwhelming opponents, we could hold them back until we killed them."

Angelica, who was already considered a harem sister by Sylphia and Baek Jimin, had already acted like one. Despite still not having officially entered his harem, she was glad that Sylphia and Baek Jimin supported her and even easily accepted her as their sister.

It was truly a relief for her that they could accept her like this, as it had been one of her worries.

Even if Aldrian accepted her, she worried about Sylphia and Baek Jimin's reaction. She did not want to damage their amicable relationship if Aldrian were to accept her.

However, it seemed that she had been thinking too much. Sylphia and Baek Jimin easily accepted her, even telling her that they already knew about her attraction to Aldrian, which made her embarrassed. They said that they welcomed her and were glad that she could be beside Aldrian in the future.

She felt truly lucky that she had met such good sisters.

"Wait, I just realized, isn't the illusion supposed to disappear the moment the last opponent is defeated? Why are we still trapped in the illusion?" Baek Jimin said.

Sylphia and Angelica also realized it. They looked around, observing their surroundings inside the illusion.

Usually, it did not take long for the illusion to disappear after the last opponent was defeated.

But at this moment, the illusion did not show any sign of disappearing.

This made them confused. Was the last enemy earlier still not defeated? But they did not sense any movement from the opponent.

"Wait, there is a figure there," Sylphia suddenly said, pointing at a lone figure standing not far from them.

The moment the others looked in the direction Sylphia pointed at, they were truly astonished because they had not sensed anything! It was as if the figure had just appeared there out of thin air.

They instantly took a wary stance. The figure wore the same black robe that covered the entire body and face as the other opponents they had faced earlier. But the strange thing was that they could not sense the cultivation of this figure at all!

"Is there any problem with the formation? I have never seen something like this when we used the training hall," Baek Jimin said uncertainly.

Sylphia did not answer as she focused on the lone figure. Her eyes narrowed. She did not know whether there was a problem with the illusion formation, but the lone figure gave her a feeling that it was strong, much stronger than any opponent they had faced before.

"Let's cancel the illusion," Sylphia said. The others nodded, as they were thinking the same thing.

They could cancel the illusion midway with their intent, and the illusion formation would bring them out of the illusion.

However, when they tried to break the illusion, nothing happened.

"It's not working. The illusion did not shatter," Baek Jimin said in astonishment.

The others were also surprised. This had never happened before. They then looked at the figure, which finally began approaching them, walking steadily. Sylphia bit her lip and looked at the others.

"It seems we have to defeat this one opponent to break the illusion. We do not know what happened to the illusion formation, but I think it is worth a try to face this unknown opponent."

Although she herself was no longer in her best condition, as she and the rest of them had just battled many opponents, she did not seem discouraged. Instead, she showed them a smile and raised their spirits.

"Let's solve this strange situation we are in. I am also curious about the strength of this figure," she said, then looked at the figure again.

The others solemnly nodded before Sylphia took the forefront, with Baek Jimin as support. Angelica stayed at the rear as support for the two. Sylphia also approached the figure, but she still kept her distance.

The figure, seeing Sylphia keeping her distance, stopped walking and glanced toward her, then toward the others.

The figure, who was none other than Aldrian, nodded inwardly. They did not instantly attack him and instead observed the unknown enemy. That was a good course of action, as they still did not know what the unknown enemy was capable of.

But he did not intend to stay still.

He did not intend to hurt his women, but he wanted to tease them.

Sylphia, who was approaching warily, suddenly saw the figure disappear, which made her eyes instantly scan her surroundings. Her gaze also swept toward Baek Jimin and Angelica, and both of them were doing the same.

"Behind Sister Sylphia!" Angelica suddenly shouted, which made Sylphia instantly attack behind her using wind laws. She created a wind shield to blast the figure away from her back.

However, the figure that suddenly appeared behind her did not even flinch. Instead, he stretched his hand toward her arm. Sylphia could sense that her defense did not work, and she wanted to jump away to create distance, but the figure had already grabbed her arm and pulled her body toward him.

The figure's covered face brushed against her shoulder, and Sylphia could hear him inhaling her scent. The figure's other hand groped her waist and even stroked it. It almost touched the side of her breast.

Sylphia's eyes widened before her expression turned furious.

"Let go of me!"

Her aura suddenly burst out strongly, creating powerful winds that pushed the figure away. But the figure disappeared again after being pushed back. Sylphia's expression flushed as she gritted her teeth. She felt harassed by that touch just now, even if it was only an illusion.

But then her gaze showed uncertainty. She could not help but feel that the touch was quite familiar.

The others, who had seen how the figure acted, were also quite surprised. However, they did not have time to remain shocked for long, as the figure suddenly appeared behind Baek Jimin.

"Sister Jimin, behind you!" Sylphia shouted, but it was already too late.

The figure groped both sides of Baek Jimin's waist and even placed his head on her shoulder, inhaling the scent of her neck. Baek Jimin was truly shocked by the sudden appearance and by what the figure did to her.

She turned furious, and her aura burst out strongly, spreading in all directions.

The figure had already disappeared again, but Angelica immediately cast her Heavenly Sanctuary to defend all of them from the figure's concealment technique, which was difficult for them to detect.

With the Heavenly Sanctuary active, Angelica's senses became sharper. Even if the figure disappeared, he could still be detected as long as he was inside the sanctuary.

A golden area appeared, covering all of them, and Angelica instantly tried to locate the figure. But she was shocked to discover that the figure was already behind her. He hugged her waist and grabbed one of her hands, then inhaled the scent on her shoulder. All of this happened so quickly that she did not have any time to react.

"Let go of her!" Sylphia and Baek Jimin shouted at the same time as they dashed toward Angelica at high speed.

Angelica tried to strike behind her with her palm, showing a rare furious expression. But the figure had already vanished, which made her feel frustrated.

The three women then took positions back to back as they watched their surroundings carefully.

"This opponent is weird, and he is actually playing with us! He is also a pervert!" Baek Jimin said furiously.

The others thought the same, and their expressions were truly pissed. The thought that this figure could freely grope their bodies while they could not catch him made them want to kill the figure as soon as possible.

But from the figure's movements just now, they understood that this figure was the strongest opponent they had faced so far. They were not confident that they could win against him.

As they continued observing their surroundings, the figure suddenly appeared right in front of Sylphia. Before she could react, the figure used his technique, which caused the three women to be dragged toward him as if he were the center of gravity.

The figure instantly hugged all of them, both of his hands holding their bodies tightly. The three women wanted to shout and even intended to deplete their entire energy just to free themselves from the figure's embrace, but they were stunned when the figure spoke.

"Caught you."

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Chapter 964 - 964: Going Together

[1,625 words]

The moment they heard that familiar voice, the three women stopped resisting. They were stunned instead, and a moment later, the illusion shattered and the figure also changed appearance to that handsome face of Aldrian.

Aldrian looked at his three harem with a smile, but the three women looked at him with blank expressions.

They stayed still for a few seconds until finally Sylphia and Baek Jimin's faces turned red and they pouted. They felt a mix of anger and embarrassment for Aldrian to make a prank like that.

They thought that they were really facing a perverted illusion opponent.

They never expected that Aldrian could enter the illusion and just act like one of the opponents. Moreover, was he not supposed to be doing his business in Arantes Star?

Sylphia also finally realized why the figure's touch had seemed familiar. She thought that she was already going crazy, but now it made sense, since her body was already used to his touch.

"You scoundrel! Aahhh, I thought there was something wrong with the illusion!" Sylphia shouted as she hit his chest repeatedly.

"Aldrian, I thought we were trapped in the illusion and had to fight that perverted figure. Please don't do pranks like this, it made me furious and tense," Baek Jimin said as she also hit his chest.

Angelica could only blush and lower her head. She did not say anything as she was only enjoying how Aldrian hugged all three of them. However, remembering how Aldrian had touched her body and even inhaled her scent made her truly embarrassed.

Aldrian could only smile as his chest was getting hit repeatedly by his two women. He just could not help but find their angry expressions cute. But he knew that he had given them quite a bad prank just now, even though he still did it.

He only wanted to see their reaction, but his women truly did not tolerate just anyone touching them, even if it was only an illusion.

He felt bad and released a sigh of regret.

"Alright, alright, I'm sorry, my ladies. I'm sorry for giving you such a shock and such a bad joke. As my apology, do you want to follow me to a faraway place?" he said, which made Sylphia and Baek Jimin stop hitting him and look at his face with raised eyebrows. Angelica also raised her head to look at him.

He knew that he had already piqued their interest and kept his smile.

"Four hours from now, I will make a journey to Blue Pearl World in the White Ring star cluster to attend a banquet invitation there. As you know, they just experienced a great war, so this banquet is meant to symbolize their victory. Besides attending the banquet, I plan to stay there for some time, so I thought, why not have you accompany me?" he said.

"Blue Pearl World was a beautiful world before the devils invaded it, and with the devils eliminated, we could expect the world to recuperate and regain its beauty. Maybe we could visit some of the places there?"

Hearing that, their expressions turned ecstatic. With how busy Aldrian was, this was a good chance for them to accompany their man in his business and, while at it, also take a vacation together.

"Yes, that will do," Sylphia said cheerfully, but as if she realized that she could not show too much of her happiness because of her sulk, she suddenly turned her head away. "But I'm still angry at you," she added.

"I'll follow you," Baek Jimin said.

"Me too," Angelica said.

Baek Jimin's happy expression was not affected at all, as she was glad that Aldrian was offering them this chance. Although this visit was mainly for Aldrian's business, they could take this opportunity to enjoy their time together. This would be the first time they would go together after all.

Angelica also anticipated it and was simply happy that Aldrian had included her as well.

"Alright, ladies, that settles it," Aldrian said.

After that, they came out of the training hall, and they also listened to some of the stories of what Aldrian had experienced in Arantes Star.

As time kept ticking, the departure time finally arrived, and Aldrian, together with his women, departed for Blue Pearl World.

In the Blue Pearl World, the reconstruction progress was still ongoing, with many people rebuilding what had been destroyed in the war. The process of making the territories that had previously fallen into the devils' hands regain their normal environment was also still ongoing, and it was progressing at a fast pace.

Thanks to the devils not occupying the territories for too long, as they only had started their invasion ten years ago, the environment was not deeply corrupted by thick negative energy or devil energy.

Although some land had already become barren because of the dense devil energy, it could be cleaned quickly with purification formations, as the devil energy was still not deeply rooted in the land.

Aldrian and the others appeared in the sky near Rudenfil City, where the Alfemin family would be holding their victory banquet in this city tonight. Aldrian used his domain ability to reach this place, as he had already built many domains across this world.

At this moment, the sun of this world was already positioned slightly toward the western side, showing that they had already passed midday. The three women looked at the land and the sky curiously, as this was the first time they had visited such a faraway place, especially Sylphia.

She had never stepped outside the central star cluster and was truly curious about a world so far away from it.

"So this is Blue Pearl World," Sylphia said. From her initial impression, it was just like Ancient Blue Gate World.

Aldrian smiled at them. "For now, let's take a stroll in the city first. The banquet is still a few hours away." He then teleported them to a place in the city where there was no one watching.

They were already wearing brown robes that covered their bodies and faces, just in case there was someone here who might recognize them and cause a commotion. They did not use any disguise techniques either, as they thought the robes were enough.

After they landed, they started to take a stroll. Aldrian, who had already visited this place a few times in the past, became the guide. As they looked around the city and visited a restaurant to taste the local dishes, they also heard about tonight's banquet.

Conversations about the banquet could be heard from time to time, and it made the three women quite interested. The banquet, which would be attended by many powers of this world and some powers from other worlds, would attract many eyes.

The reason was none other than the presence of Aldrian.

Many people still had not yet seen the man who was said to be the greatest factor in winning the war and even ending it so quickly. That was because Aldrian spent most of his time on the battlefield, and even when he visited this city and took a stroll, there were almost no people who knew who he was.

Only some members of certain families knew his true identity, along with a number of troops on the battlefield who knew what he had done in the war. His information was also kept secret by them to prevent any trouble that might come his way. This included the devils, who might have started to focus on him when the war was still raging in the past.

With the appearance of the man called Aldrian at the banquet, many wanted to at least see the man for themselves. They were truly curious about him.

Many powers that seemingly were not invited were already in the city as well, as they also wanted to meet him. All in all, tonight's banquet would cause a sensation, and even chaos, with many eyes directed toward it and many people wanting to enter.

The Alfemin family denying entry to most of the parties from outside the Blue Pearl World had already caused much dissatisfaction among those parties. People doubted that tonight's banquet would go without some sort of drama, even with Aldrian's presence there.

However, people also understood the hidden reason for the Alfemin family and other powers from this world to act that way, and they agreed with them. Those parties that did not help them in the war suddenly coming to attend the victory banquet was like an insult to those who had already sacrificed many things in this war.

The Alfemin family would not let those shameless parties take advantage of the banquet as if they had also joined the war.

As Aldrian, Sylphia, Baek Jimin, and Angelica were enjoying the local dishes in the restaurant, Sylphia spoke to him with a smile.

"It looks like tonight there will be quite a commotion based on what we heard, and it might be an unpleasant one at that. Is this part of our vacation, my love? Are we here to see chaos?"

Aldrian also smiled. "Well, don't you like seeing some shameless guys get humiliated? Maybe you will see that tonight."

The others who heard this could not help but giggle. Aldrian's answer was like saying that besides the banquet, he was also waiting for the "entertainment" that might come with it.

He did not mind the chaos, and if needed, he might even slap some faces. Of course, he was on the side of the Alfemin family and also did not like the shameless parties that wanted to enter the banquet. So he might as well help them if needed to control the situation.

While Aldrian and his women were still enjoying their time while waiting for the banquet, inside the Alfemin family's mansion, Patriarch Geodard received information from one of his men that made him ecstatic.

"His Majesty is already in the city?" he asked in surprise.

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Chapter 965 - 965: The Victory Banquet

[1,431 words]

Patriarch Geodard instantly stood up from his seat in the private room when he heard the report from one of his men standing in front of him.

"Yes, my lord. Aldrian the Great could be seen walking through the streets, and at this moment he seemed to be accompanied by three women. They were wearing robes that concealed their features, but I coincidentally passed near them and was able to see their faces. I do not doubt that he is Aldrian the Great," the man said.

From his attire, he looked like a normal food vendor, but in fact, he was one of the cultivators of the Alfemin family whose task was information gathering. He was only one of the many cultivators spread across the city to form the family's information network, maintaining the city's order and safety.

"These are the three women," the man continued as he then gave the patriarch three pictures depicting Sylphia, Baek Jimin, and Angelica. The moment Patriarch Geodard saw it, he knew that this was truly Aldrian the Great.

He could not mistake the women of Aldrian the Great, especially Sylphia, as he had seen her directly when he visited Aldrian's palace. As for Baek Jimin, he had heard that she was also his woman. And Angelica? At this point, he simply considered the three of them as his harem.

But why did they not visit him when they had already arrived?

"According to our observation, it seemed that he brought the three women to take a stroll and simply enjoy the city's scenery. Sometimes, they bought food from street vendors, and I heard that they visited a Plamoun Restaurant at this moment. From my analysis, Aldrian the Great brought the three women to enjoy the city as a vacation, but he did not want anyone to disturb them, which is why they wore robes that concealed them."

Patriarch Geodard nodded in understanding.

"I see. Good job. Keep up the good work. If His Majesty does not want to be disturbed, then let them enjoy the city. You must continue making sure everything is in order within the city, especially when those shameless bastards are staying here. I do not want anything to go wrong while His Majesty is enjoying our city with his harem."

"Yes, my lord," the man answered.

He then left the room, and not long after that, Arlic, the patriarch's brother, came in.

Patriarch Geodard looked at his brother. "It seems His Majesty is already in the city, and he brought along his harem," he said with a smile.

Arlic raised his eyebrows. "What?"

Patriarch Geodard then told Arlic what his underling had explained to him earlier, which made him understand. After hearing the explanation, he smiled. "Well, it seems the message will be much stronger tonight with His Majesty bringing his harem here. But then we have to adjust some things so His Majesty's harem can be comfortable at the banquet."

"Yes, brother. And with His Majesty bringing his harem here, it could be interpreted that he trusts us. This is a good thing for us," Patriarch Geodard said.

"True." Arlic replied, but then his eyes narrowed. "Now what we need to do is make sure those bastards do not create any trouble when the banquet takes place. We have to be ready for anything and be firmer if they try to push their agenda."

Patriarch Geodard nodded.

As the two brothers continued discussing tonight's banquet, time continued to pass.

Hours later, when the sun finally sank beyond the horizon, the time for the banquet drew nearer. The Alfemin family's mansion started to receive the invited guests from various directions.

Many cruisers and even interstellar vessels made their way to the mansion's grounds to bring the esteemed guests. Most people could only see the busy activity from below, where they looked up at the mansion on the floating land.

Many wanted to get closer to the floating land because they hoped to catch a glimpse of those who came to the mansion. They could see cruisers coming and going, each bearing various symbols of powers from across the world, and they were truly amazed.

This might be the grandest banquet, with various powers from across the world or even other worlds attending. They had never seen anything like this banquet in the past.

"Look, that is the Furen family."

"That's the Alberos family from the southern continent."

"That is the symbol of the Alstro family."

People commented on who had arrived, and they eagerly awaited the appearance of an unknown symbol or cruiser, which they believed might be Aldrian's arrival.

While many guests arrived one by one, inside the vast hall within the mansion's complex where the banquet was held, the guests had already filled it. However, due to how large the hall was, capable of accommodating thousands of guests, the atmosphere was not crowded despite the many arrivals.

The voices of many conversations could be heard, and the atmosphere was truly amicable. In the past, gathering these various parties of this world would have been impossible because of many reasons.

Only after the war, when they had united to go to war against the devils, were they able to do something like this, putting aside their differences and enjoying this moment.

As the guests continued to converse with each other, Patriarch Geodard appeared, and they instantly greeted him. Many believed that Patriarch Geodard's contribution was among the greatest in this war, as he was the one who brought Aldrian to this world. They were truly thankful that he had made the journey to meet Aldrian at that time.

"Patriarch Geodard, may we know when His Majesty will arrive?" one of the guests asked him about Aldrian, and Patriarch Geodard smiled.

"Just wait. He will arrive later." He had already received information from Aldrian that he would arrive later, so he did not need to worry. His mood was joyful at this moment, but he was still quite tense and wary inside because of the presence of many parties in the city whom he had denied entry.

He did not know what kind of things they might do tonight, but he hoped that the banquet would be successful and that Aldrian would find it pleasing. He knew that those parties might attempt something tonight, as he had received information that the various groups he had denied entry to had gathered in secret in the city a few days ago.

He did not know what kind of plans they had, but he did not like it at all that they were secretly gathered.

As time kept ticking and the moon rose higher in the sky, the moment finally came to open the banquet.

Alric also appeared, which made many others greet him.

Patriarch Geodard stepped up onto the stairs, which placed him higher than the other guests, and swept his gaze over the people below.

"Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for taking your time to attend this banquet that symbolizes our victory against the evil devils that tried to occupy our world. All of you have contributed to the war, sacrificing many things for our survival. We have lost many things, including our family members," he said.

"Thanks to the heavens not abandoning us, we were finally able to escape that situation. I know you have been waiting for our special guest tonight, the one who made our victory possible. Fret not, ladies and gentlemen. He will arrive soon."

"Now, without much further ado—" Suddenly, he stopped his words as he sensed a commotion from outside the mansion's grounds. He took a deep breath to calm himself as his spiritual sense spread outward, picking up the movement of many figures.

But then Patriarch Geodard was astonished because he could sense many powerful presences, and from their aura, he knew that they were not small characters. In fact, he knew exactly who they were, which made him grit his teeth. To think that they had come here without him knowing, or being detected by the city's information network.

They seemed to ignore the guards' warnings and simply barged into the mansion's grounds as they continued walking forward. The guards could not do much, because those who had arrived this time were truly different from before.

The other guests also finally sensed the commotion outside, which surprised them. However, they soon felt irritated after realizing who the newcomers were. They knew that tonight would not become a peaceful banquet like some of them had expected.

After a few moments, many figures finally entered the hall.

"Oh, I hope that we are not late," one of the men in the group said with a smile.

Looking at the man who spoke, Patriarch Geodard did not show much expression, but inside, he truly wanted to punch that face.

"Vermon," he said.

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Chapter 966 - 966: Chaos Before the Arrival

[1,595 words]

"Veron." Patriarch Geodard said flatly, but behind that seemingly indifferent tone burned a restrained fury. His gaze glistened as it fixed on the middle-aged man with neat red hair, who wore a cunning smirk while looking back at him and the other guests.

This man was the patriarch of one of the most powerful families in the White Ring Star Cluster, the Luivan family. Even before the war, the relationship between the Alfemin family and them was not close and could even be said to have been strained.

However, as the patriarch of one of the most powerful forces in the White Ring Star Cluster, Patriarch Geodard still approached them with the intent of seeking help. Yet, like many others, they had no intention of helping.

Instead, they responded to his request with outrageous conditions.

They would not send their best cultivators, but they demanded that the Alfemin family and several others pay with parts of their territories, specifically those rich in mineral resources such as energy stone mines. They did not fully support the war against the devils, yet they wanted to take vital territories from other families.

Presumptuous and shameless!

They had never intended to help them from the beginning.

Their goal was only to humiliate them. They wanted to see them struggle and be annihilated by the devils.

Patriarch Geodard thought that the reason for this was because the Luivan family could get rid of one competitor.

That was why, inside Patriarch Geodard's mind, the Luivan family and any other families that shared the same standing as them were truly idiots.

How could they not know that if the Blue Pearl World fell, their own worlds could become the next target? Was their competitiveness so important that such a simple truth could not be comprehended by them?

Alright, it was their right to refuse helping for various reasons. However, it still made him angry whenever he remembered Veron's and the others' refusal to help. Now, they had barged into the banquet as if this place had no value or dignity at all.

Patriarch Geodard truly hated them.

Veron's aura at the peak pseudo immortal stage could be clearly sensed, and beside him were several others who were just like him. The others present saw that there were tens of figures behind Veron, and many of them were leaders of their own families or organizations.

Everyone here understood that these uninvited guests were the ones Patriarch Geodard had denied entry to the banquet. They were also the parties that had refused to send their support when the Blue Pearl World was under attack by the devils.

"I never thought that my house could be entered by random people. I clearly remember only inviting those who joined the war, not shameless beggars who begged to enter this place while contributing nothing." Patriarch Geodard said mockingly.

The other guests giggled and smiled in ridicule after his words.

Hearing this, many people behind Veron gritted their teeth. They had never been humiliated like this in front of so many people. They wanted to shout back, but Veron had already stepped forward and continued speaking.

"My apologies for our uninvited arrival, but we came here with good intentions. We wish to offer our congratulations to all of you for winning what seemed to be an unwinnable war. We also brought many gifts for all of you, the heroes of the war. Moreover, we heard that there was someone who helped you turn the tide of the war—"

"No. We don't need your apologies or your gifts. What we want is for you dogs to get out of here and return to where you came from. I also know that you wish to see Aldrian the Great, but do you seriously think you are worthy of meeting someone as respected as Aldrian the Great?" Patriarch Geodard said, cutting off Veron's words.

"And why do you think he would want to meet the likes of you? I even doubt that Aldrian the Great wants your presence here at all. So why not save yourselves from further humiliation and leave this place?"

Hearing those harsh words, all the uninvited guests were stunned. Then, burning fury rose within them. Even Veron had not expected Patriarch Geodard to be so blunt. Had his courage grown so much because of the presence of Aldrian the Great that he no longer cared about offending so many parties, even after such a devastating war?

As Patriarch Geodard remained furious at these people who dared to barge in, he suddenly received a voice transmission. His eyes widened slightly, and he gritted his teeth in irritation after receiving the information that Aldrian had already arrived with his harem.

He felt tense that Aldrian had arrived while these troublemakers were still present at the banquet. He quietly informed his brother, and Alric nodded in understanding.

Alric then looked toward Veron. "Veron, I think you should leave this place right now. Otherwise, don't blame me for what follows. Do you even realize where you are?" he said while releasing his strong aura.

Some of the guests who had similar cultivation levels also released their auras. However, Veron and the others in his group did not back off. Instead, they released their own auras, matching the combined pressure of their opponents.

Veron then revealed a smile and looked at Alric. "Come on, Alric, don't be like that. Although we came uninvited and we had our differences in the past, do you not think it is a bit excessive to show such hostility toward us?"

"I don't care. You had better get out of this place. I will not hesitate to attack if you remain stubborn," Alric said.

"Well, I am sorry, but I don't think it would be a good idea to chase us away. Do you really want to make enemies of most of the powers in the White Ring Star Cluster?" Veron asked with a smirk.

Alric knew that this was a valid question. With so many leaders of various powers from across the worlds of the White Ring Star Cluster present, his family, and even the entire Blue Pearl World, would offend all of them at once if he forced them out now, even if they were in the right.

That would be an unwise decision, especially when their overall strength had already been greatly weakened after the war. They would have no choice but to swallow the humiliation and allow them to join the banquet.

Well, that was what would have happened, if they did not have someone like Aldrian behind them.

Alric's aura burst forth with even greater force, startling Veron and the others.

"Bring it on. Even if I have to fight all of you, I don't care anymore," Alric said. The others from the Blue Pearl World also showed their support, releasing even stronger auras. The clash of these auras threw the hall into chaos.

The feast and drinks that had already been served became a mess under the pressure of the colliding auras. Weaker cultivators were affected as well, feeling intense pressure and suffocation.

Seeing this scene, the people from Veron's camp thought that everyone here had gone mad. They dared to confront them despite still recuperating from the war?

"His Majesty, Emperor Aldrian is entering the hall!" someone suddenly shouted, causing the auras from the Blue Pearl World's camp to disappear at once. Their opponents also quickly retracted their auras, and everyone turned their gaze toward the entrance.

Patriarch Geodard and Alric felt regretful and even ashamed that Aldrian would witness such a chaotic scene. They truly had not expected the situation to escalate to this point even before Aldrian arrived at the banquet.

Although they had prepared themselves for possible trouble, they had never expected Veron and so many leaders from various worlds to personally come here.

After a few moments, Aldrian finally entered the hall together with Sylphia, Baek Jimin, and Angelica. For those seeing him for the first time, they were astonished by how young he was.

Aldrian looked flawless in his noble attire, which elevated his presence and charm to the highest heavens. His unblemished and handsome face captivated every woman in the hall, making many of them blush unconsciously.

Sylphia, Baek Jimin, and Angelica were no less captivating. Each of them wore elegant dresses that suited them perfectly, enhancing their beauty and grace.

Any man who saw them at this moment could not help but think about how fortunate Aldrian was to have them as his harem. As for the women, they were filled with admiration, mixed with jealousy, both for their beauty and for their status as Aldrian's companions.

Aldrian and his harem appeared so perfect that it was difficult for anyone to find even the slightest flaw in their appearance.

As Aldrian entered the hall, he stopped and looked around. Sylphia and the others also looked around, and they were surprised. The place was quite chaotic, with food and broken glasses scattered everywhere.

They had already expected that tonight's banquet might be different, given the delicate situation among the powers of the White Ring Star Cluster.

Still, they had not expected the chaos to have already erupted before their arrival.

Aldrian, who had already sensed the disturbance from afar, did not say anything. His gaze was directed toward Alric and Patriarch Geodard. He then continued walking in their direction, followed closely by Sylphia and the others.

However, before he could approach Patriarch Geodard, his path was suddenly blocked by a red-haired man. The man gave a slight bow and spoke.

"It is a pleasure to finally meet you, Your Majesty. I have long heard of your great name. Let me introduce myself, I—"

Before he could finish, he saw Aldrian completely ignore him and continue walking past him without sparing him a single glance.

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Chapter 967 - 967: Repeated Humiliation!

[1,589 words]

Veron had already heard about how young Aldrian was, but it still gave him a sense of surprise when he finally saw Aldrian at this moment. The information he had gathered about Aldrian recently was limited.

He had heard that Aldrian rose to become an emperor even though he had not yet reached twenty. Aldrian was also hailed as a powerful cultivator who possessed absurd power, power that even those at the peak pseudo immortal stage could only hope to reach.

All of this was achieved with a cultivation level that was "only" at low pseudo immortal establishment stage, making him the youngest cultivator in history to reach that stage.

He was the man who gained fame and trust among the powers of the Central Star Cluster through his own strength. He was also the one who enabled the powers of the Central Star Cluster to liberate the Northern Star Cluster from the devils, something that could not be achieved in the past.

Veron had already sent his own men to gather more information about Aldrian by sending them directly to the Ancient Blue Gate World. However, they still needed a long time to obtain any useful information, as the distance was great and they had not even reached the place yet.

Although many of the stories about Aldrian were difficult even for him to believe, he still gave them the benefit of the doubt.

Moreover, after Aldrian's presence allowed the Blue Pearl World to win their war, Veron did not want to underestimate an unknown man whose full capabilities he did not yet understand.

That was why he had to be careful, and why he wanted to meet Aldrian. If what those stories said were all true, and the Blue Pearl World truly had someone like Aldrian as their backing, then it would change the map of power in the White Ring Star Cluster.

That kind of monster needed to be prevented from forming a connection with the Blue Pearl World and even becoming their support. The fact that Aldrian willingly helped the Blue Pearl World must have meant that the Alfemin family had given him something valuable enough for him to spend his time joining their war.

They needed to try to meet Aldrian and personally confirm the truth about him, while also disrupting any relationship the Alfemin family had with Aldrian. It would be far better if he could instead build a connection with Aldrian and draw him closer to the Luvian family.

However, he truly did not expect Aldrian to ignore his presence without hesitation. He glanced at Aldrian's figure as it passed by him without even looking at him.

Veron felt humiliation and shame. He had never seen someone so arrogant that they would dare to ignore his presence, a peak pseudo immortal cultivator.

The others from the Blue Pearl World's camp, who saw Veron being ignored by Aldrian and made to look like a fool, giggled and smiled mockingly. Even with such a simple posture from Aldrian, it made them feel truly satisfied.

That arrogant bastard needed to be put in his place sometimes.

The others from Veron's camp felt secondhand embarrassment as they watched how Aldrian treated Veron's greeting. They gritted their teeth and wanted to berate Aldrian. However, remembering why they had come here, they refrained from doing anything against him. The absurd rumors and stories about Aldrian also deterred them from doing anything excessive.

Patriarch Geodard and Alric smiled as they watched how Aldrian treated that bastard, and they felt deeply satisfied inside. They wanted to jab at their pride, and Aldrian had already done that for them.

Patriarch Geodard and Alric then approached Aldrian, and after they reached him, they slightly lowered their heads.

"Welcome, Your Majesty. Thank you for taking your busy time to visit this banquet," Patriarch Geodard said as he also looked at Sylphia and the others.

Aldrian finally showed a smile. "I apologize for not informing you of my arrival earlier today. I simply wanted to enjoy the city with my wives first before coming here. I hope Sir Alric and Patriarch Geodard do not find my actions offensive."

"Aish, what is the problem with that? There is nothing we feel offended about. Your Majesty simply wanted to enjoy the city with your wives. I only hope you enjoyed it and liked it here," Patriarch Geodard replied before letting out a sigh.

"But I truly apologize that Your Majesty has to come only to see this kind of scene at the banquet. I had already prepared the best arrangements to greet Your Majesty so that you could be more comfortable here, but I truly did not expect so many stray dogs to come to the banquet and cause chaos. Allow me to chase them out first, Your Majesty. Then we can enjoy the banquet after the mess is cleared."

"That's alright. I understand, but let us not dwell on it. This is supposed to be a joyous time, after all. Let me fix it for you," Aldrian said.

Before anyone could react, all the shattered glass and the scattered dishes disappeared from sight. The hall became clean once more.

This caused everyone to feel astonished and impressed by what Aldrian had just done. They did not sense anything when all the things that made the scene look messy vanished from their sight.

Aldrian then looked at Veron and his group.

"Would you please leave this place? Your presence here is disturbing the banquet. I would appreciate it if you could leave on your own. That would be far better than having to go through a method of humiliation, right?"

Hearing this, Veron frowned, and the expressions of those behind him darkened. Aldrian truly did not regard them at all. He did not take their status seriously and acted as if he could chase them out whenever he pleased.

Although they had come to this banquet to cause trouble and to observe Aldrian, the repeated humiliation they had suffered since earlier nearly pushed them to their limits. Even Veron himself finally began to show his displeasure.

"Emperor Aldrian, even if you are a special guest of this banquet, you cannot simply chase us out. We are also nobles who came with good intentions. It was Patriarch Geodard and the people here who failed to receive our goodwill and instead showed hostile intent," one of the men in Veron's group said.

Aldrian glanced at him.

"I don't see any problem with that. It is the host's right to show hostility toward you. Did you not hear what Patriarch Geodard said? According to him, you are stray dogs, unworthy of this place and deserving to be chased out. Yet you shamelessly insist on staying despite not being invited."

"And who are you to speak such shameless reasoning and still act as if it were righteous? Do you hold the highest position here? Do I need to listen to your opinion?" Aldrian continued calmly. "I should applaud your confidence for saying something so ridiculous without even a hint of embarrassment. If I were not being merciful at this moment, I would have already slapped your face and sent you to oblivion for uttering such stupidity."

"Pfft!"

Many wanted to laugh, but they held it in. Aldrian truly did not regard them at all. It was as if he were berating a group of scoundrels.

The man's face turned red as he nearly lost control. His aura flared violently around him.

"You—"

"Hold it."

Veron suddenly spoke, signaling with his hand for him to stand down.

The man looked at Veron, his fury on the verge of exploding. "But—"

However, he froze when he met Veron's cold gaze, which immediately caused his fury to recede. He seemed to realize what he had almost done if he had allowed his anger to take over. Still, he gritted his teeth and looked at Aldrian with restrained fury.

Aldrian continued to look at him without much expression, then shifted his gaze to Veron, who was also looking in his direction. From the bulging veins on Veron's neck and the reddened skin, Aldrian knew that Veron himself was also holding back his fury.

He inwardly smirked, feeling impressed by the man's patience. To endure repeated humiliation since earlier revealed about his character.

It seemed that, as a noble, he did not only harbor an "I am higher than thou" mentality. He was capable of thinking tactically and maintaining his calm under humiliation.

Veron took a deep breath and finally showed a smile.

"Alright. If Your Majesty says so, we will leave. Still, we offer our congratulations to all of you for winning the war. We hope that we can continue to build our relationship in the future. Please excuse us."

After saying that, he turned around and walked away.

The others in his group, who were clearly dissatisfied and still wanted to stay, finally followed Veron as well. Their expressions of fury and displeasure were truly a delight for the invited guests present.

Even after arriving in a grand manner with many powerful cultivators, they still had to tuck their tails and leave after Aldrian spoke.

This was a show of strength! Strength ruled above all else!

Even those people who seemed not to care about the authority of the powers of this world hesitated to clash with Aldrian the Great.

Seeing that all the nuisances had already left, Patriarch Geodard revealed a smile as he looked toward the others.

"My apologies for the slight disturbance, but fret not. We had already anticipated the chaos and made preparations for it." After he said that, many maids and waiters entered the hall, bringing with them new dishes and drinks.

"Please enjoy the banquet and all the entertainment we have prepared for tonight. Let us celebrate our victory!"

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Chapter 968 - 968: Planning Something?

[1,592 words]

The banquet continued with a joyous atmosphere. The disturbance caused by Veron and his group was simply considered entertainment by the guests. With the Alfemin family already prepared with a new set of dishes and drinks, the banquet continued without much problem.

The music from the Alfemin family's music group accompanied the banquet, creating a soothing atmosphere. With many powers gathered, they naturally interacted with each other, but one figure still attracted most of the guests.

Many wanted to talk to Aldrian, as he was the focus of this banquet. Many flocked to him, trying to speak with him to build connections. There were still many who had not had the chance to talk to him or even see him in the past, so this moment was a good opportunity.

As for Sylphia and the others, they were surrounded by many ladies. They also became the focus as Aldrian's harem, and many ladies wanted to know more about them. For Sylphia, Baek Jimin, and Angelica, they did not mind being surrounded, as this was the consequence of becoming Aldrian's women.

They had to be ready for this kind of occasion, and they also had to build their own connections to help Aldrian.

As the banquet proceeded smoothly and amicably, Veron and his group were already leaving the mansion grounds. They flew toward the outskirts of the city, where many interstellar vessels were landed.

Their faces still showed displeasure after what happened at the banquet. As nobles, they had never been treated like nobodies before.

"Veron, are we really just going to let them go? This is not like you at all. Where is that supposed domination you were talking about?" one of the men behind him said. He had the same cultivation level as Veron.

"Of course not, but for now, it is wise to retreat, as Aldrian the Great is truly outside my expectations. He did not act as we thought he would, and he is more wild and arrogant than we expected. For him to dare go against all of us shows that he is confident in himself," Veron replied.

"Moreover, with many leaders of the powers of this world present, it would be our loss if things escalated for the worse. There might be another war, but with Aldrian the Great still here, I am afraid that we would have to be ready to pay a heavy price if we truly want to achieve victory," he added.

"Tch, are all the stories about him even true? Although I have to admit that he has that overbearing presence despite his looks, he is still only a pseudo Immortal Establishment stage cultivator. I still cannot believe that someone like him could have that much

strength. Even the 'Great' title sounds too excessive for someone like him," another man said.

This was the man who had been humiliated by Aldrian at the banquet earlier. He still harbored much resentment, and because he could not unleash it, he could only show his fury in this way.

However, some of the nobles here agreed with this man, and Veron knew that. He glanced at him and the others as he saw that they were in agreement with what the man said. He did not blame them, as he himself still had some doubts about Aldrian.

Did he really have that much strength? Until he saw it himself, he could never be one hundred percent sure.

But he was a wary person who did not underestimate his opponents. The rumors and those stories must have some basis, considering how widespread they were. There was no way that all of it was merely nonsense meant to hype up Aldrian's name.

The fact that he managed to accomplish difficult things, such as winning against the devils in the Northern Star Cluster and the Blue Pearl World, already proved that Aldrian's presence could flip the situation around. He did not know whether Aldrian's strength was the real deal, but whatever it was, Aldrian clearly had something that made all of that possible.

That was why he needed more information regarding Aldrian. Really, a lot more information. His trusted men, whom he had tasked with gathering information, were still on their way to the Ancient Blue Gate World, so it would still take a long time before he gained anything from that place.

But then he smirked. There was a faster way to gain more information regarding him while Aldrian was still near them, in this world.

He glanced at the man who had been humiliated by Aldrian.

"Sir Patrick, do you think the stories regarding Aldrian the Great are only exaggerations?"

"I do not doubt that his presence could flip impossible situations, as the proof is already there. With him, the war in this world ended with the victory of this world's powers. However, I do not believe that he truly has that much strength as a pseudo Immortal Establishment stage cultivator," the man named Patrick said.

"That is too absurd to even think about and would overturn the entire understanding of cultivation that has been established since ancient times. That is why I am more inclined to believe that he might be using an artifact or something else that made all of his achievements possible." His eyes glistened dangerously.

"As long as we find out his secret, we can take advantage of it for our benefit. As long as we are careful when dealing with that secret, we can pay back today's humiliation and also give those bastards a harsh lesson, enough to make them regret messing with us."

Veron then glanced at the others. "Do any of you think so?"

"I have the same opinion as Sir Patrick," one of the men said.

"Me too. Aldrian the Great must have a secret, and we could take advantage of that," a woman said.

One by one, they also gave their opinions, and in the end, most of them shared the same mindset as Patrick.

Hearing all of that, Veron smiled and nodded.

"Alright, I understand what you all think, and I believe what Sir Patrick said has some merit. In that case, how about we discuss what we need to do next at my place? To be honest, I also want to give that arrogant bastard a lesson. We must unite at this moment and not let the powers of this world grow arrogant just because they have some backing."

He looked forward with a smile, hidden intent glistening in his eyes.

The banquet lasted for three hours before Aldrian and his group decided to leave. Patriarch Geodard had already offered him a place to stay in the mansion, but Aldrian politely declined. He had his reasons for staying outside the mansion, as it would grant him and his harem more freedom.

Moreover, if he stayed at the mansion, many eyes would be directed toward it, which would make his movements more limited. It could also bring problems to the Alfemin family later, and Aldrian thought it did not need to reach that point.

Furthermore, with him offending many powers from other worlds, it would be better for him to stay outside the Alfemin family's mansion. Aldrian knew that those nobles would likely think of ways to pay back their humiliation tonight. He could sense their fury, and he did not doubt that they would do something stupid while he was still here.

They would not be deterred by his strength or any of the stories they had heard about him until they saw the horror themselves. Those nobles had high pride and dignity, which were difficult to control once they were humiliated. Even more so after the way he had humiliated them, they likely wanted nothing more than to strangle him to death as soon as possible.

With him not staying in the mansion, people could only guess his whereabouts. That would confuse anyone who wanted to disturb him, as well as those nobles who wished to keep an eye on him.

Patriarch Geodard and Alric understood Aldrian's reasoning, and they did not insist further since Aldrian had already made his decision. In the end, the only thing the Alfemin family could do was make sure that his stay in the city was comfortable.

For security, they tightened the surveillance of the city, especially in the areas surrounding where Aldrian was staying. Still, even if those who wished to harm Aldrian dared to approach him, Patriarch Geodard and Alric doubted that anyone could truly do anything to Aldrian or his harem.

After the banquet, Aldrian and his group appeared outside the floating land, where many people could see him. This was a performative act so that people would think that he had already left the mansion grounds.

"Look, that is Aldrian the Great. He is already leaving the floating land," one of the onlookers said as he pointed at the sky.

The onlookers had already seen Aldrian and his harem enter the floating land when they arrived, so they knew what he looked like. The moment they saw the figures of Aldrian and his group, they immediately cheered toward him, showing their admiration and respect, as he was already considered a hero in this world.

Aldrian and his group showed brief smiles before disappearing toward the place where they were staying, the most luxurious inn in the city. This would be their residence for as long as they remained in this world.

The next day, Aldrian and his group left the inn. This time, they had to use disguises, as many already recognized their faces.

Wearing the same robes they had worn yesterday to cover their features, they walked toward one of the warp gate plazas.

Their destination?

They were heading to the most dangerous place this world could offer.

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Chapter 969 - 969: The Legend in the Sea

[1,518 words]

In the Blue Pearl World, there is a legend that spread among its people about a place called the Divine Wrath Sea. The Divine Wrath Sea is the name of a water region given by the people of this world, located in the middle of the biggest ocean in this world, the Blue Heaven Ocean.

The legend that developed among the populace says that this sea region is the place where the Sea God has lived since ancient times, and that there is no one who could enter this area.

There are many ways to reach that place, but because of the terrifying stories about the region, there is no one who wants to go there. This was exactly what Aldrian and his group were experiencing at this moment.

They had already arrived at the coastal city called Palarem, a beautiful coastal city with stunning scenery overlooking the Blue Heaven Ocean. This city was the "closest" civilization to the Divine Wrath Sea, although that sea region was still far away.

At this moment, Aldrian was looking for a guide who was willing to guide his group to that sea region. He met several people who offered their services as guides, but their answers were all the same.

"What? You want to go to the Divine Wrath Sea? Are you crazy? No, I don't want to. No matter how many energy stones you give me, I have to refuse."

"To the Divine Wrath Sea? I'm sorry, but I can't do that. There is no sane person who wants to go to that place. Even before we reach it, we would have to pass through the territories of powerful spiritual beasts. They are not friendly toward humans."

"No way. I'm not crazy enough to throw my life away by going to that place."

There was no one who wanted to be Aldrian's group's guide. Aldrian had expected this kind of reaction, but he did not expect that even after he offered a large amount of energy stones, enough for a person to build a small sect overnight, they still refused.

'It seems that the reputation of the Divine Wrath Sea is truly terrifying among these people. Oh well, no wonder even when the devils invaded this world, they tried to avoid that sea region.' Aldrian thought.

The devils that invaded this world specifically avoided the Blue Heaven Ocean as a whole, not only because the ocean had many powerful spiritual beasts, but also because of the presence of the Divine Wrath Sea.

The devils had already learned about the dangerous places of this world, and regarding the Divine Wrath Sea, they decided to leave that place untouched until all of them had occupied the land.

The devils had once tried to reach the Divine Wrath Sea to uncover its mysteries using an expeditionary force that consisted of several pseudo immortal stage devils. The result was that no one returned.

Since then, the devils had not touched the Divine Wrath Sea or the Blue Heaven Ocean, instead focusing their battles on land. That was also the reason this city had not been heavily affected by the war, as it was far away from the front line.

"Dear, it seems we have to make this journey ourselves. If there is no one who wants to be our guide, then we can just ask for the general direction of the Divine Wrath Sea," Sylphia said beside him. Aldrian responded with a nod.

"Well, I guess that works too," he replied.

They then walked toward one of the guides to ask about the direction of the Divine Wrath Sea, but before he could reach the guide, someone approached him from behind.

"Wait, sir, with the three young misses!"

Aldrian heard a man's voice from behind and turned his head. He saw a young man chasing after him, running through the crowded streets. After reaching Aldrian, the man stopped and caught his breath.

Aldrian wondered who this man was and why he was pursuing him.

The young man had short blue hair and beautiful blue eyes, wearing normal clothes like an ordinary commoner. This man had Middle Duke stage cultivation, which was quite decent for the level of this world.

After observing him for a moment, Aldrian finally asked,

"Who are you?"

"Ah, my apologies. Let me introduce myself. You can just call me Klein. I heard that you need a guide to the Divine Wrath Sea. I can be your guide," Klein said, which made Aldrian and his harem raise their eyebrows.

This piqued their interest.

Aldrian did not sense any ill intent from the man, and Klein meant what he said. This piqued his curiosity, as this was the first time he had heard someone willing to be their guide to the most dangerous place in the Blue Pearl World.

"Interesting. Are you sure you want to be our guide to the Divine Wrath Sea?" Aldrian asked.

"Yes. Please let me guide you, sir and misses. I will lead you there." Sensing there was no problem with Klein, Aldrian continued walking.

"Then follow me. We will depart after this," he said.

Sylphia and the others glanced at Klein with curiosity for a moment before following Aldrian. Klein took a deep breath before following them as well.

While Aldrian and his group were about to start their journey to the Divine Wrath Sea, among the crowd, a man looked at them with an astonished expression.

'Aldrian the Great is really going to depart for the Divine Wrath Sea! I have to report this to Lord Geodard!' he thought before walking in the opposite direction.

Not long after, Aldrian and his group reached the shoreline. He was about to take out his cruiser from his storage ring when he heard a different man's voice from his side.

"Yo, isn't this Klein? What are you doing here?"

Aldrian turned to look at a group of three men approaching them. The man who spoke earlier was at the forefront, and from the posture and expressions of the three, Aldrian knew they were looking for trouble.

They wore mocking expressions, as if they had found someone to bully.

He glanced at Klein and saw that he seemed stiff. Aldrian could sense that something was wrong with Klein as he looked at the group.

However, Aldrian did not care about it and thought that there was no need to wait any longer. He ignored the newcomers and took out a large cruiser from his storage ring.

The moment the large and luxurious cruiser appeared, many people were shocked, including Klein and the group of three. Even Sylphia, Baek Jimin, and Angelica looked surprised.

Without waiting any longer, Aldrian jumped onto the cruiser and brought his harem, and Klein along with him.

Without saying a word, he moved his cruiser, and the sudden acceleration threw the three newcomers away. They rolled across the beach sand several times, and after they stopped rolling, one of them shouted.

"Ptui! Ptui! Fuck! I will kill that guy!" he said as he spat out the sand that had entered his mouth while rolling.

"Fucking bastard! Klein, I will kill you!" the man who had spoken to Klein earlier shouted.

While the three men cursed Aldrian and his group, they were already above the open sea, moving at a speed far beyond any cruiser that could be seen anywhere. The cruiser Aldrian was currently using was one of the treasures left behind by his followers at the faith gathering place.

Using a cruiser that came from the Higher Heavens, he could reach his destination much faster than if they had used a normal cruiser. Then why did he use a cruiser instead of a much faster method like teleportation?

That was because he wanted Sylphia and the others to enjoy their journey and admire the beautiful scenery. By using a cruiser from the Higher Heavens, their journey would be more comfortable and far safer.

The cruiser's defenses could not be penetrated even by the full attack power of a peak pseudo-immortal stage cultivator, as everything about this cruiser originated from the Higher Heavens.

Sylphia and the others were amazed by the grandness of the cruiser and observed their surroundings, while Klein wondered what kind of identity Aldrian had. He had never seen this kind of cruiser before, and from its speed, he estimated that they could reach the Divine Wrath Sea in a single day.

A journey that usually took more than six days using a normal cruiser being shortened to one day was truly unheard of for him.

While he was still observing his surroundings, Aldrian stood beside him.

"I just moved the cruiser without much thought. Is this the right direction?" he asked.

"Ah, yes sir. This is already the right direction, but later we will need to make a few turns to evade the spiritual beast territories. I do not doubt with our current speed, if we enter those territories, it will be directly sensed by them as they would notice something flying so fast through their domain. They would think that a pseudo immortal stage cultivator is passing through, and that might create trouble."

Aldrian nodded. There was a brief moment of silence, and Klein glanced at Aldrian repeatedly, as if he wanted to say something. However, Aldrian spoke first.

"Tell me, Klein. Why do you want to go to the Divine Wrath Sea?"

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Chapter 970 - 970: The Reason

[1,653 words]

Klein was slightly stunned, but Aldrian continued.

"I'm curious because I could sense your spirit when you voluntarily wanted to guide us toward the Divine Wrath Sea, which is strange when others fear it. Why is that, if I may ask? Well, if you do not want to tell your story, then you do not have to. I am just curious about your reason, that's all."

Klein fell silent for a moment and looked at the ocean ahead. His expression turned to one of reminiscence. Aldrian did not say anything else and also looked toward the sea.

After a few moments of silence, Klein finally opened his lips.

"It's because I want to look for my father's traces. He disappeared two years ago in that sea region," he said, then took a deep breath.

"My father is someone who has a passion for the mysteries of the Divine Wrath Sea. He was eager to uncover its secrets. That is why, for a long time, he learned everything known about this sea region from any records he could find and liked to observe it personally. Sometimes, he would sit on his cruiser or ship for days, or even more than a month, near that dangerous sea region, just researching how he could pass through the Divine Wrath Sea."

Klein's expression then turned sad.

"Three years ago, when my father and I were standing on the beach, we saw a beautiful aurora in the sky. It was so mesmerizing that we forgot our surroundings and even the gloomy atmosphere caused by the war."

"But not long after that, my father noticed something strange in the sea. The sea seemed to retreat, making the shoreline much farther from our position. It was like a tsunami was about to occur, yet no tsunami followed."

"Then, we suddenly saw a blue light on the horizon. It lasted only a few seconds before disappearing. From its direction, we knew that the blue light came from the Divine Wrath Sea. At that moment, my father hurriedly wanted to depart to check what that phenomenon was."

"We had never seen any sign from that sea region before, and this made my father truly ecstatic. I wanted to go with him, but he forbade me and ordered me to stay with my family. In the end, he departed alone on his cruiser..." Klein paused as he released a sigh.

"That was the last time I saw my father. He never came back, and there has been no news about him at all."

"If only I had followed my father at that time," he added before stopping.

Aldrian finally understood and looked forward. He did not have any words of consolation for Klein, as this was something beyond his current capacity to change.

His father might already be dead at this moment, and there was nothing he could do about it. The place where his followers built the faith gathering site was truly dangerous. No beings of the First Heaven could enter it, and even an immortal would have great difficulty doing so.

If Klein's father forced himself to enter the Divine Wrath Sea, which he strongly suspected to be the location of the faith gathering place, then he might already be dead.

But then he picked up on the details of Klein's story. The day Klein's father departed was the same day they saw the beautiful aurora in the sky.

The timing also aligned with when he absorbed the remnants of the golden energy left behind by Feng Xuanyan and Long Shentian, and the Barisan Continent opened to the world.

The moment the Barisan Continent opened to the entire world, countless people saw the sign from the universe, just as Feng Xuanyan had said. From what he had heard, beautiful auroras appeared across the world, and he knew that was the sign.

Klein said that a blue light appeared from the direction of the Divine Wrath Sea not long after the aurora appeared.

Did that mean something inside the Divine Wrath Sea reacted to the sign of his return?

If that was the case, then he believed he was already heading in the right direction toward the faith gathering place. He had already sensed the flow of faith energy toward the Divine Wrath Sea before their departure, and this only strengthened his belief.

"Uhm, sir, my apologies if I ask this, but are you not from this world? For you to want to go to the Divine Wrath Sea is something only someone who does not know the true danger of that sea region would do. Someone not from this world," Klein asked carefully.

Aldrian smiled. "Yes, I am not from this world, and I have heard about the dangerous region called the Divine Wrath Sea, which has been said to be undiscoverable since ancient times in this world."

"Uhm, if I may ask, is there any specific reason for you to visit that place?" But then he realized that he had asked too much and instantly bowed.

"Ah, I'm sorry, sir. It is not my intention to meddle in your affairs. It's just that I'm really curious. Anyone who wants to visit that place would be branded as crazy or even blasphemous by the people of this world." Klein then looked forward again toward the vast sea.

"Just like my father, who truly wanted to uncover the mysteries of that sea region, many thought that he had lost his mind by courting death by constantly nearing that place. Many mocked him for trying to uncover something impossible to uncover, and some even tried to stop him forcefully, believing that what he did could attract the wrath of the sea god."

Aldrian finally understood why those three troublemakers with arrogant expressions had seemed to want to trouble Klein. This was a case where the child also had to bear the brunt of what the parent had done.

Klein's father's reputation was not good because of his research on the Divine Wrath Sea, and Klein was affected by it.

Many people of his age mocked him because of his father.

Still, Aldrian smiled and looked forward.

"Well, what I can say is that I like challenges, and I want to challenge anything dangerous. The Divine Wrath Sea is one of the places that I thought could satisfy me."

Klein was stunned. He did not expect to hear such a reason. However, it opened his mind to the fact that there were people with such crazy hobbies.

Still, he did not understand why this crazy man had also brought three women with him.

Who were they to willingly follow this man? Did they also have the same mindset as him?

"You don't have to worry about entering that sea region. Once we arrive at the area where I think it is too dangerous for us to continue using the cruiser, you will stay here on the cruiser with my women. As for your wish to look for your father's traces, wait until I return from the Divine Wrath Sea. I will help you regarding your father."

Klein was astonished, but then his eyes glimmered. He did not focus on Aldrian's arrogant words about returning from the Divine Wrath Sea. Instead, he focused on the fact that Aldrian said he would help him regarding his father.

He could not sense the cultivation of Aldrian or the three women, but he believed that they were extremely strong cultivators with great backgrounds.

Possessing such a strange and luxurious cruiser and having such a dangerous hobby must require great strength. He thought that Aldrian might be a pseudo immortal stage cultivator.

If someone like that could help him look for his father, then he believed he could find his father's traces. He hoped that his father was still alive by some miracle, but he knew that the probability of his father already being dead was much higher.

After all, his father had gone to the most dangerous place.

But whatever his father's fate was at this moment, at least he could know the truth and put his restless soul at ease.

Their cruiser kept flying at a constant high speed. The ladies were enjoying the scenery of the vast blue sea comfortably. With the barrier protecting them, they did not need to worry about the chaos caused by the strong winds that would sweep over them as they moved at high speed.

More than ten hours later, Klein told Aldrian to move the cruiser according to his directions. They were already reaching the territory where strong spiritual beasts at peak pseudo immortal stage residing in the deep sea.

They were territorial beings and did not like others passing through their domain, so to avoid trouble, it was better to evade them. He and his father knew the path based on the sea and the signs on the horizon.

On the horizon, they could finally see something other than a sunny sky and blue ocean. Overcast clouds covered a large part of the horizon, as if a storm were approaching them.

It was truly ominous and made their hearts tremble. They could see sparks of lightning within the stormy clouds.

Aldrian did not mind following Klein's directions to evade the spiritual beast territories. Although he did not care about trespassing on others' domains, he preferred a peaceful journey.

He did not need to beat anyone unless he had to.

Just as Klein had said, he could sense that some of the beings from the deep sea were attracted to them. Sometimes, he could see huge silhouettes, as long as seven kilometers, beneath the sea surface, and they came in varied shapes.

Sometimes he saw giant fish or whales. Sometimes he saw giant snakes.

They did not attack them, but only observed for a while before swimming back into the deep sea.

It seemed that as long as they did not enter their territories, the beasts did not mind their presence, though they were still curious about the newcomers.

As they continued onward for the next few hours, the storm kept drawing nearer, and they could see the previously calm sea surface beginning to form waves.

They were almost at the Divine Wrath Sea!

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Chapter 971 - 971: Inside the Divine Wrath Sea's Region

[1,544 words]

As Aldrian's cruiser got closer to the stormy clouds, the sea became more violent and the wind grew more chaotic. Heavy rain began to strike them, and lightning followed by rumbling thunder colored the dark sky.

The view was truly terrifying.

The spiritual beasts also did not dare to make their territory too close to the stormy area, as if they knew this was a dangerous zone. Aldrian knew that this kind of phenomenon, which prevented anyone from entering deeper into the region, would likely extend all the way into the deep sea and down to the seabed.

As the cruiser kept flying into the stormy area, their speed was reduced. They did not sense any disturbance because of the barrier protecting them. However, they knew that the moment the barrier disappeared, they would be thrown from the cruiser by the powerful wind.

They could see the barrier protecting them as the torrential rain and violent wind tried to break through it. Although Sylphia and the others trusted Aldrian, the scene still made them tense.

Aldrian could sense that the area they were passing through at this moment could throw even an emperor stage cultivator like a kite with its string cut off and kill them. They could not pass through this area at all, even if they used some kind of artifact.

Space itself felt chaotic. Anyone who tried to use space laws in this place would face great difficulty or be unable to use spatial abilities at all. If they attempted movement based on space laws, they could end up dead after being thrown into a deeper part of the region, where the area became far more deadly.

Aldrian still calmly looked forward, while Sylphia and the others had already moved closer to him in search of comfort. They felt extremely tense as they looked at the violent storm, unable to stop themselves from imagining what would happen if the barrier shattered.

Klein also looked at the surroundings of the cruiser, which had already turned pitch-black. Only the flashes of lightning served as their source of light.

Fear could be seen in his eyes. Sweat had already rolled down his face as he also moved much closer to Aldrian.

"Sir, is this really okay for us to enter this deep? Can the cruiser withstand the power of nature here?" he asked hesitantly.

Aldrian smiled at him. "You don't have to worry. This cruiser can withstand this much, so you can relax and just enjoy the chaos."

Klein was speechless upon hearing that, but it gave him slight relief.

Still, Klein never expected that Aldrian would bring them this deep into the stormy area. Even he and his father had not dared to go this far. The deepest his father could go was only before the area entirely fell into darkness. He did not dare to go any deeper because of the power of nature.

That was what his father told him in the past.

As for him? Heck, he did not even dare to enter the stormy area at all.

But then Klein thought about his father, who might have possibly tried to enter this area because of the signs they had seen that day. He thought that his father might have been truly determined to look into the deeper part of the region, which made him even more reckless.

Did his father really have a chance to survive this?

His father was a low pseudo immortal establishment cultivator, so he was not weak. However, looking at the power of nature here, he did not know if even a peak pseudo immortal establishment stage cultivator could survive.

As they all kept going, they finally reached an area where the waves rose to nearly two hundred meters. Not far in front of them, there were many massive waterspouts.

They did not know how many, but in the brief moments when lightning illuminated the area, they could see numerous waterspouts extending into a much deeper part of the region.

After more than a day since they started their journey, the cruiser finally stopped its movement right outside the region where the waterspouts blocked their path.

Aldrian then looked at his harem and smiled at them.

"All right, ladies. From this moment on, I will go alone. You all stay here. Once I think it is safe for you to go deeper, then I will bring you all into the much deeper region to see what mystery lies behind this place."

Sylphia and the others showed their smiles, but it was clear that they were truly worried about him. Sylphia grabbed the edge of his robe.

"Be careful, dear. Just looking at our surroundings makes me scared. If it is too dangerous, please come back."

"Yes, you don't have to force yourself if you cannot proceed. Don't endanger your life," Baek Jimin also said.

Angelica did not say anything, but her expression showed that she agreed with them. As the most junior among Aldrian's harem, she felt the most tense about him. Hearing that he wanted to go out alone made her want to stop him immediately.

Although she knew how strong Aldrian was, it still made her worry about his safety while facing such a dangerous environment.

However, seeing Sylphia and Baek Jimin trust him enough to let him go out, only reminding him to return if it was too dangerous, she decided to learn to believe in him as well.

Had they already grown used to seeing Aldrian face this kind of power of nature? Then she would also believe in him and support him.

Aldrian smiled, took Sylphia's hand, and kissed it. He then took Baek Jimin's hand and kissed it as well. Lastly, he took Angelica's hand, slightly stunning her, and kissed it before speaking to all of them.

"Yes, my ladies."

He then closed his eyes for a moment before opening them again. He released his golden energy, forming a shield that surrounded his body.

"I'm going," he said one last time before suddenly disappearing. The three beauties could only hope that he would be fine now that he was already out there.

Klein, who saw Aldrian disappear, then looked toward the waterspout region not far from them. He bit his lip, hoping that everything would be all right, that Aldrian would return safely, and that he could help him find traces of his father.

Aldrian was already deep inside the area, where waterspouts surrounded him. The powerful wind gave the sensation of sharp blades and even made space itself chaotic. Aldrian could sense small spatial rifts in many areas near the waterspouts.

In fact, it was not only space. The surrounding energy here was also chaotic, making it impossible for cultivators to absorb or manipulate energy to strengthen elemental techniques or even unleash them.

Spiritual sense was also useless, as it would be swept away by the chaotic wind and space.

This was an area where cultivators could do nothing at all, an absolute killing zone.

The power of nature in this place could instantly kill a peak pseudo immortal stage cultivator. Aldrian did not underestimate it and used his energy barrier combined with the power of his domain as his defense, blocking the slicing wind and the terrifying suction of the waterspouts.

The distance between one waterspout and another was more or less a hundred meters, and they extended into a much deeper region. The waterspouts formed a tight defense against anyone who wished to pass through this area, although Aldrian doubted that anyone had ever reached this far.

This place was, in some ways, much more challenging than the Bottomless Abyss because of the existence of deadly phenomena such as waterspouts and deadly storm.

Aldrian decided to continue using his domain ability to pass through this region, as it was much safer and faster. He created his domain many times while moving forward, following the flow of faith energy, which was not affected by the chaotic space.

He kept teleporting to safe areas between the waterspouts and only after more than an hour of doing this, he finally passed through the waterspout region.

What he found afterward was a calm sea that stood in sharp contrast to the environment behind him.

Although the region was still shrouded in darkness because of the overcast clouds, he could sense that the sea ahead was truly calm as far as he could sense.

It created an amazing spectacle that could not be explained by common knowledge.

How could a violent sea filled with towering waves and deadly phenomena exist side by side with such a tranquil sea? Even the moment Aldrian reached it, the wind felt soothing.

This strangeness was not too shocking to Aldrian, as he knew it must be the work of a large scale, nature based formation.

After observing the calm sea, he continued his journey. He kept using his domain just in case, and as he moved forward, he could sense nothing but tranquility. However, he also caught something unusual within the sea's environment.

"I see. There is a strong illusion formation placed here as well," he murmured. If anyone stepped into this calm sea region, it was most probable that they would become lost, unable to find any direction amid the darkness and the illusions that would confuse them.

Even for him, he did not lose his way because he was following the flow of faith energy.

After moving for another twenty-five minutes, he finally saw light on the horizon.

He could sense that his destination was getting nearer!

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Chapter 972 - 972: Luck Worth of Lifetime

[1,504 words]

Aldrian kept moving toward the horizon, and after a few moments, he finally emerged from the region of darkness.

Once again, it was as if he had arrived in a different environment, but this time it was much more drastic. He stepped into a beautiful, sunny environment with a warm, soothing breeze. He was still above the sea, the calm sea reflecting the glimmering light of the sun.

There was a sun high above him, though he did not know whether it was an illusion or the real subject, as this place must be protected by a formation. This was the core area of the Divine Wrath Sea, after all. From space, the core region could not be seen, as stormy clouds covered the entire area, leaving no way for sunlight to reach this place.

Aldrian then looked into the distance, where he saw a lone island with a towering mountain standing at its center. Without hesitation, he flew toward it. He could sense the flow of faith energy moving in that direction.

After a few minutes, he finally arrived above the island and stopped to observe it. The island was quite large, but he could still see its far edge in the distance. The land was lush with forests that stretched from near the beach all the way to the base of the mountain. He had to lift his head to see the peak of the mountain, showing just how high it was.

As he spread his spiritual sense to its maximum range, he realized that the island was not truly devoid of life. He could sense living beings such as insects, lizards, and birds. However, he did not detect any large creatures or humans as far as his spiritual sense could reach.

He retracted his spiritual sense and created his domain before flying toward the mountain, where he sensed the faith energy growing stronger.

However, while he was flying toward the mountain, he suddenly felt as if someone was observing him, which made him stop. He did not doubt his instinct, so he looked toward the direction from which he sensed the gaze coming. The direction came from the opposite side of his approach, on the other side of the island.

He calmly looked in that direction for a moment before deciding to dash toward it.

As he kept getting closer, he finally sensed something that he had been unable to detect earlier due to the limitation of his spiritual sense's range. Then he saw a silhouette dash out from the shadows of the trees, running away from him as if trying to escape.

He did not hesitate to use teleportation and instantly appeared right beside the figure, who was wearing a robe that covered his entire body.

The figure was shocked by Aldrian's sudden appearance. He wanted to attack, but Aldrian grabbed the figure's hand, twisted it behind his back, and pinned him down.

"Argh!"

A man's voice filled with pain resounded as Aldrian pressed him down with his knee, while his arm was locked so he could not move or escape.

Aldrian instantly opened the hood of the robe to look at the figure's face. What he saw was a middle-aged man with a grown blue beard covering his lower jaw and lips. Aldrian also used the system to check the man's information, and the moment he saw it, he was stunned.

That was because—

'This man has the same surname as Klein!'

Aldrian was truly astonished at this moment.

How could he not be, when there was only one conclusion that came to his mind? This man was Klein's family, or most possibly his father!

Moreover, the man had low pseudo immortal establishment stage cultivation, the same as what Klein had described his father's cultivation to be. This was truly shocking, because how could he reach this place?!

With all those dangerous obstacles and his level of cultivation, it was impossible for him to even reach the region filled with waterspouts.

"Gerald Deniver," Aldrian said, which made the man freeze in shock. Aldrian stopped pinning him down and stood up, allowing the man to move freely.

The man sat on the ground and looked toward Aldrian with astonishment.

"You... how could you...?" He could not understand how Aldrian knew his name, and he did not remember someone like Aldrian.

However, he thought that Aldrian might have heard of him or seen him in Palarem. He had some "reputation," after all, so he did not think too deeply about it.

Yet another question arose in his mind. Who was this man? How could he appear here?

"You... how could you reach this place?!" Aldrian asked first, before the man could speak.

For Aldrian, this was the most important thing he wanted to know.

What kind of ability did this man possess to reach this place? What kind of miracle allowed him to do so?

The man looked confused as he answered.

"That is supposed to be my question. Who are you? How could you reach this place?"

Aldrian fell silent for a moment before nodding. "Alright then. You can call me Aldrian. I'm from another world, and I came here because I have my own business. As for how I reached this place, well, nothing great, just passing through any path that led here. Now it's your turn to answer me. How did you reach this place? Wait, even before that, do you know where you are right now?"

Gerald had more questions after hearing Aldrian's answer, but he took a deep breath. "Well, of course I know this place. Although I have never stepped into it before, I can more or less guess where I am based on the strangeness of this place. I'm inside the region of the Divine Wrath Sea."

"However, I do not know the exact location of this place. As for how I reached it, well, it was truly nothing but luck. When I reached the region where the strong winds almost flipped my cruiser, I did not hesitate to use my escape talisman."

"But after I crushed the talisman, my body was instead sucked into chaotic space. After withstanding excruciating pain as my body was slashed repeatedly by the chaotic space, I fell unconscious. When I woke up, I was already on the beach of this island."

Hearing this, Aldrian was truly astonished. From what Gerald described, Aldrian thought that this man had luck worth a lifetime. The decision to use the escape talisman itself was what allowed Gerald to arrive here.

Because of the chaotic space, which was caused by the power of nature and formations, the moment Gerald used his escape talisman, he was undoubtedly thrown into chaotic space.

However, in a very small chance of this happening, the chaotic space instead carried his body toward the core region of the Divine Wrath Sea.

That was possible because the entire region was one massive formation, meaning everything within it was more or less connected.

But this kind of chance was extremely small, almost bordering on impossible, because such an outcome was entirely left to fate to decide. In most cases, if anyone tried to use an escape talisman within chaotic space, they would be thrown to a random location.

At worst, they could appear in an even deeper region where more dangerous natural phenomena were located.

Or even before they managed to escape from the void of space, they would already be shredded by the chaotic space, dying before ever emerging from the void.

These two possibilities were the most likely outcomes for anyone who used an escape talisman in such an environment.

Gerald was truly an exception, and Aldrian thought that the heavens were truly generous to decide that Gerald's fate would allow him to meet him here.

"I felt truly lucky to survive that, but I had to pay a great price for it..." Gerald continued, then opened the robe that covered his body. Aldrian saw that Gerald had lost one of his arms, and both of his legs were covered in slashing scars. The scars were truly ugly, with scabs still clinging to them.

Aldrian could also sense space laws lingering within those wounds, and he knew they came from the moment Gerald had been inside chaotic space. These were the aftereffects, as wounds caused by chaotic space were different from ordinary injuries.

The remnants of chaotic space were still lingering inside Gerald's body, slowing or even completely preventing the healing process. This could cause lifelong damage if the remnants could not be erased.

However, erasing them was far from easy, as these were remnants of chaotic space and embedded deep within the body.

Worse still, the remnants could block the flow of energy inside the body, harming Gerald if he tried to force his energy to circulate.

'So that's why his movements looked clumsy and slow earlier,' Aldrian thought after observing Gerald's condition.

Seeing that Aldrian fell silent, Gerald continued.

"Aldrian, how did you reach this place? From what you said, you have business here. What kind of business do you have in this place?" he asked with narrowed eyes.

"For three years, I have explored this place. The only thing that caught my attention was the sealed doors leading to the unknown inside that mountain. Is that your purpose?"

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- Chapter 973 - 973: His Anxiety

Chapter 973 - 973: His Anxiety

[1,579 words]

Aldrian only smiled in response to Gerald's question. This only made Gerald even more confused, yet he did not need to ask further. Aldrian's purpose was indeed something inside that mountain with that kind of response.

However, how was that possible?

How could Aldrian know that there was something within the mountain when this place was supposed to be undiscoverable by anyone until he had been stranded here?

If they pushed the thought further, another question emerged.

How could Aldrian even reach this place in the first place?

Aldrian's answer made Gerald want to pull his hair. What did he mean by just passing through?

If it were that easy to reach this place, then it would not be known as the most mysterious location in the Blue Pearl World.

If it truly were easy, Gerald would not have had to rely on sheer luck to reach this place, nor would he still be unable to leave it.

He had tried repeatedly to leave this place in the past. He had created a small ship using wood from the forest and attempted to sail away.

Yet every time he entered the region of darkness, where overcast clouds covered the sea, his ship would be forced back toward the island, even though he continued sailing forward. It was as if he had entered some kind of illusion. No matter how many times he tried, the result was always the same.

This made him worry.

He wondered whether he would be trapped here until the day he died. That was why, when he sensed movement in the distance and saw another human for the first time, he was deeply shocked.

Judging by Aldrian's good condition, Gerald did not believe that Aldrian had entered this space the same way he had. He must have used proper means. That meant he knew how to deal with all those dangerous natural phenomena.

But how was that possible when Aldrian was only at the middle pseudo-immortal establishment stage?

The only explanation Gerald could think of was that Aldrian knew this place and understood its secrets.

Once again, the same question surfaced in his mind.

How was that possible?

Who was this person, really?

"Don't think too much, Sir Gerald. It would not be good for you to know too much. The most important thing is that you are safe here, and luckily, I met you here. Klein would be very happy to see his father again," Aldrian said, which made Gerald widen his eyes.

"Klein?! Ah, yes, that's right. How is he?! Is he alright? How is the war? Before I was trapped here, I heard that the situation was not very promising on the frontline," he asked hurriedly.

Seeing Gerald's reaction, Aldrian thought that his guess was correct. Gerald was indeed Klein's father.

"He is fine. In fact, he is with me. He guided me toward this sea region, but he stayed in a safe place, so don't worry," Aldrian said.

Hearing that, Gerald was stunned.

Klein was with Aldrian? He had followed him into this dangerous sea? He could not help but worry about his son.

"As for the war, it is already over. The Blue Pearl World won, and the devils are no longer in this world," Aldrian continued.

Once again, Gerald was shocked, but then he released a sigh of relief.

"Is that so? Thank heavens. The last time I heard, the situation was really bad, and there were already many people who thought about escaping to other worlds."

"Yes, the situation was indeed bad. Luckily, the alliance forces were able to turn things around and win the war, and life has started to return to normal," Aldrian said.

Gerald nodded in understanding. There was a moment of silence as Aldrian then glanced at Gerald's arms and legs.

"Do you want to recover your body's condition to how it used to be? Complete and healthy?"

Gerald was stunned. His eyes glimmered, but he released a slow breath.

"Can you heal me and restore my body's condition?" he asked.

Of course, he wanted his body to return to how it used to be. He wanted to move freely and touch things with both of his hands.

At this moment, even walking felt stiff and weak because of the aftereffects of passing through chaotic space. Even when he tried to circulate his energy to support some of his activities on the island, he felt slight pain.

The moment he used a movement technique for the first time after reaching this place was when Aldrian had approached his direction. He felt more pain and could not properly control his movement. When he tried to attack Aldrian, another wave of pain followed.

He truly felt tormented, as he could not do anything properly without feeling discomfort during these past three years.

Aldrian nodded in response to Gerald's question, which made him sigh.

"I see. If you could restore me to my past healthy state, I would truly appreciate it. But I am afraid I cannot repay you, as I have nothing. Even so, do you still want to heal me?"

"You don't have to worry about that. Just consider it my way of thanking your son for guiding me to the Divine Wrath Sea. He is already waiting for you. He is truly brave to dare face the Divine Wrath Sea's reputation and voluntarily guide my group. It would be better for him to see you in much better condition than now," Aldrian replied.

"I can see my son again? So you can bring me out of here?" Gerald could not help but ask in a trembling voice.

Aldrian nodded with a smile. "Of course. Why wouldn't I? I was able to enter this place, so naturally I can leave it and bring you with me as well. You can finally rejoice, Sir Gerald."

Hearing that he could meet his son again, relief washed over him, and he felt like crying. His eyes watered, and he unconsciously dropped to his knees and kowtowed to Aldrian.

"Thank you, truly thank you," he said. "And I am sorry for trying to attack you. I did not know your intentions and acted in panic."

All this time, he had been confused about how he could ever return to the outside world. Although he was passionate about the Divine Wrath Sea, he was still a human with a family.

When he saw signs coming from the direction of the Divine Wrath Sea, he felt both surprised and ecstatic, as there was something new for him to observe and research. He steeled himself and ventured much deeper into the Divine Wrath Sea than he ever had before.

But his recklessness had almost taken his life, and only through luck was he able to reach deep inside the Divine Wrath Sea.

He felt ecstatic when he realized that he was stranded within the Divine Wrath Sea region and had entered an undiscoverable place. It was like a dream come true for him, entering a region that he had spent much of his life researching and trying to unravel its mysteries.

However, after observing the entire island and learning almost everything about it, the fact that he could not return gave him a sense of loss and confusion. He had family outside, and the war was still ongoing. With the situation of the war being far from optimistic, what if they truly lost? What would happen to his family?

He was trapped in the place he had most wanted to visit, yet his mind could not focus, as his family was still out there and a war was raging. He could do nothing, and he might remain trapped here in loneliness until his final day.

The only thing that became his hope was the strange doors inside the mountain. He wondered whether whatever lay behind them could take him out of this place.

But those doors gave no reaction, no matter what methods he tried to open them. There were no hints on how to open them, which frustrated him deeply. That might have been the last mystery he had yet to solve in this place.

Now that Aldrian had appeared and claimed that he could bring him out, Gerald felt relieved and deeply moved.

"Alright, alright, stop kowtowing. I understand your reason for attacking me, so I don't mind. Let me heal you first before you show your happiness," Aldrian said.

Gerald straightened his body, and Aldrian finally released his energy. First, he needed to erase any remnants of chaotic space within Gerald's body. This was something that would be tricky for others, but for Aldrian, it was much easier due to his mastery over energy and the existence of his golden energy, which could "subdue" the remnants of chaotic space.

He injected his golden energy and cleaned away all traces of chaotic space's energy. It gave Gerald a warm sensation for the first time in three years. At that moment, he truly wanted to sleep from how comfortable he felt.

He could sense all of his meridians opening, and his energy flowed smoothly again as the remnants of chaotic space's energy disappeared.

The scabs on his wounds slowly peeled off and fell from his skin. His ugly scars vanished at a rapid pace, revealing healthy skin beneath.

After a few moments, Aldrian was finally done dealing with the wounds across Gerald's body and all remaining traces of chaotic space's energy.

Next came the reshaping of Gerald's arm.

Combined with his life laws, movement appeared at the place where the arm had once been.

Gerald felt a slight stinging sensation, but he endured it as his arm began to regrow. It happened quite quickly and took no longer than a minute.

After Aldrian finished, he retracted his energy and smiled.

"How is it?"

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Chapter 974 - 974: Entering the Mountain

[1,573 words]

Gerald tried to move his newly grown arm. He moved his entire arm, then his wrist, before he tried to move his fingers. He smiled as he could feel that this new arm was not different from his previous one.

Even its strength did not differ from his other limbs, which had already been trained and cultivated for a lifetime. He was surprised, but he did not dwell too much on Aldrian's restoration technique. The most important thing was that he could have a normal body again.

He felt refreshed and no longer felt any pain like what he had experienced for the past three years. He tried to circulate his energy, and it moved smoothly, just like in the past.

After checking that everything was alright, Gerald looked at Aldrian and bowed deeply.

"Thank you once again, Aldrian. No, Young Master Aldrian. You are truly my benefactor and savior. After I get out of this place, I will try my best to repay your kindness."

Aldrian smiled and waved his hand.

"You do not need to think about that. Just like I said, this is also my way of repaying your son for guiding me to the Divine Wrath Sea." He then looked at the mountain.

"Anyway, I will go to the mountain first to take care of something. You can do whatever you want here while I am at it."

He wanted to fly toward the mountain, but Gerald's voice made him pause.

"Wait."

Aldrian looked at Gerald, who seemed hesitant.

After a few seconds, Gerald finally spoke.

"Uhm, may I follow you to the mountain, Young Master? I know you already warned me about not knowing too much about your business, but I am truly curious about the mystery of this island. There is only one place on this island that I still cannot check because of the sealed doors protecting it." His face showed that he was embarrassed to say this.

"I know it sounds shameless of me to make this request after what Young Master has done for me, but I am truly curious about the last mystery hidden in this place. I want to see it myself. However, if this is something that will cause trouble for Young Master, then forgive my rudeness, and I will stay here until Young Master is done with your business."

Aldrian blinked twice. It could be seen that Gerald felt ashamed to make such a request, but he still did it because of his curiosity.

Aldrian did not blame him, as this was Gerald's passion to uncover everything about the Divine Wrath Sea region. Aldrian did not find any trouble in it, so he showed a smile.

"Of course, you can follow me, but you have to stay behind me, as I also do not know what we might encounter inside there," he said, which made Gerald's expression turn ecstatic.

"Yes, Young Master," he replied.

Aldrian then flew toward the mountain, followed by Gerald. He did not mind bringing Gerald along, as there was really nothing he needed to keep secret, and that included any treasures here, if there were any.

Gerald would not know about the real value of the faith gathering place anyway. Moreover, the moment his consciousness entered the stone pillar, Gerald would likely faint, just like what happened to everyone when he connected to the stone pillar in the Ancient Blue Gate World.

At that time, everyone near the stone pillar fainted from the blinding light.

Suddenly remembering that time, Aldrian could not help but think of another detail regarding the Ancient Blue Gate World.

'Come to think of it, the faith-gathering place of the Ancient Blue Gate World is the only one whose location is not in the most dangerous area. It just sits in the middle of nowhere and is managed by the three great sects,' he thought.

He did not know the real reason behind this, but he tried to guess if it was because the location was under trusted parties. The three great sects had their history tied directly to the Heavenly Demon, so perhaps they did not need to go through the trouble of creating the most dangerous formations to protect it.

Aldrian smiled and shook his head, putting that matter aside. He continued to focus on what was in front of him now.

The flow of faith energy moved toward the mountain's slope, which was quite high from the mountain's base. After a few moments, he finally arrived at an entrance embedded in the mountain's slope near the cliff.

The entrance was polished and extended deep inside, allowing them to see a large hallway. From this sight alone, it was obvious that someone had built this place, something that had shocked Gerald the first time he found it.

Aldrian stood in front of the entrance for a few moments and looked at Gerald.

"You reached this place with your body's condition at that time? You are surely a tough guy."

Gerald smiled. "Well, I am just a man who is really hungry for knowledge about the Divine Wrath Sea, and this place was the first place where I was stranded, so I did not pass up any chance to research every part of it. Even if I had to climb this high mountain with my bad condition at that time, I just wanted to know everything about this place."

"When I found this place, I was truly surprised that it was obvious someone had built it. There is no record of anyone entering the Divine Wrath Sea, so this became the mystery that I was curious to uncover." He looked at the entrance.

"Seeing that Young Master knows there is something here and does not seem surprised, I suppose that the ones who built this place have a connection with Young Master." He then glanced at Aldrian, who was already looking ahead.

He saw Aldrian only smiling and keeping silent as he stepped into the hallway. Gerald did not mind and followed him.

On both sides of the hallway, there were murals that gave Aldrian hints about who had built this place. The murals showed dragons.

Now the question was, which dragon?

Aldrian's mind tried to make a guess based on the shape and details of the dragons in the murals.

'Is it a sea dragon?' That was his guess based on how the murals appeared to him. The dragon race whose clan stayed in the ocean. Dragons blessed with mastery over the water element, especially when they were in their habitat, the sea.

One of the strongest dragon clans under Long Shentian, controlling the seas wherever they lived.

As Aldrian and Gerald kept walking deeper, Gerald also observed the murals. He had already seen the murals a few times before, yet he still did not understand why dragons were depicted on them.

The Blue Pearl World did not have any dragon clans, so this became one of the questions he was searching for an answer.

He then looked at Aldrian's back. Aldrian had said that he was from another world, so if Aldrian had any connection with these dragons, then it would make sense.

Still, it only made him question Aldrian's origin and the dragons even more.

After walking for a few minutes without any problems, as there were no traps whatsoever, they finally arrived at the end of the hallway, where they were met with a

pair of giant doors. On the top side of the doors, there was a statue of a dragon's head overlooking them.

Even though it was only a statue, it gave the sensation that they were indeed being watched by a living dragon. Gerald felt his soul tremble every time he arrived at this place because of that statue.

On the surface of the doors, the murals from both sides of the hallway merged into one, and above the doors themselves, the symbol of an absolute ruler was engraved.

Aldrian observed this for a moment before he took a step closer to the doors and touched them with his palm. Gerald wanted to see what Aldrian was going to do. His heart beat faster in anticipation. He had never succeeded in trying to open these doors, and from Aldrian's actions, it seemed that he already knew how to open them.

As Gerald focused his gaze, a golden light suddenly shone on the doors for a split second. The hidden formation lit up with golden light before the sound of the door mechanism could be heard.

Crack! Crack!

The double doors slowly opened, making Gerald's heart tremble.

Aldrian truly could open the doors!

His eyes focused on the opening doors, wanting to see what was behind these sturdy doors.

After waiting a few seconds for the doors to fully open, Aldrian, without hesitation, took a step inside, followed by Gerald, who at this moment was truly speechless, his gaze filled with amazement.

Behind the doors was a large hall, and in the middle of it stood a massive statue of a long dragon. The dragon was in a circling position, with part of its body raised and its head looking in their direction.

The sight was truly intimidating, making him hesitate to walk further. But then he saw Aldrian walk toward a stone pillar erected in front of the dragon.

Aldrian stopped for a moment to read the writing engraved on the stone tablet near the pillar before continuing to stand right in front of it.

He touched the pillar with his palm and stood there for a moment. Gerald also wanted to read what was written on the stone tablet, but suddenly, a blinding light engulfed the entire hall. Gerald was shocked, and his vision suddenly turned to darkness.

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Chapter 975 - 975: Unexpected

[1,534 words]

Aldrian's consciousness was already in a different space, and at this moment, he was standing on the surface of water. As far as the eye could see, there was only water, yet he could sense a presence behind him.

The moment he turned his head, he saw a man with long blue hair kowtowing to him.

"Ao Tianhai greets the Great Emperor of All Heavens, the absolute ruler of all heavens," the figure said, his tone filled with piety toward Aldrian.

Aldrian observed the figure for a moment before replying.

"Rise."

After he said that, Ao Tianhai straightened his body and remained kneeling with both knees on the ground. Only then could Aldrian clearly see his face.

It was a young and handsome face, with several features that showed he was a dragon. Slit irises and dragon horns, similar to the common human form of dragons. His gaze, directed at Aldrian, was filled with deep worship.

"Tianhai, are you a sea dragon?" Aldrian asked.

"I am a mutation of the sea dragon known as a storm dragon, Your Majesty. I am the first storm dragon in existence." As he spoke, Aldrian could sense his pride.

After Aldrian's disappearance, life across the universe of course continued to move forward. Naturally, many changes and developments emerged that had not existed when he was still alive as the Great Emperor.

Ao Tianhai seemed to be one such example, a new type of dragon that had appeared after his death.

"I am the last son of the first Sea Dragon Lord, Ao Yuanhai. I was born after Your Majesty disappeared, so Your Majesty might not know me," Ao Tianhai continued, which made Aldrian nod. He wanted to ask more, but Ao Tianhai was still not finished.

"However, as a dragon, I truly admire and worship Your Majesty. My father always showed his reverence toward Your Majesty in every one of his stories, which made my worship grow even deeper. Moreover, His Majesty, Lord Long Shentian, also worships you. He once said that you are his god. Because of that, I dreamed of meeting you and serving you one day, and it seems that my dream has finally come true."

Aldrian raised his eyebrows. He did not know why, but he felt something deeper hidden in the way Ao Tianhai spoke. Still, he set that feeling aside and asked again.

"How is your real body?"

Ao Tianhai nodded. "My Body is safe, Your Majesty. I have already stored my body inside a time-stopping formation specially created for me with the help of Formation Master Xuanji. It does not only stop time around my body but also seals my existence and most of my cultivation here, preventing it from attracting the heavenly laws."

"As long as Your Majesty opens the seal, I will be free, and I will be able to serve Your Majesty on your journey to return to your rightful place as the absolute ruler."

Aldrian was stunned, but then his expression turned confused.

"Wait, you are sealed right now and need me to unseal it? Why would you do that? And why would the heavenly laws restrict you when you are in the Higher Heavens, which can support your cultivation?"

"My apologies, Your Majesty, but it seems I did not explain it clearly enough, so Your Majesty misunderstood. My real body is not in the Higher Heavens. My real body is here, on the island inside the secret chamber," Ao Tianhai said, which made Aldrian's eyes widen in shock.

"What?" he could not help blurting out, but Ao Tianhai, still wearing a calm expression, nodded.

"Yes, Your Majesty. My body is on the island, and I am ready to follow Your Majesty on your journey once you open the seal on my real body."

Aldrian was truly shocked. This was far different from what he had expected.

He truly did not know of the existence of Ao Tianhai's real body, as his spiritual sense was obstructed inside the mountain by the hidden formation. He had thought it was a formation protecting the hall and also connected to the secret chamber.

Moreover, the domain he had created on the beach did not reach this place, so he could not sense anything using his domain sense.

He truly never imagined that there would be someone like Ao Tianhai, who had allowed himself to be sealed here for eons while waiting for his arrival.

But then, another possibility surfaced in his mind.

'Don't tell me there are many others like Ao Tianhai, sealing themselves in the faith-gathering place, waiting for me to open the seals?' he thought. This was the first time he had seen such a thing, so it did not eliminate the possibility that there were others like Ao Tianhai.

What they did was a gamble. They could be trapped forever if he did not succeed in his journey. If that happened, it would be no different from death for them.

However, he also found something positive if there were indeed others like Ao Tianhai.

'It could strengthen my army tremendously. With the support of cultivators from the Higher Heavens, when I ascend there, I will at least not be completely powerless against some powerful cultivators I may encounter in the future.' Aldrian's eyes glistened as he thought of this.

He could not help but smile at the future prospect. It seemed that his journey in the Higher Heavens would not be as difficult as he had once thought.

"I see. If that is the case, then I will talk to your real body," Aldrian said, and Ao Tianhai nodded.

"Yes, Your Majesty."

After he spoke, their surroundings shattered, and Aldrian fell into darkness. When he opened his eyes, as usual, he felt a refreshing sensation from successfully making the entire world his domain. His senses became sharper, and he felt more powerful.

However, he set that feeling aside as he looked toward the secret entrance that had already opened. Aldrian thought that it must be the way to the secret chamber. He then glanced at the unconscious Gerald and thought that it might be better if he remained unconscious for now.

He did not waste any time and walked toward the entrance. The path beyond it was wide enough for five people to walk side by side. It sloped slightly downward, leading him deeper into the mountain.

After walking for a few minutes, he finally reached another entrance without a door. When he stepped inside, he was greeted by a vast chamber, but his eyes instantly focused on the figure at the center of the chamber.

He saw Ao Tianhai's figure, identical to the will that he put inside the stone pillar. At this moment, Ao Tianhai was frozen inside a large purple crystal, his eyes closed. He stood upright, wearing white and black robes.

Surrounding the crystal, a pentagon-shaped formation created a white barrier that connected the floor to the ceiling of the chamber.

Aldrian could sense powerful time laws within the barrier, and he was truly amazed by how Xuanji had managed to create such a formation. It was formed through Xuanji's knowledge and comprehension of formations and time laws.

Time laws possessed many uses. These were laws that also had to be comprehended by anyone capable of using clairvoyance or vision techniques to search for targets or observe distant scenes.

However, for high level cultivators in the Higher Heavens, time laws could be far more terrifying. Stopping time was possible, and even reversing time was not out of the question.

Fortunately, time laws were difficult to comprehend, and not all beings were capable of grasping them. However, once someone managed to comprehend time laws to a profound level that allowed active use in many circumstances, they would surely become a powerful and terrifying cultivator.

Moreover, if divine beings comprehended time laws, they could wield them far more freely. As a divine being, Xuanji's comprehension of time laws was truly deep. That was why he could create a formation capable of completely stopping time, even until this very moment. The formation itself was also useful for Aldrian, allowing him to comprehend time laws more profoundly.

Although Aldrian had also comprehended time laws, it was still not at a level where he could use them in most situations.

At best, he could return the condition of certain objects to a few seconds earlier, and only within a limited distance.

Although what he could do was already mind blowing for someone who was currently only a mortal, it was still not enough for him to use time laws as one of the laws he could depend on.

His eyes continued to linger on the crystal and the formation, admiring their complexity. Then his focus shifted back to Ao Tianhai's body.

He tried to read Ao Tianhai's information through his system.

Ao Tianhai

Age : 2,000,050,120 years (Frozen)

Race : Dragon (Storm Dragon)

Cultivation : God Sovereign (Sealed), Peak Pseudo Immortal.

Cultivation technique : -

Attack techniques : Wind laws, Water laws, Lightning Laws, Space laws, Storm laws, Karma laws, Devouring Laws, Destruction Laws (Sealed).

Defense technique : Wind laws, Water laws, Lightning Laws, Space laws, Storm laws, Karma laws, Devouring Laws, Destruction Laws (Sealed).

Movement technique : Wind laws, Water laws, Lightning Laws, Space laws, Storm laws, Karma laws, Devouring Laws, Destruction Laws (Sealed).

Supporting technique : Wind laws, Water laws, Lightning Laws, Space laws, Storm laws, Karma laws, Devouring Laws, Destruction Laws (Sealed).

Looking at the information, Aldrian's heart trembled.

Ao Tianhai was a divine being!

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Chapter 976 - 976: A Real Divine Being

[1,608 words]

Aldrian's heart trembled as Ao Tianhai before him was a living god. A real god. Not only in name or exaggeration, but someone who had truly reached the realm of divinity.

The God Sovereign cultivation stage alone already placed him among the strongest beings in this universe. He was not only a god, but one of the strongest gods.

The way the system displayed the information was quite different compared to when he normally read others' information. However, Aldrian understood the reason, and it made sense.

As a divine being, Ao Tianhai's control over energy and techniques was already vastly different from mortal or immortal. A god had the ability to freely manipulate the laws they had already comprehended. Their connection with the heaven and earth energy that existed everywhere was so strong that it could be said they had become one with nature itself.

They could use nature's energy in a far more proficient manner, to the point that there was virtually no limit to what they could do with it. Not only that, they could even draw upon the energy within an area as wide as two percent of an entire heaven.

Considering how vast each level of the heavens was, such a capability lay far beyond the comprehension of anyone who had yet to reach the realm of divinity.

On the scale of the First Heaven alone, a two percent area already covered everything from the central star cluster to the white ring star cluster. That distance would take five months of travel using warp, yet a god could utilize the energy within that entire area at will. They could also freely control the laws they had comprehended within that area.

Of course, all of this still depended on their cultivation stage, but that was the true picture of anyone who had reached the realm of divinity.

It did not exaggerate to say that each god's movement, even if it was merely a casual motion without much intent behind it, could already be worthy of being called a technique.

That was why, in the information shown by the system, the details regarding attack techniques, defensive techniques, and so on only listed Ao Tianhai's comprehension of laws. With those laws alone, he could do anything, whether it was attack, defense, support, or even movement techniques.

With him could do anything, the only limitations to his capabilities were his imagination and how he implemented them.

That was one of the defining qualities of a person who had reached the realm of divinity.

However, Ao Tianhai's true cultivation had been sealed, and at this moment, he was only at the peak pseudo immortal stage. Of course, this was clearly done so that he could remain in the First Heaven.

Even if he was a god, the law of causality would still affect him, and if he rebelled, divine punishment from the heavens could endanger him. He might even die because of it.

Still, with Ao Tianhai's presence, Aldrian would have more support. Powerful hands that would greatly aid him on his journey.

He also thought that there might be others like Ao Tianhai across the First Heaven, waiting for him to arrive and open their seals.

Aldrian's eyes glistened, and he could not help but feel ecstatic. However, he knew that it would be too time-consuming if he continued to travel by normal means as he was doing now. With countless worlds and realms within the First Heaven, it might take years before he could visit every world or realm.

'I need to make the entire First Heaven my domain first, and only after that can I effectively open their seals,' he thought.

For now, he would do what he could with what was in front of him. He approached the formation protecting the crystal and stood before it. He tried to touch the translucent white barrier, and find that it was actually solid.

He looked at the formation once more, focusing more deeply on the complex patterns and the profound comprehension of time laws within it. Without thinking further, he tried to push the barrier with his raw strength.

However, the barrier did not budge. Seeing that his raw strength had no effect, he used his golden energy instead. He coated his palm with golden energy and pushed against the barrier once more. This time, the barrier actually bent, and finally, it shattered.

The white barrier surrounding the crystal broke apart, and he was finally able to approach the crystal where Ao Tianhai was sealed. He stood in front of it and placed his palm on the crystal, a smile appearing on his face.

"It's time to wake up," he said as he released his golden energy and injected it into the crystal.

The crystal began to crack slowly at one point, then the fractures spread rapidly across its surface.

A few moments later—

Crank! Crink!

The crystal shattered entirely, and Ao Tianhai's body fell from its position. However, Aldrian caught him and brought him to the side, laying him down carefully so he could rest comfortably.

Ao Tianhai did not instantly open his eyes, and Aldrian did not find it strange, as he had just come out of the crystal that had sealed him for who knew how long. However, his

body was already showing movement, as if he was "coming back to life." His chest rose and fell as he began to breathe steadily.

Aldrian checked Ao Tianhai's body condition, and this was the first time he had examined a living divine being in this life.

As a dragon, and a dragon of the divine realm at that, his dantian and meridians were vastly different compared to the normal dragons Aldrian had ever examined before. However, he could sense that most of the paths of Ao Tianhai's meridians and large portions of his dantian had already been sealed.

With those seals in place, he could not use most of his cultivation, though he would be able to break them once he ascended to the higher heavens.

Aldrian did not find anything wrong with Ao Tianhai's body.

He was healthy and only needed to wake up.

He then injected his golden energy to trigger a reaction within Ao Tianhai's body, attempting to wake him up.

After a few seconds, he finally sensed movement in Ao Tianhai's fingers. He stopped injecting his golden energy and waited for Ao Tianhai to open his eyes.

After a few moments, Ao Tianhai slowly opened his eyes.

Once they opened fully, he blinked a few times. He then looked at Aldrian beside him. His gaze briefly swept over the surroundings, but as Aldrian was the only one present, he returned his attention to him.

His eyes focused on Aldrian's face for a few seconds, as if he were trying to embed that face into his memories. After that, he quickly took a sitting position. Aldrian wanted to warn him to be careful since he had just woken up, but Ao Tianhai had already knelt down and kowtowed before him.

"Ao Tianhai greets the Great Emperor of All Heavens, the absolute ruler of all heavens," he said, his voice filled with reverence.

Aldrian sighed, but he still smiled.

"Rise, Ao Tianhai. To be honest, I'm really shocked. I truly did not expect that you would dare to do this."

Ao Tianhai straightened his body and smiled. He felt proud that Aldrian called him by name, and it showed that Aldrian already met his will within the stone pillar.

"It was my way of helping Your Majesty. With those invaders slowly approaching and Your Majesty still having yet to restore your past strength, I voluntarily wished to accompany Your Majesty on your journey from the First Heaven," he said.

"And judging from Your Majesty's reaction, it seems this is the first time Your Majesty has discovered someone sealed within a time-halt formation. In fact, there are others just like me, Your Majesty, waiting for your return and ready to help you on your journey."

Aldrian's smile widened as his guess correct. There were indeed others like Ao Tianhai, sealed within the First Heaven.

"Do you know where they are?" Aldrian asked, but Ao Tianhai shook his head.

"My apologies, but I do not know, as they are spread across the First Heaven, and we never had the chance to communicate with each other. However, it is a fact that they also voluntarily descended to the First Heaven to be sealed and wait for Your Majesty."

Aldrian nodded.

"Your Majesty, as I have just awakened, I need time to adjust myself to this new situation and to learn many things. Therefore, I apologize in advance if I unconsciously do something wrong later. Please be patient with me if that happens," Ao Tianhai said as he kowtowed once more.

Aldrian nodded. "I understand, and I am not so unreasonable as to punish you simply for trying to adapt to life in a new environment. However, I still hope that you restrain yourself from mass killing, except toward those connected to the invaders. I do not care if you kill many of the invaders' followers, but as for the others, you may act according to how they treat you."

"You must observe the situation before you act. You are a mortal here, so there are moral considerations and strategies at play." He added.

Aldrian knew that as a god, and even more so as a dragon, Ao Tianhai's mindset was vastly different from that of the living beings here. He was afraid that Ao Tianhai's divine perspective might lead him to easily cause bloodshed in this place.

After all, many mortals were cunning and could bring trouble.

"I will keep that in mind, Your Majesty," Ao Tianhai replied.

Aldrian nodded and looked around his surroundings.

"Let's leave first. I have already spent quite some time here, and it is time for you to be free and see the world once again."

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Chapter 977 - 977: Leaving the Divine Wrath Sea

[1,496 words]

Ao Tianhai nodded and stood up. His height, much taller than Aldrian's, made Aldrian have to look upward if he wanted to see his face.

Remembering something, Aldrian spoke to Ao Tianhai.

"Ah, right. I came here with my wives. If my wives ask about your identity, just don't say anything about you being from the higher heavens or any of your connection with me. Don't tell my past to them. Is that clear?"

Ao Tianhai nodded without hesitation. "Yes, Your Majesty."

Although he replied calmly, inwardly he was surprised as Aldrian had said that he already had wives.

In the many stories told about the legend of the Absolute Ruler, he was described as a solitary emperor, with no woman by his side as a companion.

His existence itself was too high and too sacred for any woman of that era to harbor romantic feelings for him. That was why, despite the countless beauties who revered him, no one dared to entertain such thoughts, as doing so would have been considered blasphemous.

If there truly had been a woman who became his wife at that time, then her status and position would have been revered by all beings in the universe. Even the heavens themselves might have placed that woman at the same level as the Absolute Ruler.

Once again, all of that would have happened IF the Absolute Ruler had chosen someone as his wife.

Now, here he was, hearing the Absolute Ruler himself say that he already had multiple women.

He could not help but feel glad that the Great Emperor was able to enjoy his life despite the heavy responsibility entrusted to his shoulders by countless beings.

Personally, he felt that this was how the Great Emperor was supposed to be, accompanied by his harem, displaying his might not only in strength, but also as a man.

Aldrian and Ao Tianhai then walked outside the secret chamber, where they saw Gerald still unconscious. Ao Tianhai did not know the circumstances of this man, so he remained silent.

Aldrian that looked at the unconscious Gerald thought that it would be best if he remained unconscious until they returned to the cruiser.

"Your Majesty, what will you do with this place? This place has no use anymore, and there are no treasures here, as I left most of my treasures in the clan for them to use," Ao Tianhai asked.

"Let's keep it as it is. Although this place no longer has any use, it is inside a separate realm that could still be useful for many things. Who knows, it might be useful in the future," Aldrian replied with a smile.

After making the entire Blue Pearl World his domain, he could finally sense the entire formation that covered the whole Divine Wrath Sea.

Besides the formation that created dangerous phenomena and illusions in the surrounding core area, the core area itself was actually a separate realm from the outside world.

If someone could pass through the illusion region, they would undoubtedly step into this place, which already existed within a separate realm.

That was why, when he stepped into the core area, he found himself facing a truly contrasting scene compared to the chaotic region surrounding it.

The sun above was a real object created from fire laws, and it actually acted as the eye of the formation together with the moon, which was made from earth laws.

Aldrian was truly amazed by the idea of using a moving object like an artificial sun and moon as the eye of a formation. Such a thing would have been impossible with the knowledge of the First Heaven.

Ao Tianhai nodded, and Aldrian teleported all of them above the island.

Ao Tianhai was stunned when he found himself already outside the island, and he could not help but feel amazed by Aldrian's ability. This was the first time he felt that there was nothing he could do but be dragged along through teleportation by someone else.

He just stood there, and suddenly his surroundings had already changed.

It was truly amazing.

'As expected of His Majesty,' he thought.

"I will teleport us to my cruiser, where my group is already waiting," Aldrian said after he observed the entire core area. Ao Tianhai nodded, and a split second later, their surroundings changed once more. At this moment, they were already on the cruiser.

The moment they appeared, Sylphia, Baek Jimin, Angelica, and Klein were stunned, but then the three women's expressions turned to relief.

"Dear, you're finally back, but—" Sylphia said, as her and the others' gazes shifted toward the two unfamiliar men.

However, before they could ask anything, Klein's shout resounded beside them.

"Father!" He ran toward his unconscious father.

Despite the thick beard that had grown while Gerald was trapped inside the core region, Klein could still recognize his father by his attire. As he touched his father and examined his condition, he was glad to find that he was still alive.

"Don't worry, Klein. There is no problem with your father. He is only unconscious and will wake up later," Aldrian said.

Klein felt truly relieved upon hearing that, but he continued to watch over his father. His father looked thinner compared to the last time he had seen him, but he was still breathing.

Klein felt as the weight in his heart finally disappeared at this moment. His eyes watered, but he quickly wiped them with the back of his hand before looking toward Aldrian.

He finally turned his attention to the newcomer beside Aldrian. Who was that person? He could not help but feel a kind of pressure even though that man was only standing there. From his features, it was obvious that he was a dragon in human form.

Sylphia and the others also felt that this dragon was not ordinary. The way he simply stood there gave off a strange sense of pressure that even affected their souls.

It was as if they were compelled to worship his very existence.

The sensation was quite vivid, which left them surprised, as they had never felt such a feeling even when they were near Dragon King.

Before they could ask Aldrian anything, Ao Tianhai suddenly bowed toward them.

"I greet your majesties. I am truly blessed to be able to stand before your presence." His voice was filled with reverence, and his movements carried no hesitation at all.

The three women were astonished, while Aldrian facepalmed.

'This guy...'

It seemed Ao Tianhai had simply doing what he thought was right the moment he saw Sylphia, Baek Jimin, and Angelica. However, with such an act, his women would inevitably have many questions in their minds, questions that they would obviously ask later.

They knew that he had just returned from the deeper region of the Divine Wrath Sea, so for him to suddenly bring back a new person, and for that person to pay his respects to their status as empresses, was strange.

With their curiosity, they would undoubtedly seek answers from him, and from Ao Tianhai directly as well.

'It seems I will have to explain a few things to Tianhai later,' Aldrian thought.

There was also someone here who did not know their identities. And as expected, when Aldrian looked at Klein, he saw that Klein was surprised by Ao Tianhai's actions. The way Ao Tianhai addressed Sylphia and the others left him confused, and he did not know what to think about them.

Klein then looked at Aldrian with an expression that showed he had many questions.

However, for now, they needed to get out of this place first. They could talk later under much better place.

"I know that all of you have many questions, but we need to leave this place first," Aldrian said. The others agreed, and Aldrian finally moved the cruiser in the direction they had come from.

The cruiser flew forward at high speed, passing through dangerous natural phenomena. While doing so, Sylphia and the others gathered around Aldrian, occasionally glancing at Ao Tianhai.

He kept some distance from them and looked around as he observed the surrounding chaotic scenery.

"Dear, who is that person? How did you come back with him?" Sylphia asked in a hushed voice.

"I don't know his identity. When I found him, he was trapped inside the core area of the Divine Wrath Sea. I don't know the circumstances of how he ended up trapped there, but he felt grateful to me for freeing him. To repay me, he wishes to follow me for now and has offered his strength to me," Aldrian replied.

The others raised their eyebrows and looked at Ao Tianhai again.

They then continued to "interrogate" Aldrian about his journey. Whenever they asked something about Ao Tianhai, he answered with explanations he instantly created in his mind.

He also tried to redirect the conversation to focus more on his journey or on Klein's father instead, and thankfully, that worked.

They were drawn into his story as he told them about what he experienced in the deeper areas of the Divine Wrath Sea.

As he continued telling his story, hours passed, and they nearly reached the edge of the stormy region.

They were finally about to leave the vast formation that protected the Divine Wrath Sea.

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

Chapter 978 - 978: Return to Palarem

[1,520 words]

At the sea depth near the Divine Wrath Sea, a spiritual beast stayed still. It was actually a male whale, and a truly massive one at that, as its body was seven kilometers long. It did not move at all, its eyes closed as if sleeping.

However, despite appearing vulnerable, there was no being that dared to go near this behemoth. That was because the whale possessed peak pseudo immortal stage cultivation and was one of the rulers of the sea in this part of the ocean.

As he kept his eyes closed, he suddenly sensed something coming from the Divine Wrath Sea, causing him to open his eyes. A cruiser had actually emerged from the Divine Wrath Sea.

He felt confused, but then he quickly felt astonished.

'Wait, don't tell me they really survived?!' he thought.

To satisfy his curiosity, he began approaching the cruiser. At the same moment, a few beings similar to him also sensed the cruiser emerging from the Divine Wrath Sea and moved toward it.

They knew that earlier this morning, a strange cruiser had flown toward the Divine Wrath Sea and entered it until it completely disappeared from sight. They had wondered who the insane people on that cruiser were, daring to challenge the Divine Wrath Sea, a place even they did not dare to enter.

The reputation of the Divine Wrath Sea was already widely known, so seeing such figures challenge it made them think those people were foolish and arrogant.

The Divine Wrath Sea could easily kill even peak pseudo immortal stage spiritual beasts, and no one had ever been able to pass through that region. That was why no one wanted to build their territory near the Divine Wrath Sea.

However, this time, they sensed that some people had actually returned after entering that region. They needed to see it for themselves and ask whether those people had truly entered the Divine Wrath Sea.

They also wanted to know whether those people had brought something back, or at least found something in that place.

As they kept closing in on the cruiser, they finally revealed their enormous bodies on the surface of the water, intending to stop the cruiser.

But before they could do so, they suddenly felt an intense gaze coming from the fast-moving cruiser. They were stunned, and with their sharp sight as peak pseudo immortal stage spiritual beasts, they finally saw a blue-haired man standing on the cruiser.

That man was looking in their direction with a calm gaze, and simply standing there.

However, their souls were shaken and their bodies trembled, as that calm gaze alone was enough to make them fall into a sensation as if they were standing before a giant beast. A giant predator that would swallow them whole if they did anything foolish.

The illusion of enormous eyes and a terrifying dragon's head staring directly at them caused all of them to bury their intent to stop the cruiser. Instead, they fled as far away as possible. Their instincts screamed at them that it would be truly dangerous if they tried to stop the cruiser.

On the cruiser, Ao Tianhai watched the spiritual beasts swim away with a calm gaze before letting out a snort. He warned Aldrian that several peak pseudo immortal stage beasts had been approaching, but Aldrian told him to simply ignore them.

However, just to be safe, he looked toward the incoming spiritual beasts and saw that they seemed intent on stopping the cruiser. He decided to warn them with his intent alone, and that was enough to make them run for their lives.

"Ugh," a voice suddenly resounded from Gerald's lips, making Klein beside him instantly call out to him.

"Father."

Gerald's eyes trembled as they slowly opened. For a moment, he was blinded by the light before his vision gradually cleared, and the first thing he saw was Klein's face. Relief was evident in his expression as Klein called out once more.

"Father."

Gerald blinked several times before finally showing a smile. It seemed he was already outside the Divine Wrath Sea.

"Klein," he said softly, then tried to sit up with Klein's help. Once he was able to sit, Klein instantly hugged his father tightly.

Gerald returned the hug. He truly felt guilty for recklessly entering the Divine Wrath Sea and becoming trapped there for three years.

There were people who must have worried about his fate, and the ones he thought of the most were his wife and his son.

However, as he hugged Klein, his gaze shifted to his surroundings, and confusion appeared on his face. Why had he lost consciousness? The last thing he remembered was entering the vast hall with Aldrian and wanting to check the stone tablet.

Then, a blinding light had burst forth from the stone pillar, illuminating the entire hall before his vision suddenly turned dark. He had not sensed anything afterward, feeling as though he had merely fallen asleep. Why had he lost consciousness because of that light? And what about Aldrian?

His gaze then turned toward Aldrian, who was already standing nearby.

"How are you feeling, Sir Gerald?" Aldrian asked. Klein released his hug to make way for his father to reply.

Gerald let out a sigh and nodded. "I'm fine, Young Master, but what happened to me? Why did I suddenly lose consciousness? What was that blinding light?"

"I triggered the mechanism hidden in the stone pillar, and that caused you to faint," Aldrian replied without offering any further explanation.

Gerald frowned at the ambiguous answer, but he knew it was likely Aldrian's own business, and he did not want to probe too deeply into it. Instead, he looked around and finally noticed Sylphia, Baek Jimin, Angelica, and Ao Tianhai.

He stood up and looked at the ocean before turning his gaze to the sun high in the sky. His eyes watered, as he had never felt as glad as he did at this moment when he saw the vast ocean and the beautiful sunny sky.

He had finally escaped that place after believing he might be trapped there forever.

He looked at Aldrian again and bowed deeply.

"Young Master, thank you for bringing me out. I will never forget your generosity," he said. Klein followed his father's action.

"Thank you, sir, for saving my father!"

Aldrian smiled at them. "No problem. Sir Gerald, you are truly a man full of luck, as you became the first person to reach the core region of the Divine Wrath Sea. You should be proud. There is no one else who could reach that place besides us and come back to tell the tale."

"However, please be careful next time, Sir Gerald, because your luck might not always be with you. If you recklessly approach the Divine Wrath Sea again like you did in the past, I think you might truly die next time," he advised.

Gerald smiled upon hearing that and waved his hand. "Of course, Young Master. How could I repeat my mistake after all that experience? It was only due to my luck that I survived and also met Young Master, which allowed me to get out of that place. I think that is enough for me to decide never to return to the Divine Wrath Sea again."

Hearing his father's words, Klein was stunned.

Would his father finally stop pursuing the mysteries of the Divine Wrath Sea? But recalling how his father had returned from that place, Klein thought that perhaps his father's curiosity had already been satisfied.

There was nothing more left for him to pursue there, which made his decision to stop make sense.

Klein could not help but feel proud of his father for finally achieving his dream: reaching that place and researching it. He could not wait to hear what his father had experienced all this time through his own words.

It must be fascinating, and all those who had doubted his father or even mocked him would have to swallow their words. His father could slap them in the face very hard!

Unbeknownst to Klein, what he guessed was only half true. Gerald had indeed decided to stop visiting the Divine Wrath Sea itself, but as for pursuing its mysteries? He still harbored curiosity and wanted answers.

He no longer needed to enter the Divine Wrath Sea again, as aside from trauma, he did not think there was anything more for him to gain there.

Then how would he pursue the mystery of the Divine Wrath Sea?

Of course, the best source to seek answers from was right beside him. Who else could it be if not the person who seemed to know the Divine Wrath Sea and its secrets?

His gaze turned toward Aldrian, as if he were a teacher, a master, and the most valuable treasure.

The intense gaze made Aldrian feel goosebumps, but he ignored it.

Their cruiser continued toward Palarem City at high speed, and by the next day, they could finally see the city in the distance.

Gerald truly missed this scenery, and he kept looking at the city until they finally reached the shoreline and the cruiser came to a stop.

However, even before Aldrian and the others could step onto the land, their cruiser was already surrounded by many people. Aldrian recognized some familiar faces, and he knew that these people had not come with good intentions.

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Chapter 979 - 979: Trouble Upon Arrival

[1,562 words]

Aldrian spotted the three bullies who had wanted to bully Klein before their departure to the Divine Wrath Sea among the crowd. The ones surrounding their cruiser appeared to be cultivators from the same families as those three bullies. The strongest among them were three at the middle pseudo Immortal Establishment stage.

Gerald frowned the moment he saw them, and he could not help but sense trouble.

"The young masters from the Ruis, Lein, and Uran families? Klein, did those arrogant people create trouble for you?" Gerald asked.

"Well, they caused trouble, especially after father disappeared. Before we departed for the Divine Wrath Sea, the three young masters wanted to stir up trouble, but we left before anything happened. I think they came again to pay back for us ignoring them, and it has made the problem much bigger now," Klein said with embarrassment.

Gerald showed a displeased expression. The three local noble families were much like his own family, the merchant family.

Despite Gerald's reputation as a crazy person due to his obsession with the Divine Wrath Sea, he was one of the most capable businessmen. He was the one who brought his family to new heights. The Deniver family had risen to become one of the merchant families with great influence in the city.

The four families shaped the economy of Palarem City and competed with one another for dominance. However, after Gerald's disappearance, the Deniver family gradually lost its influence, and the other three families began their efforts to seize the Deniver family's businesses.

In recent days, the Deniver family was already on the brink of being swallowed entirely by the other merchant families.

"Klein, and those bastards who do not know their place, come out and face your punishment!" one of the arrogant young masters shouted. He was the one who greeted Klein earlier and seemed to be the leader of the bullies, the young master of the Ruis family.

Many onlookers stopped in their tracks to watch the commotion. They could smell drama and wanted to see what it was about.

Aldrian, seeing trouble coming his way, felt that he needed to address this matter quickly.

He knew this would become an irritating matter if he did not resolve it right here and right now. He needed to give these arrogant people a lesson, one strong enough to make them stop bothering him and Klein's family.

He glanced at Ao Tianhai, and as expected, his expression was already dark, as if he were ready to create a bloodbath on the spot.

That was another reason Aldrian had to solve the problem as soon as possible. He did not want to bring divine wrath to this place.

"My apologies, young master, but let me—"

"No, let me take care of this problem. This is also because of me anyway. I will meet them and give them a lesson," Aldrian cut off Klein's words, leaving Klein stunned.

Before Klein could say anything more, Aldrian had already moved. Just before he jumped out of the cruiser, he looked at Ao Tianhai.

"Hold your fury. Let me take care of it," he said.

Ao Tianhai, still wearing a dark expression, took a deep breath to calm himself and nodded.

"Yes, Your Majesty."

Aldrian nodded before finally jumping down and landing on the beach right in front of the many cultivators surrounding their cruiser. Ao Tianhai also followed Aldrian, jumping down behind him, which made many people stunned.

They could clearly see Ao Tianhai's features, which showed that he was not purely human. Many recognized that Ao Tianhai was a dragon from the horns on his forehead. Although the Blue Pearl World did not have any dragons living in this world, dragons occasionally visited this place, so people were familiar with the appearance of a dragon's human form.

However, the moment they saw Ao Tianhai's overbearing posture, an invisible pressure descended upon them. Their minds urged them to prostrate before the dragon.

This caused many of the cultivators surrounding the cruiser to take a few steps back as they felt a sudden sense of reverence and fear upon seeing him.

As for the three young masters, they were truly shocked. Their hearts shook, their legs trembled, and their minds screamed warnings about how dangerous the dragon before them was.

At the same time, confusion filled them. Where did this dragon come from? They had not seen him when Aldrian and the others departed for the Divine Wrath Sea.

Sylphia and the rest also followed behind Aldrian and Ao Tianhai. The moment the crowd saw Gerald, they were shocked. Gerald had already shaved his beard and looked like his former self, so people instantly recognized him.

"Isn't that Sir Gerald?"

"It's him! Wasn't he already dead inside the Divine Wrath Sea?"

"He survived that place? Impossible!"

Chatter instantly erupted among the crowd, and the three young masters were equally shocked as they stared at Gerald. They had believed Gerald was already dead in the Divine Wrath Sea, which was why the Deniver family had fallen into decline.

But what was this? He looked completely fine and had even returned with these unknown people. They did not know what had truly happened, and it made them furious.

The father of that weakling was still alive, and he was traveling with a group of unknown people who seemed extremely strong, with even a dragon among them.

Even without the dragon making any move and merely standing there, the pressure he gave off was enough to make anyone hesitate to even speak.

"You have two choices," Aldrian said as he looked at the three young masters. "First, return to wherever you came from and from now on, don't disturb me or the Deniver family again. Second, the moment you make a move against me or the Deniver family, I guarantee that you will regret making any move at all."

"The choice is yours. Of course, I prefer a peaceful conclusion, and—"

"May I know your identity?"

A man's voice suddenly cut off Aldrian's words. The crowd instantly turned their gazes toward the sky as the voice came from above. From the distance, someone flew in their direction, and a moment later, the man arrived in the air above them.

When they saw the man's face, the people were shocked to realize that the figure was none other than the patriarch of the Ruis family. Before they could recover from their surprise, two more figures arrived in the same manner.

The crowd was astonished when they recognized the other two as the patriarchs of the Lein and Uran families. Now, all four patriarchs of the noble merchant families were present. Everyone wondered what would happen next.

However, many believed that even with the patriarchs' arrival, they would not dare to act recklessly because of the dragon's presence.

At the same time, they were curious about the identity of the man who had so arrogantly warned the three noble families.

Was he closely related to the Deniver family?

Aldrian looked up at the three figures in the sky, all of whom possessed low pseudo Immortal establishment stage cultivation. From what he had heard, they were the patriarchs of the three noble families in this area.

"I have no obligation to answer your question. The only thing I want to know is your choice," Aldrian said. "I don't have much time to stay in this place, so you had better decide quickly."

The three patriarchs frowned, clearly showing their displeasure. However, they could not boast about their strength or influence, as they did not know Aldrian's true identity.

Moreover, the presence of the dragon, whose strength they could not gauge, made them realize that whatever Aldrian's background was, it was far from simple and might even be stronger than all of them combined.

Still, as nobles, they had their dignity to uphold. The patriarch of the Ruis family wanted to say something, but before he could speak, another group entered the scene.

"Wait!"

A booming voice resounded as a group of people rushed in their direction. All of them were flying at high speed and quickly arrived at the scene. The crowd, and even the three patriarchs, were shocked when they saw the attire of this group and the person leading them.

They were from the royal family.

Palarem City was located within the Erdian Kingdom, and the people before them were an envoy led by the king's own steward, Erlan Igaris.

They were confused about why the royal family had appeared in this place.

Erlan's gaze swept from the three patriarchs to Aldrian's group. The moment he saw Aldrian, he glanced at the man beside him. That man whispered something to him, and Erlan nodded in response.

Erlan then looked back at the three patriarchs.

"To all of you, please refrain from making any moves. The royal family will handle this matter according to the king's order," he said before turning to the cultivators surrounding Aldrian's cruiser. "All of you may return to your families. Do not disturb the order here."

The three patriarchs and many others were astonished.

Had the royal family intervened because of the presence of that unknown man?

Their gazes returned to Aldrian, who was also looking calmly at the group from the royal family.

Aldrian smiled faintly, as it seemed the problem would be much easier to resolve than expected. Under the gaze of many onlookers, Erlan descended and landed before him.

But then, once again, the crowd was stunned when they saw Erlan suddenly bow toward Aldrian.

"We greet Your Majesty, Emperor Aldrian. My apologies for the inconvenience that Your Majesty has experienced here."

After hearing Erlan's words, everyone present froze on the spot.

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Chapter 980 - 980: Regret

[1,569 words]

The crowd froze, and only silence remained. The moment they heard the name Emperor Aldrian, their thoughts were immediately drawn to the name which, at this moment, had become a hot topic among the populace.

In this world, there was no emperor named Aldrian. That left only one possibility, and that was that Emperor Aldrian was "that" Emperor Aldrian.

What happened at the victory banquet was still being discussed across the world. Moreover, what occurred inside the banquet had spread everywhere, turning it into a huge sensation and further propelling Aldrian's name.

The man who helped the Blue Pearl World win the war had also humiliated many families from other worlds who came to cause trouble. He was so domineering that those leaders from other worlds could not say anything and could only run away with their tails between their legs in humiliation.

Just hearing the stories alone gave the populace great satisfaction, and it further boosted Aldrian's name, which already held a high reputation among countless people.

Now, the same man that everyone had been talking about was actually here?!

The three patriarchs' chests turned cold. Sweat dripped from their foreheads. Of all the people their son could have offended, it had to be him. No wonder the royal family was here. No wonder he seemed fearless and arrogant.

He had the means to be so!

The three young masters felt the blood drain from their bodies. Their faces turned pale, and their bodies felt cold. They thought that their lives might end after this.

They tried to deny the reality that the person in front of them was Aldrian the Great, but reality still settled in their minds in the end. There was no other reason for the royal family to be here unless they had something important.

What else could it be but Aldrian the Great visiting this place, and the three noble families were actually trying to find trouble with him?

They suddenly sensed a sharp gaze from the sky, and they instantly knew that their fathers were looking at them with dark expressions. They did not dare lift their heads, as they could imagine that their fathers might want to kill them at this moment.

The Ruis family's young master lowered his head as he felt his status crumble at this instant.

Why did he have to offend Aldrian the Great?

'It seemed we need to talk about your position as my successor.' An incoming voice transmission entered his mind, and it came from his father.

After hearing that, it felt as though he had fallen into an abyss. He instinctively looked upward toward his father, but he trembled when he saw the dark expression on his father's face, barely containing his fury. He lowered his head once more quickly.

'It's over. My life is over,' he thought.

Aldrian nodded after receiving the royal family's envoy's greeting.

"So the royal family will take care of it? I appreciate it then. I do not have to handle this trivial matter. Please send my regards to His Majesty, King Zerviah."

Erlan bowed again. "We will send Your Majesty's regards, and we will take care of this problem with a conclusion that satisfies Your Majesty. And I also bring His Majesty's message. If Your Majesty has time, His Majesty invites Your Majesty to visit the royal palace. We hope that Your Majesty can visit the royal palace."

Aldrian nodded. "Maybe later. I still want to stay here for a moment. I will tell you if I decide to visit the royal palace."

"Yes, Your Majesty," Erlan replied ecstatically. He was truly thankful that Aldrian's response was not an outright rejection, and that there was a chance he might visit the palace.

He had to report this to his king so preparations could be made if Aldrian truly decided to visit.

Behind Sylphia and the others, Klein looked at Aldrian's back as if he were dreaming. The man he had guided to the Divine Wrath Sea, and the man who saved his father, was actually the same man revered as a hero.

A powerful man who changed the fate of the entire world and freed them all from the threat of the devils.

As for Gerald, he was surprised to learn that the man who saved him was the very same man Klein had spoken of, the one who led the world to victory against the devils.

However, because he had been trapped and had not experienced the despair of the populace over the past three years, nor witnessed how Aldrian's presence turned the situation around, his reaction was not as deep as the others.

"Gerald! Klein!"

Suddenly, a woman's voice resounded from the crowd, prompting both of them to turn toward her. The woman pushed through the crowd and then ran toward them.

Gerald widened his eyes. "Tiera," he said.

"Mother," Klein called out beside him.

The woman was Klein's mother and also Gerald's wife. She had a beautiful face and long blue hair. Tears had already fallen from her eyes as she ran toward Gerald, and Gerald himself also moved toward her.

A moment later, they were finally hugging each other.

The woman's body trembled, and her tears soaked Gerald's clothes while he also shed tears as he could finally hold his wife again.

"I thought that I had already lost you," Tiera said.

"I'm sorry for making you miserable. I'm sorry for making you sad," Gerald said between his sobs.

Klein, who saw his parents finally united again, held back his tears.

Those who witnessed this scene were also deeply moved. However, they still had questions about how Gerald survived the Divine Wrath Sea. The news that had spread was that he had already died there after recklessly entering it three years ago.

Yet the fact that he was still alive and had returned in the same group as Aldrian the Great made them start to question the truth behind his disappearance.

Aldrian smiled at the reunion and finally spoke.

"Let's leave this place first, let the royal family take care of the rest. Oh and may I visit your place?"

Gerald and his wife separated slightly and widened their eyes. Klein's eyes glimmered as Gerald replied with full enthusiasm.

"Of course, Your Majesty, you may visit our home. It would be our honor to receive your visit."

His wife followed. "Please, Your Majesty. We truly feel honored by your visit, but my apologies if our current situation is not very good and we lack in many ways to properly receive Your Majesty."

Aldrian kept smiling. "No problem. I only wish to visit and enjoy my time before I have to leave later."

After that, Aldrian and his group left under the guidance of Gerald's family. The crowd instantly made way for them, and they even made the path as wide as possible for them to pass.

Besides Aldrian's presence, they truly felt intimidated and fearful of Ao Tianhai's presence.

With his tall and firm body, dragon features on his head, and a powerful aura that made all people want to prostrate, everyone instinctively kept their distance from him.

After Aldrian's group left, Erlan looked at the three patriarchs and the three young masters before he spoke to them.

"I will visit each of your families to discuss the compensation and punishment for causing His Majesty, Aldrian the Great, inconvenience. Let's start with the Ruis family."

Hearing that, the three patriarchs sighed. They knew that after this, their reputations would take a great hit. It was not an exaggeration to say that because of this matter alone, their families could fall into decline and lose their status as noble families.

The opposite would happen to the Deniver family, as Aldrian the Great seemed to have a close relationship with them.

They felt truly frustrated that all of this had happened because they let their sons do whatever they wanted. They allowed them to bully Klein, which they thought was normal, never realizing that Aldrian the Great would be dragged into the picture.

If only they had stopped their sons much earlier.

But now, only regret remained, and there was nothing they could do except accept that they had already fucked up.

Aldrian visited the Deniver family's mansion and spent two hours there before he and his group decided that it was time for them to leave.

Aldrian also decided to make a visit to the royal palace and informed Erlan of his intention.

When the time for them to depart arrived and they were already standing in front of the mansion, Gerald and his family bowed to him.

"Thank you, Your Majesty, for everything you have done for us. We will never forget it for the rest of our lives," Gerald said, before letting out a sigh.

"And are you sure you do not want anything, Your Majesty? I feel bad that I cannot give anything to you after all the things you have done for me and my family."

Aldrian nodded with a smile. "It's okay. I don't need anything, and you don't have to feel bad, Sir Gerald. It was because of Klein's bravery that, in the end, brought me to you and made all of this possible. He has already helped me, and I have already obtained what I needed. That is enough."

"Alright, if Your Majesty says so," Gerald replied.

"Then I will depart. Take care, Sir Gerald, Madam Tiera, and Klein," Aldrian said before he and his group left under the escort of the royal family.

Under the Deniver family's waves of farewell, Aldrian continued his adventure in the Blue Pearl World. His mind felt relaxed, and he could attend to other matters without worry, as his main purpose had already been achieved.

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Chapter 981 - 981: Leaving Blue Pearl World

[1,574 words]

Later that day, Aldrian and his group visited the capital city of the Erdian Kingdom and the royal palace. He was not surprised that the royal family knew about his visit to Palarem, as they must have received this information from the Alfemin family.

The only ones who knew about his place of stay while he was in the Rudenfil city were a few people, and they were all from the Alfemin family.

He could sense that someone had been tailing his group since they left the inn in Rudenfil City, and he thought that they must be cultivators from the Alfemin family.

Aldrian did not do anything about it, as this was likely part of the Alfemin family's efforts to ensure that there would be no problem as long as his group stayed in this world.

As long as they did not disturb his business, he would not tell them to stop following.

The Alfemin family must have known about his movement toward the Divine Wrath Sea, and they informed the royal family of the Erdian Kingdom.

Palarem City was within their territory after all, and it only made sense that they would handle everything regarding Aldrian as long as he remained there.

Because of this, the royal family paid close attention to Aldrian and was already waiting in Palarem in case he returned from the Divine Wrath Sea. That was why the royal family's envoy quickly arrived at the scene when Aldrian was surrounded by the three nobles.

The king of the Erdian Kingdom, King Zerviah, also explained this to Aldrian during his visit to avoid any misunderstanding.

They did not want to be seen as people who sent spies to monitor Aldrian's movements, as that would look suspicious.

Aldrian understood this, so he did not mind it. Together with his group, he enjoyed their time in the palace.

While they were there, it was as he expected. Ao Tianhai's presence truly attracted attention. Even the king himself was affected by his mere presence and wondered what kind of dragon he was.

Aldrian simply said that Ao Tianhai was one of his men and that he came from the Ancient Blue Gate World, and that was enough to satisfy the king's curiosity.

Still, the king was truly amazed that Aldrian had a peak pseudo immortal stage dragon as one of his men.

King Zerviah could not help but feel envious.

Aldrian and his group stayed in the royal palace and the capital for a day before he decided to return to Rudenfil City. Aldrian thought that he could spend another few days in this world to explore more with his harem, and that was exactly what he did.

For the next four days, he, Sylphia, Baek Jimin, and Angelica traveled to various places across the world. Aldrian ordered Ao Tianhai to stay in Rudenfil City and to use a disguise while hiding his aura to the maximum.

He needed to explore the outside world by himself and learn everything so that he could adapt to life as a mortal here.

In Aldrian's opinion, as a divine being, Ao Tianhai was not stupid, and he could learn and adapt as a mortal, although he might need some time. As long as no one stepped too deeply on his red line, Aldrian was confident that Ao Tianhai would not create any trouble.

As the next few days passed, it was finally the last day they were in the Blue Pearl World, and Aldrian thought that they could return to the Ancient Blue Gate World. He was already satisfied with the vacation with his harem, and there had been no problems during the past few days.

He visited Patriarch Geodard and Alric in the morning to bid them farewell.

"I see. Then it cannot be helped. Please be careful on your journey back, Your Majesty. I hope that you did not find your time here uncomfortable, and that you will want to return in the future," Patriarch Geodard said.

Aldrian smiled and nodded. "I am truly pleased here. I enjoyed my time, as there are many places we could explore. Even though we have not yet explored all of them, I believe we can do so in the future."

"Then we will wait for Your Majesty's next visit," Patriarch Geodard replied.

"When Your Majesty returns in the future, the world may already be different, and it will be much better. Your Majesty will surely like this world even more then," Alric also chimed in.

Aldrian nodded, but then he spoke again. "Oh, right. Before I go, I just want to warn Patriarch Geodard and Sir Alric. I think you should be careful of those nobles from other worlds. I suspect they are planning something after the repeated humiliation they endured during the banquet."

"That man, Veron, might be a troublesome snake. I can see that he is the type who bides his time and strikes when others are unprepared. I hope that you will be careful after I leave."

Hearing this, Patriarch Geodard and Alric smiled.

"We have already anticipated that, Your Majesty. That is why since the banquet, we have not truly relaxed and have remained wary of anything that snake might throw at us. However, I doubt that he will act openly. He is likely targeting us or even Your Majesty, but he will not simply barge in with other families and fight us to the death or something like that," Alric said.

Aldrian nodded. "I see. Then my worries are unnecessary. I only warned you just in case—"But then he suddenly stopped speaking and closed his eyes for a moment, which made the others wonder what Aldrian was doing.

After a few seconds of silence, Aldrian finally opened his eyes and looked at Patriarch Geodard.

"Does your family have any hidden pseudo immortal stage cultivators disguised as gardeners, guards, or maids?"

The two brothers were stunned, but then they shook their heads.

"No. All of our pseudo immortal stage cultivators are already known, and there is no one we ordered to disguise themselves as the mansion's staff," Patriarch Geodard answered and then he narrowed his eyes.

"What's the matter, Your Majesty?"

He knew that Aldrian would not bring up such a topic without reason.

"Is that so? Then I am afraid your mansion has uninvited guests. There are several people with pseudo immortal stage cultivation disguised as members of the mansion's staff. I can sense them..." Aldrian then stated their exact cultivation levels, their professions, where they were located, and even their appearances.

Patriarch Geodard and Alric were astonished. They instantly understood that there were intruders within their mansion. They did not doubt Aldrian's words, as he had no reason or benefit to speak nonsense.

They did not know how Aldrian knew all of this, but they believed that this was why he had suddenly closed his eyes earlier.

He must have used some kind of vision technique that made it impossible for anyone to hide from his senses.

But that meant there was a party daring enough to infiltrate this place, and they had done so without them even knowing. With how they managed to infiltrate the mansion and with cultivations at such a high level, Patriarch Geodard and Alric knew they were not simple individuals.

Now they felt irritated. After all, they had just said that they were wary of any plots from those powers, yet intruders had already appeared on their own turf.

They felt ashamed, but Patriarch Geodard released a long breath to calm himself.

"I see. Thank you for informing us, Your Majesty. As for the rest, let us take care of it. Judging from their cultivation levels, I believe we need some preparation to capture them," he said.

Aldrian smiled and nodded. "That would be for the best. If they truly have ill intent, it will be a bloodbath given how strong they are."

"Anyway, I think that is all. Until next time, gentlemen," Aldrian said, before he and his group disappeared.

Patriarch Geodard and Alric sighed after their departure, but then they frowned and looked at each other.

"Were those infiltrators sent by those bastards?" Patriarch Geodard asked.

"Maybe. But the fact that they infiltrated the mansion and seemed not to have done anything means they may be acting as spies or waiting for the right time to strike. Damn it. Just when we thought we were already wary of them," Alric replied in frustration.

"It is fine, Brother. With their cultivation and the ability to bypass our senses, that means they were truly prepared. However, they will not expect that we already know about their existence here," Patriarch Geodard said.

"For now, let us observe the targets first, and then we can catch them off guard," he added. Alric nodded in agreement.

On the other side of the mansion, there were two figures carrying out their duties without showing anything unusual. One was a gardener, and the other was a guard.

From the outside, there was nothing odd about them, and they appeared to be nothing more than ordinary staff members.

In truth, they were the cultivators Aldrian had mentioned earlier. They were disguised as staffs of Alfemin family and were concealing their real cultivation using artifacts.

At this moment, the gardener communicated with the other through voice transmission.

"Aldrian the Great is still in the room and has not left yet."

"I see. Keep reporting. If there is any indication that he will use a cruiser or an interstellar vessel, inform me immediately. We will begin the operation then," the guard replied before moving further away from the gardener.

The gardener continued with his work, completely oblivious to the fact that he and the other infiltrators had already been exposed.

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Chapter 982 - 982: Familiar Place, Familiar Sensation

[1,592 words]

Aldrian already appeared on his palace's grounds, and it made the three ladies smile as they finally came home. They had experienced many things in the Blue Pearl World, most of them being pleasant memories.

Still, home was the best place for them.

Sylphia then looked toward Aldrian.

"Thank you, love, for bringing us to the Blue Pearl World. That was really amazing."

"Yes, I am truly thankful that you brought us. It was truly an amazing experience," Baek Jimin also commented.

"Thank you for bringing me as well," Angelica followed.

Aldrian smiled at them. "No problem, ladies. This is not the last time we will do this. There will be another chance in the future for us to go together like this."

The three women nodded, but then Sylphia curiously asked Aldrian.

"By the way, what happened just now? How did you know there were intruders in the Alfemin family's mansion?"

"Well, if not for the fact that I accidentally sensed someone coming near the patriarch's room with the aura of a divine-grade artifact, I would not have known about it myself. When I checked, I discovered that the artifact was on the body of a maid who had middle pseudo immortal stage cultivation. At that moment, I instantly knew something was strange," Aldrian answered.

"I then instantly scanned the entire mansion's grounds and found several others with the same cultivation as hers, all using the same artifacts."

Sylphia and the others were astonished.

"All of them have divine-grade artifacts? Isn't that too extravagant just for infiltration? To think that there is someone who could casually provide several divine-grade artifacts just for an infiltration," Baek Jimin commented, but then she narrowed her eyes.

"But if that is the case, isn't that dangerous for the Alfemin family? They have divine-grade artifacts," she added.

Aldrian was still smiling. "Don't worry. They can still take care of them. Those divine artifacts' main function is only to hide their cultivation and presence, to the point that even pseudo immortal cultivators cannot detect them. As long as Patriarch Geodard and Sir Alric are prepared, they can catch them without causing much destruction."

The others understood and nodded. If Aldrian said so, then they truly could handle the intruders.

Aldrian then walked toward his parents, whom he could sense near the Tree of Life. He could also sense Celestina there.

While they walked, Ao Tianhai looked at his surroundings with amazement.

For Ao Tianhai, who was stepping into this place for the first time, he was stunned by the sudden change in sensation that brushed over his body the moment he teleported here.

He was truly astonished as he observed his surroundings, because what he sensed from this place was rich divine energy.

This made his heart tremble, because the amount of divine energy here could support even his level of cultivation.

But then, after only a few moments of observation, he began to feel a sense of recognition toward the place, before realization struck him.

'Is this the palace of the Absolute Ruler?' he thought.

The palace was located in the Highest Heaven and was said to be the place where the Absolute Ruler lived in the past.

He had visited the palace of the Absolute Ruler before, so he could not help but feel nostalgic. He wondered whether someone had brought the entire palace down to the First Heaven.

Another thing that astonished him was the sensation that made his soul tremble and resonate with something located nearby.

He could sense that something deep underground was causing his soul to feel an instinctive sense of worship. This feeling was something he recognized well, as he had experienced it many times in the past.

It was the feeling he felt when he was near the peak existence among dragons, a being that many dragons regarded as their god.

The Dragon God, Long Shentian.

However, Ao Tianhai could also sense another presence, and he was able to identify it as well.

'This is the Phoenix God, Goddess Feng Xuanyan.'

He took a deep breath to calm himself. Were they still alive and living here together with the Absolute Ruler? He could not help but suddenly feel nervous.

'Your Majesty, is Lord Long Shentian and Goddess Feng Xuanyan staying in this place? I can sense their presence,' he sent a voice transmission to Aldrian.

Aldrian slightly paused his steps before he continued.

'They are no longer with us.'

Ao Tianhai's body trembled for a moment, and he instantly understood what that meant. Their Dragon God was no more.

He had already disappeared from existence.

This information was like lightning striking his heart, making his body turn cold.

However, a moment later, fury surged within his heart, as this must have been caused by those invaders. Then sadness followed, because the dragons had lost the existence that could be called their lord, their leader, and their god.

Even if all dragons of that era regarded Aldrian as a god above all gods, the one with the highest authority who ruled over all beings and the cosmos, Long Shentian was still considered the true god of the dragon race.

All dragons came into existence because of him, so they would naturally feel a deep resonance and connection to his presence.

Long Shentian was the god who became the starting point of their race and led them along the path of glory. Moreover, as one of the five divine overlords under the Absolute Ruler, the Dragon God was an existence they could take pride in.

Hearing that his god was no more, Ao Tianhai truly wanted to cry, but he held it back. His eyes had already grown moist as he looked at Aldrian's back, wanting to say something about this matter. However, before he could speak, Aldrian sent a voice transmission to him.

"I will avenge him. You don't have to worry. I will not disappoint you or anyone. This has been my vow for a long time."

Ao Tianhai was slightly stunned, but then his expression turned firm as he instantly wiped away his tears.

If Aldrian had already said it like that, then there was nothing he needed to say anymore. He believed what Aldrian had said, and he had always been taught by his parents and elders to treat every word from the Absolute Ruler seriously.

Sylphia and the others could sense that the atmosphere had slightly changed, but they did not know what it was. They simply kept walking until they reached the Tree of Life, where they could see Aldrey, Irene, Celestina, and Sylvia.

When Ao Tianhai saw the Tree of Life, his eyes slightly widened.

'Isn't that... isn't that the Tree of Life that grows near the Heavenly Tree of the World? The tree personally protected by Goddess Seralis?'

He had visited the Heavenly Tree of the World twice in the past, so naturally he was familiar with the Tree of Life. There was no tree like it, so there was no way he could mistake it for something else. It was said that the Tree of Life only grew in that place, and that only one existed.

He was truly surprised that he could see that tree here, in the First Heaven.

However, if that tree was here, then the only possibility he could think of was that Goddess Seralis had moved it here in order to prevent it from falling into the invaders' hands.

When he was sealed inside the time-stopping formation, he had no knowledge of the fate of many people or what they had been doing.

This was one of the matters he did not know, which was why he was so surprised to see the Tree of Life here.

Ao Tianhai then shifted his focus toward Aldrian's family.

Celestina, who was already a year old, could stand, and with her unsteady steps she tried to follow Sylvia. The spirit of the Tree of Life also liked to play with her and happily entertained the adorable Celestina. Aldrey and Irene watched over them with smiles on their faces.

As Aldrian and the others approached, they were finally sensed and the group turned to look at him and the others. However, just like many before them, their gazes shifted toward Ao Tianhai. His tall and firm build, along with the dragon horns on his head, was truly conspicuous.

Still, despite their curiosity, Sylvia dashed toward Aldrian and instantly hugged him. Aldrian smiled and hugged her back as he continued walking toward his parents.

Celestina, who had also seen her elder brother arrive, tried to walk toward him. With her still unsteady steps and outstretched hands, she tried to reach Aldrian as quickly as possible.

Aldrian, who found it adorable, could not wait to hug his little sister, so he made her float and pulled her toward him. Celestina was truly happy and giggled as she flew, before finally landing in his embrace.

With both children in his arms, Aldrian greeted his parents.

"Father, Mother."

Aldrey and Irene smiled.

"You have already come back? How was your journey there?" Irene asked as she also looked at Sylphia and the others.

"Magnificent. We truly enjoyed our time, Mother," Sylphia answered.

"Aldrian brought us to many beautiful places, and we truly enjoyed it," Baek Jimin followed, while Angelica only nodded in agreement.

Irene nodded with a smile and then finally looked at Ao Tianhai with curiosity.

"And he is...?"

"Let me introduce him, Mother, Father. His name is Ao Tianhai, and he will be with us from now on. I have accepted him as one of my subordinates," Aldrian replied.

Irene and Aldrey raised their eyebrows and looked at Ao Tianhai once again. Before they could say anything, Ao Tianhai suddenly bowed deeply to them.

"Ao Tianhai greets Your Majesties, the parents of the Great Emperor. It is my honor to meet you," he said with full reverence, which left Aldrey and Irene stunned.

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Chapter 983 - 983: Surprise

[1,610 words]

Aldrey and Irene were stunned. They did not expect the sudden bow from Ao Tianhai, but Irene quickly spoke to him.

"Please rise. Just act more casual. You do not have to be overly formal in front of us, as you will be staying with us from now on. Moreover, you are my son's subordinate. He is your boss, not us."

Ao Tianhai slightly raised his head.

"How could I do that, Madam? His Majesty's family is also important to me. I will give respect worthy of the family of the great emperor," he said with a firm expression.

Aldrian then took a step forward.

"Just let him be, Mother. He is the type who is serious about his work and has his own rules. He might be rigid about it, but please do not mind it. He is glad to do this, as he considers it his pride."

"His Majesty is correct, Madam. This is my pride, to serve His Majesty and everything related to him. Please do not feel too bad," Ao Tianhai said, supporting Aldrian.

Irene sighed. "Alright, if you say so."

Aldrian then told Ao Tianhai to look around the palace to become more familiar with it. As the strongest being under him at this moment, Aldrian had already decided to place Ao Tianhai as one of his main forces, the force he would likely rely on the most for now.

Because of his strength and the fact that he was an actual divine being, Ao Tianhai was more appropriate to stand alone as an independent force without anyone beside him. With Ao Tianhai's existence, it truly boosted the power of his currently small forces.

Now he had the Dark Saber Group, the Thunderous Shadow Group, and also Xin Haotian.

Xin Haotian, as his only knight at this moment, would lead his own knight order in the future, and that knight order would become one of his main forces. However, he needed to wait for Xin Haotian to reach at least = pseudo Immortal Establishment stage before Xin Haotian could truly be someone he could depend on.

Because many of his enemies were always high ranking cultivators, he needed Xin Haotian to reach that level so that Xin Haotian could truly help him.

Thankfully, Xin Haotian was a genius among geniuses, and his cultivation technique, which originated from the God of Light, was truly compatible with him.

At this moment, he had already reached peak Emperor stage and was already nearing a breakthrough into pseudo Immortal Foundation stage. It was truly an amazing cultivation speed.

With him also supporting Xin Haotian's cultivation using abundant resources, Xin Haotian's cultivation speed became faster than ever.

In fact, all of his forces were also getting stronger much faster after they received his self-created cultivation technique. With that cultivation technique and abundant resources, their cultivation speed had also increased greatly.

While Ao Tianhai took a look around the palace, Aldrian spent his time with his family.

After two weeks of spending his time outside the world, it was finally family time with his own blood family.

Time quickly flew by, and another four months had already passed. During these months, Aldrian spent most of his time in the Ancient Blue Gate World.

Besides doing his usual activities, meeting with many people, building connections, observing his domain, and cultivating his comprehension, he was also preparing for a day he had already been waiting for.

The day of his wedding with Baek Jimin.

He had already told the leaders of the major territories to spread the announcement of his wedding with Baek Jimin across the continent, which would be held next week.

He did all of that without Baek Jimin knowing.

At this moment, while all territories were spreading the news of his wedding, Aldrian himself brought Baek Jimin to the place where they had declared their love to each other in the past, the Valley of the Promise.

The sun had already half sunk below the horizon, creating beautiful orange and purple hues in the sky. Half of the sky had also already turned dark, revealing countless stars and a moon that was preparing to replace the sun.

Aldrian hugged Baek Jimin from behind as they enjoyed the scenery. There was only silence between them, a silence full of serenity and romantic feeling.

"How beautiful," Baek Jimin said softly, and Aldrian nodded.

She then turned her head to look at Aldrian's side profile and smiled. "But still, I wonder why you brought me here this time. Is there something that I don't know?"

Aldrian kept smiling and turned to look at her. "What do you think?"

Baek Jimin then thought for a moment. "Let's see. This is not my birthday, and not yours. Today is not a celebration of any big day. Hmm..." Her expression showed deep thought, but then she shook her head.

"I give up. I couldn't think of anything."

Aldrian, who kept his smile, then suddenly stretched his hand toward the sky. Baek Jimin also looked in the direction his hand was stretched toward.

Suddenly, on the dark side of the sky, countless glimmers of "new stars," much brighter than the others, appeared.

Baek Jimin's eyes glimmered at how beautiful it was, but then her eyes narrowed as she realized that the new stars were forming a shape.

After focusing more, her eyes widened as she finally saw what the shape was, and she turned to look at Aldrian. Her expression turned touched, and tears welled in her eyes.

In the sky, the words "Will you marry me?" were formed by countless stars. At this moment, if people in the Demon Territory focused on the sky, they would also realize the appearance of those words.

Unfortunately, only a few people noticed this as they looked at the sky, and it made them wonder if this was Aldrian's doing.

That was the first thought that came to their minds, showing how deeply Aldrian's figure was embedded in their hearts.

Everything extraordinary that happened beyond their understanding must be Aldrian's doing.

This also coincided with the news of their emperor's wedding, which further strengthened their belief.

The only one who knew what had truly happened was Sect Master Baek, who at this moment was looking at the sky with a smile.

Aldrian had already told her about his plan much earlier.

She could not help but think how romantic Aldrian was and felt glad that her precious daughter had a man like him. She also could not help but think of her late husband at this moment, as he had been just as romantic as Aldrian in the past.

Returning to the two lovers, Baek Jimin had already shed her tears and hugged Aldrian tightly. Aldrian smiled warmly, hugging her tenderly while stroking her long white hair.

Her body trembled as she wiped her tears with his clothes, and he simply let her do so.

"I already planned our wedding for next week, and I have already told everyone to prepare. I wanted to give you a surprise. Oh, well, it looks like my surprise is working," Aldrian said in a joking tone.

Baek Jimin softly hit Aldrian's chest. "Of course it's working. I have already been waiting for this moment. To think that you had already planned this far ahead, I'm really surprised." She then lifted her head, showing her tear-filled eyes to him.

"You really got me, doing all of this without me knowing." Aldrian wiped her tears, and she smiled through them.

"Of course I will marry you. Am I crazy for not marrying you after everything that we have been through?" she said with a slight sulking tone. Baek Jimin then hugged her again.

"I love you. I love you so much."

Aldrian hugged her tightly. "I love you too."

The two lovers continued hugging each other for a few moments until the sun finally sank, and the night sky completely replaced the light of the sun.

In the darkness of the night, with the only sources of light coming from the moon and the stars, Baek Jimin's hair looked like snow against the darkness. Aldrian continued stroking that smooth hair, mesmerized by its beauty.

However, while he was still enjoying her warmth and her hair, he suddenly felt his body being pushed to the ground by her. He allowed himself to fall as she also put her body weight on him. As he fell, he wrapped his arms around her to protect her from the impact.

Thud!

Aldrian lay on the ground with Baek Jimin in his embrace and blinked a few times. He looked at her as she then sat on top of him. Her eyes, which had already dried from her tears, were now showing a sensual gaze instead.

Aldrian raised his eyebrows, and before he could say anything, he felt her hand touch his crotch, which surprised him.

With a sensual smile, she spoke to him.

"All of these emotions make me want to show you how much I love you. What else could I do at this moment besides giving you my special service?"

Baek Jimin suddenly felt her hand brushing against something hard, and rising as if challenging her. Sensing this, her smile grew even more sensual, and Aldrian also smiled, though his smile turned naughty.

"Then I want to see how your service performs," he said.

What followed after that was an intense battle in which Baek Jimin tried to dominate. Unfortunately for her, Aldrian was far too strong for her to overwhelm alone, and in the end, she was the one who was dominated instead.

The domination, filled with unrestrained erotic moans and slapping sounds, echoed through the area, as if both of them wanted to relive the memory of the first time they had united in this very place.

They truly released all of their desire and passion toward each other, further strengthening their bond and love.

Time continued to pass, and finally, the wedding day of Aldrian and Baek Jimin arrived.

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Chapter 984 - 984: The Second Wedding 1

[1,671 words]

On this joyous day of Aldrian and Baek Jimin's wedding, people had already decorated many places across the continent, just like during Aldrian's wedding with Sylphia. The busiest people at this moment were those of the demon territory, especially those in the Thorny Flower Garden.

Aldrian and Baek Jimin's wedding would be held in the Thorny Flower Garden sect, the place Baek Jimin came from.

The Thorny Flower Garden and its nearest city, Blooming Flower City, were becoming busy like never before, with many visitors who wanted to attend the wedding. This was also the first time many leaders of the orthodox cultivators were visiting the territory of an unorthodox cultivator.

Figures such as King Durand, King Herman, and King Raymond could be seen passing through the streets of the city in carriages, heading toward the Thorny Flower Garden sect. There were also groups from King Ladwin with his elven entourage, followed by the dwarves from the Forgeheart Kingdom.

In the past, such a spectacle would have been impossible, but now many people thought that this kind of scene was no longer something special. Since Aldrian united the entire continent, the orthodox and unorthodox cultivators had become more amicable than in the past. Their leaders also sometimes met with one another to solve problems that arose across the continent.

Although past sentiments could not be easily erased from everyone's heart, at least they were no longer shown openly as they had been before. Many understood that what they needed was unity rather than disharmony, especially after everything they had gone through since Tarius' attempt to descend.

The visitors were not only from the Aster Empire itself but also from outside.

Those who had close relationships with Aldrian, such as Emperor Rozwald, the Dragon King, and the Phoenix Queen, also came.

The three sect masters of the three great sects of the Central Continent had arrived as well. Sect Master Baek Sujin, the sect master of the Thorny Flower Garden of the Central Continent, was someone who had visited this place before, and at this moment, she looked outside from her carriage.

Sect Master Baek Sujin's gaze was calm, without showing any expression, but for the female retainer who sat across from her, she knew that her sect master's mood was really good.

The retainer smiled. "Does this marriage really make you that happy, Sect Master? I could sense your good mood since this morning."

Sect Master Baek Sujin continued looking outside as she opened her lips. "Of course I'm happy. Our sect's branch will have a direct connection with Aldrian the Great. Even if we put aside his strength and his status as emperor, his position as the successor of the Heavenly Demon is already enough for him to be placed as the highest authority among demon cultivators."

"For someone like him to marry one of us, and for that person to also be the one who comprehended the Heavenly Demon's Flower Scripture, it strengthens our standing among the three great sects and other powers, even if the one who married him is only from our branch."

The retainer nodded in understanding. Even though the three great sects lived in an amicable relationship, there was still rivalry between them.

As the three great sects had long histories and were built by ancestors who have close connections with the Heavenly Demon, it was inevitable for rivalry to exist.

Although many agreed that the Piercing Heaven Sect was the strongest sect, that did not mean the others would simply sit and look up to them. They also made their own efforts to strengthen their sects' power so they would not lag behind or lose their relevance.

With Aldrian the Great marrying a member of the Thorny Flower Garden, even if it was only a branch, it would still give the main sect a boost in its standing among the three great sects.

"But Sect Master, with Aldrian the Great being the successor of the Heavenly Demon, some people will undoubtedly see the Piercing Heaven Sect as united with us through marriage, or perhaps even think that they are dominating us," the retainer said.

Sect Master Baek nodded. "Maybe that's true, but that would only apply to a very small number of people. Those who know Aldrian the Great's status as the successor of the Heavenly Demon are few, and most of them are sect higher-ups."

"They must also know that despite Aldrian the Great becoming the successor of the Heavenly Demon, he does not have a deep relationship with the Piercing Heaven Sect. Although he comprehended the Heavenly Demon Scripture, from what I heard, he does not really have much communication with those from the Piercing Heaven Sect."

"The only connection he has with them is that he comprehended the Heavenly Demon Scripture, that's all. So in the end, we are the ones who will benefit the most, as Aldrian the Great has a much deeper connection with the Thorny Flower Garden. In fact, I even believe that he spends most of his time with members of our sect's branch compared to members of the Piercing Heaven Sect."

The retainer nodded again. What Sect Master Baek Sujin said was true, and the retainer also looked outside.

In the end, in the eyes of Sect Master Baek Sujin, this marriage was not only a show of love between two people, but also an opportunity to strengthen the Thorny Flower Garden.

Time continued to pass, and as the sun climbed higher, more visitors arrived, and the streets grew increasingly crowded.

Inside the Thorny Flower Garden sect, the sect had already opened its grounds to accommodate the many guests. Those entering the sect's grounds were only special guests whose identities had been confirmed, whether nobles or commoners who were acquaintances of the bride or the groom.

This wedding also became another opportunity for those who could not attend Aldrian's wedding with Sylphia. Some new faces that had not been seen at Aldrian's wedding with Sylphia could be seen here.

Sect Master Baek Hayoon was, at this moment, greeting many people who offered her their congratulations. Her expression was full of smiles as she greeted every person who came to her and offered their congratulations.

"Congratulations, Sect Master, on your daughter's wedding, and on having His Majesty as your son-in-law," one of the patriarchs of a large family said to Sect Master Baek.

"Thank you, Patriarch Murong. You may take a seat inside the hall so you can see the reception clearly," Sect Master Baek replied.

As time continued to pass and the guests showed no sign of stopping their arrival, the moment finally came for the reception to begin.

"Ladies and gentlemen, the wedding ceremony will begin. Those standing on the red carpet, please move to the sides so the bride and groom's path will not be blocked," one of the members of the Thorny Flower Garden sect announced.

The atmosphere, once full of chatter, instantly quieted. The people standing on the red carpet began to make way, carefully clearing the path.

"Thank you for your cooperation, ladies and gentlemen. Now, let us start the procession."

Bong! Bong! Bong!

Suddenly, the loud sound of tanggu drums resounded, followed by other musical instruments, creating a festive and celebratory atmosphere.

"First, let us greet our empress today. The bride will arrive at the main gate shortly."

As the musical instruments continued to play, the people who were only able to stand outside the sect's main grounds saw a long line of an entourage emerge from the sect's other entrance. The distance from the sect's main gate was quite far.

In the middle of the entourage was a red carriage pulled by four horned horses. The people knew that this carriage must be carrying Baek Jimin, as they could see the silhouette of a veiled woman inside.

The entourage presented a form of entertainment along the way, with some dancing and most of them playing music throughout the journey to the main gate. After a journey that lasted more than twenty minutes, the carriage finally stopped right in front of the sect's main gate.

Members of the entourage then opened the curtain covering the carriage, revealing the figure of a woman stepping down with their assistance.

The moment the crowd saw the bride, they were truly mesmerized by her beauty. Baek Jimin wore an all-red robe, with a transparent red veil covering her hair and face.

Her white hair beneath the veil created a striking contrast that further enhanced her charm as a beauty with white hair.

At this moment, there was no one like her.

Under the veil, Baek Jimin showed a smile as she began to walk along the red carpet alone. She truly felt happy at this moment, and since earlier, she had been holding back her tears.

The red carpet led her toward the hall, where she and Aldrian would formally tie their fates together as husband and wife.

Once she entered the hall, she could see many people that she knew, but her gaze focused toward the platform at the end of the hall. She could see her mother already sitting there, her expression looking as though she wanted to cry.

She could also see Aldrian's parents sitting on the same platform, in line with her mother. She could not help but imagine that if her father were still there with her, he would be beside her, escorting her to the platform.

Sect Master Baek, who had finally seen her daughter walking along the red carpet, felt that she could no longer hold back her tears. A tear fell from her right eye, which she quickly wiped away.

Besides feeling extremely happy for her daughter, she also imagined that if her husband were still there with them, he would be beside their daughter, escorting her to the platform.

For a moment, it was as if she could see her husband's silhouette beside Baek Jimin, wearing a smile, before it disappeared. She believed that her husband must be truly happy at this moment, even if his physical body was no longer with them.

Baek Jimin continued walking until she finally stepped onto the platform and stopped there.

"With the bride ready for the ceremony, let us now greet our emperor today, the groom," another announcement resounded.

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

Chapter 985 - 985: The Second Wedding 2

[1,491 words]

A moment after the announcement, from the distant sky, a carriage pulled by six flying horses approached the sect's grounds. This was the same carriage that he had always used in the past, including during his wedding with Sylphia.

He came in the same style as he had for his wedding with Sylphia. The carriage later landed right in front of the main gate, before the members of the sect opened the carriage's door.

A moment later, Aldrian's figure stepped down from the carriage, revealing himself to anyone across the continent who could see the wedding ceremony through the screens. Once again, they were mesmerized by his existence.

Different from his attire when he married Sylphia, at this moment, he wore a traditional red wedding robe that did not diminish his charm.

In fact, it increased his charm, giving him a kind of devilish allure that captivated anyone who saw him. His long red hair, combined with the red robe that fit his firm body, made him resemble a devilishly handsome villain stepping into the scene.

"To the brightest star and eternal light, we greet Your Majesty, the Great Emperor!"

Many people on the sect's grounds instantly shouted in unison and kowtowed in Aldrian's direction. Many people from outside the Aster Empire also bowed toward him.

"Rise," he said, and only then did they stop kowtowing and bow instead.

He started to walk along the red carpet until he finally entered the hall, where he could see Baek Jimin and all of her family members. Sylphia and Angelica sat below the platform, looking at him with happy expressions.

Celestina was in Sylphia's arms and also showed a happy expression. She wanted to go to him, but Sylphia kept holding her so she would not fall and would not disturb the ceremony. There were also other acquaintances of his in the hall.

Still, his focus was on his empress for today, Baek Jimin, who was already waiting for him on the platform.

He warmly smiled as he continued walking closer, and Baek Jimin also showed her beautiful smile to him. She almost could not help holding back her tears of happiness at this moment.

After Aldrian finally reached the platform and stood beside Baek Jimin, Sect Master Ryu suddenly walked from the side and onto the platform, stopping not far from the groom and the bride.

"From this moment, I will be the one guiding the wedding ceremony," he said as he looked at Aldrian and Baek Jimin. Aldrian nodded, signaling him to start.

Sect Master Ryu understood and turned to look at the guests again.

"For the wedding's main event, there is not much difference from the wedding procession we usually have among demon cultivators. The only thing that is different is that there will be a vow declaration by the groom and the bride later. Oh, and there will

also be a lecture from His Majesty, so be prepared," he said, which caused many people to become astonished.

Aldrian giving another lecture was something they could not let pass. The last time he gave a mass lecture, during his parents' wedding, it truly brought many benefits to the populace across the continent.

Many made breakthroughs in their cultivation, and many gained enlightenment. At that moment, the entire Aster Empire suddenly experienced a boost in overall strength. Geniuses also began appearing one by one because of the enlightenment they received.

Since that day, they had wondered when Aldrian would give another lecture, and finally, the time was here.

Those from outside the empire who had never heard Aldrian's lecture were also curious about it. They had already heard how his lectures could easily grant enlightenment to cultivators. They wondered whether this would also be the case for those in the Immortal Transition Realm.

As the atmosphere grew filled with anticipation, Sect Master Ryu continued.

"Now, let us start the main event," he said, then paused for a moment.

"First, bow toward the Heavenly Demon as the one who shaped us demon cultivators, the one who made it possible for us to gain strength through his knowledge."

After that, Aldrian and Baek Jimin looked upward and bowed once. For demon cultivators, the Heavenly Demon's position was the same as the heavens. That was why bowing toward the Heavenly Demon was the same as bowing toward the heavens.

"Second, bow toward the parents who raised you from infancy."

Aldrian and Baek Jimin then faced their respective parents and bowed. Sect Master Baek's tears kept flowing at this moment. Even though she kept wiping them away, they continued to flow, wetting her cheeks.

Baek Jimin also could not hold back her tears, and once again, she remembered her father.

Beside her mother was a vacant seat that would have been where her father sat if he were still here.

She could not help imagining that her father was there with them, sitting there with a touched expression.

At this moment, both she and Sect Master Baek imagined that their small family was complete. In this joyous moment, it showed just how happy they were.

After the bow, Sect Master Ryu continued.

"The third bow, bow toward each other, showing respect toward one another and a sign that they are ready to start their lives together."

Aldrian and Baek Jimin then faced each other with smiling expressions, despite Baek Jimin's eyes already being wet with tears. They bowed once before Sect Master Ryu continued.

"Next is the vow declaration from the groom and the bride," but then Sect Master Ryu hurriedly spoke again.

"Oh, and please brace yourselves for the heavens' reaction. We were truly given a shock the last time, so we had better be prepared this time."

Many chuckled and giggled upon hearing that, and those who had not experienced Aldrian's wedding with Sylphia felt confused.

However, although many laughed at the joke, they still prepared seriously for the heavens' reaction. They would not be caught off guard like last time.

A moment later, after Aldrian felt that everyone was ready, he lifted Baek Jimin's veil, revealing her beautiful face. He then declared his vow with a smile.

"I'm Aldrian Aster. I will always love you and cherish you, in better or worse, in richer or poorer, in sickness and in health until death do us part. Even if you leave me, I will pursue you. If I ever lose my affection for you, I would kill myself before that happens."

For those who heard his vow for the first time, they were shocked by how extreme it was, but Aldrian was still not finished yet.

"I swear upon the heavens, with the entire universe as my witness, that if I ever leave my wife unjustly, stop loving her, or treat her badly, then the heavens may send their strongest tribulation as punishment and kill me on the spot. May the heavens and all the laws that make up the universe curse me for thousands of lives."

Rumble!

The heavens showed their reaction. Dark clouds manifested, followed by rumbling thunder, and the pressure began to descend.

Because the populace was already prepared, they reacted much better than during Aldrian's wedding with Sylphia. Aldrian also strengthened his domain to withstand the pressure from the heavens, protecting everyone, but mainly his family and Baek Jimin.

At this moment, because the wedding was held indoors, Aldrian further strengthened his domain so the pressure would not collapse the building. Baek Jimin, who stood in front of Aldrian, could sense the heavy pressure directed toward him.

She hugged him tightly as the aura from the heavens was truly terrifying, even though the pressure she felt was not as heavy as during his wedding with Sylphia.

No matter what, this was still the heavens, a force that shaped the laws of the entire universe.

If it reacted, she could not help but feel afraid.

The pressure continued for more than fifteen seconds before the dark clouds finally dissipated, revealing a clear sky once again.

The people sighed in relief as the atmosphere returned to normal, while those who experienced it for the first time thought that Aldrian was already crazy!

To think that Aldrian dared to go that extreme just for a woman!

Baek Jimin then separated from Aldrian, and finally, it was her turn to declare her vow.

"I'm Baek Jimin. I will always love you and cherish you, in better or worse, in richer or poorer, in sickness and in health until death do us part. Even if you leave me, I will pursue you. If I ever lose my affection for you, I would kill myself before that happens."

What she said was the same as Sylphia's vow.

However, next, she decided to be different and followed Aldrian instead.

"I swear upon the heavens, with the entire universe as my witness, that if I ever leave my husband unjustly, stop loving him, or treat him badly, then the heavens may send their strongest tribulation as punishment and kill me on the spot. May the heavens and all the laws that make up the universe curse me for thousands of lives."

The people raised their eyebrows, and many sighed while looking toward the sky. The pressure came again, and the dark clouds returned.

Again?

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Chapter 986 - 986: The Second Wedding 3

[1,565 words]

Aldrian, who heard Baek Jimin declaring the same vows as him, did not hesitate to once again strengthen his domain and protect her.

At this moment, the pressure and aura focused on her, which was very different from when she had merely stood near him earlier.

If he did not protect her, she would likely have been on her knees because of the pressure. He wanted to keep her dignity as one of his empresses, and he did not want her to feel embarrassed.

Aldrian hugged her body while he himself was also under the heavens' pressure, as he could see Baek Jimin enduring the terrible aura from the heavens that was now focused on her.

Despite her being one of his women, but because he had already asked the heavens to treat him as they would treat anyone who made an oath using the heavens, Baek Jimin also received the same treatment.

The populace across the continent once again felt the effect, but it was as if they were already used to it, and they reacted more prepared than earlier.

After the same amount of time as the previous heaven's reaction, the pressure disappeared and the dark clouds dissipated. The people could breathe in relief once again.

However, they wondered if Aldrian were to have more women in his harem in the future and marry them, would they always have to witness the heavens' reaction?

After the pressure was gone, Aldrian and Baek Jimin separated and smiled at each other. Baek Jimin's soul was still shaken because of the aftereffects of the heavens' aura, but she still felt happy because, at this moment, they were finally officially husband and wife.

Aldrian then grabbed her hand and gently stroked it.

"Ouff, that was still quite tense. Luckily, we already prepared for it," Sect Master Ryu suddenly said, which made the others chuckle.

"Anyway, those were truly romantic vows declared by the groom and bride, and their declaration is also a sign that they are now officially husband and wife. Congratulations to Your Majesty, Emperor Aldrian, and Empress Baek Jimin," he added.

A split second after Sect Master Ryu's announcement, the celebratory music resounded once again, further heightening the festive atmosphere. Many also celebrated it with cheering and clapping their hands.

Aldrian, who could sense the joyous atmosphere across the empire, allowed it to continue for a few moments before he spoke.

"Thank you for all of your support and for taking the time to join me in this joyous moment of my life. Now, I do not want to give nothing in return after all the support you have given me, so let me give you a gift. I hope that with this gift, it can help your lives in the future."

All the people who heard this turned ecstatic and knew that Aldrian was about to give his lecture.

"Now, please look for a comfortable place and take a meditation position. I will start my lecture shortly."

The populace across the continent then looked for places to sit for meditation. They did not care where it was, as long as they could concentrate and sit comfortably.

That was why, at this moment, across all places on the continent, people could be seen sitting in meditation. Whether it was on the streets, in plazas, inside buildings, on top of tree branches, and elsewhere.

Baek Jimin also sat beside Aldrian, as this lecture would also give her tremendous benefits. Aldrian swept his gaze over the guests while his domain sense spread across the continent, making sure that everyone was ready.

His gaze then shifted to Celestina, who was still in Sylphia's arms, before he made her float toward him. It was so Celestina would not disturb Sylphia during her cultivation later.

Sylphia released Celestina as the little child happily floated toward Aldrian.

Celestina then landed in his arms, instantly hugging his neck and giggling. He smiled warmly before looking at the guests once again.

"Then I will start." He then began his lecture about cultivation. His voice could be heard across the entire continent, and there was no one who did not hear it.

The voice itself was not spread solely because of the screens placed in many locations across the continent, but because Aldrian used his domain to spread his voice. Along with his voice, he also imbued it with sound laws and even hypnotic effects, allowing those who heard him to more easily fall into enlightenment state.

His lecture was about cultivation and the many elements comprehended by cultivators. He wanted to give great benefits to all cultivators, so he gave a lecture that also encompassed various elements.

As time passed, many entered enlightenment state, and later, some finally made breakthroughs in their cultivation.

The number of people making breakthroughs continued to increase, creating a spectacular scene as energy became quite chaotic in many places.

Those who broke through to the emperor stage instantly rose from their positions and moved toward deserted areas to undergo their heavenly tribulations.

Many were disturbed by the chaotic situation, which caused them to fall out of their enlightenment state, but they continued trying to meditate while listening to Aldrian's lecture.

Amazingly, those who were disturbed were able to enter enlightenment state again after continuing to hear Aldrian's lecture. This alone showed how Aldrian's lecture truly contained profound content and could easily hypnotize those who listened to it.

The lecture went on for more than seven hours before Aldrian finally stopped.

As many people opened their eyes and felt the changes within themselves, they were truly amazed. Without hesitation, they instantly kowtowed toward Aldrian's direction.

"Thank you for your lecture, Your Majesty!" they shouted in unison.

Even the leaders of various factions from outside of the Aster empire at this moment lowered their bodies to a level they had never lowered before as leaders of their organizations.

In front of the knowledge and enlightenment they had just received from Aldrian, they could not help but admire the depth and profundity of Aldrian's understanding of cultivation.

Even pseudo immortal stage cultivators benefited from the lecture, gaining new insights that they could use in the future. At their level, gaining insight or enlightenment was rare, as their comprehension and perspective on cultivation were already deep.

If they could gain enlightenment, then it was their fortune, and it could greatly boost their cultivation and comprehension in the future when they would break through to higher realms.

However, among the guests, there was one figure who, at this moment, felt confused after hearing the lecture.

That person was Randolph.

He had to admit that Aldrian's lecture was truly profound, so much so that he himself had gained enlightenment because of it.

He had already considered Aldrian to be an apostle of an unknown god, despite the many abnormal things about him that made Randolph unsure of Aldrian's true identity.

However, when Aldrian gave his lecture, he could not help but remember a time in the past when he had once had the chance to hear his god's lecture.

That was one of the best moments of his life as an apostle, and he could still remember how profound his god's knowledge was, to the point that he could not absorb all of the lecture.

He did not know why, but suddenly remembering that lecture, he could not help but compare it to Aldrian's.

The way Aldrian explained cultivation was more or less the same as his god.

Did Aldrian also once have the chance to hear his own god's lecture in the past?

That might have been the case, but giving a lecture was another matter entirely. If Aldrian himself was the one giving the lecture, then he had to have comprehended the content of the lecture himself in order to teach others.

From what Randolph felt, Aldrian had truly comprehended the content of his own lecture.

The thing was, he, Randolph, the apostle, found that he could not absorb all of Aldrian's lecture, just like when he had heard his god's lecture.

This astonished him.

He still could not absorb his god's lecture back then, but Aldrian seemed able to do so.

Just how great was Aldrian's comprehension ability?

'Or is he just like one of my wild guesses, that he might be the reincarnation of a god?' he thought solemnly.

Although he had never heard of something like a god's reincarnation becoming an apostle of another god, from his understanding, that might be possible if that god was willing to become another god's apostle.

That was only one of his wild guesses, born from how absurd Aldrian's strength and abilities were.

After the lecture just now, he simply could not help but feel that this possibility had increased.

'Uuhf, this is getting more complicated and dangerous.'

As Randolph pondered Aldrian's true identity, on the platform, Aldrian finally spoke.

"Rise. I hope that all of you could benefit from this lecture, and as you grow stronger, you can use your strength to do good for yourselves and also for your surroundings. That is all from me."

Bong! Bong! Bong!

The celebratory music resounded once again, and Aldrian and Baek Jimin could finally speak with their family and the guests. He conversed with many people as they came to congratulate him.

From his acquaintances to those he was seeing for the first time.

They also brought their gift that especially directed to Baek Jimin. They knew that to elevate their image, one of the ways was to please his woman.

If his woman was pleased, then he would be pleased as well.

The ceremony went on until the sun sank, and it completely concluded after the closing banquet.

After that, Aldrian and Baek Jimin finally entered their bridal chamber.

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

Chapter 987 - 987: Her Performance (R-18)

[1,550 words]

Aldrian princess carried Baek Jimin to their bed, which was already decorated with red ornaments. He carefully put her down on the bed and sat beside her on the edge while she lay there. Her smile, which at this moment was full of love, made Aldrian's heart flutter.

She stretched both of her hands as if she wanted a hug, but he knew that was not what she wanted. He lowered his head, approached her face, and kissed her lips.

She circled her arms around his neck as they continued kissing. Their kiss started warmly, showing their love for each other. As time passed, their kiss became much deeper and wilder, revealing their desire for one another.

They began using their tongues, trying to dominate each other's mouth. However, just like usual, Baek Jimin lost, and her mouth was dominated by Aldrian as his tongue wreaked havoc inside it. She could only try to serve his tongue inside her mouth as they danced together, giving both of them pleasure.

After kissing for several minutes, they finally separated, and Aldrian smiled at her.

"Don't you feel tired after all of that ceremony and those conversations? You really didn't get time to rest earlier, since people kept coming to you."

Baek Jimin also smiled. "Well, it's quite exhausting with people coming endlessly, but I'm really happy, so I didn't really think about it. And aren't you the same? I think you were even busier than me, with many people wanting to talk to you for a long time."

"Well, I'm already used to it, so I just treat it like normal daily activities. But you rarely receive that many people wanting to talk to you," Aldrian replied.

"That's true, but that is not enough to tire me out completely, so you don't have to worry," Baek Jimin answered.

"Is that so? Then let me confirm first whether what you said is true," he said as his hand moved as if he wanted to touch her breast. However, before he could touch her, she suddenly evaded him and put some distance between them.

He raised his eyebrows and watched as Baek Jimin stood up from the bed and smiled at him.

"Not now. Let me show you something first. I already prepared this for this moment," she said before walking toward the bathroom at the side of the room and entering it.

Aldrian smiled, wondering what Baek Jimin wanted to do. He let her do what she intended and waited for her.

After waiting for a few minutes, the bathroom door opened and Baek Jimin stepped out. Aldrian, who had been waiting in anticipation, slightly widened his eyes as he looked at Baek Jimin now.

She wore attire usually worn by dancers, revealing her belly and her long, sexy legs. She also wore a long, transparent white scarf, the same color as her hair, and a white veil that covered half of her face.

From the usual impression of a thorny flower, beautiful but able to hurt anyone who underestimated her, she now gave the impression of a succubus that would lure anyone with her charm before devouring their life.

With an elegant walk, she moved from the bathroom toward Aldrian. He did not take his eyes off her for even a second as he enjoyed every inch of her body's movement.

Baek Jimin then stopped not far from Aldrian and gave him a respectful bow.

"Jimin is here to serve my lord. I hope that my lord will like Jimin's performance."

Aldrian, who had already realized what she intended to do the moment he saw her costume, followed along.

"Go ahead. I would like to see your performance."

Baek Jimin nodded before taking out an information crystal. What she took out was a new model of information crystal that could display recordings on a large screen and produce sound so that multiple persons could watch or hear it together.

Baek Jimin placed it on the table not far from them before activating it. The information crystal suddenly released the sound of a guqin, and Baek Jimin also began to move her body.

She moved with a slow tempo at first, but every movement was truly elegant, allowing him to enjoy the dance without any naughty thoughts, only admiration for her performance.

Her movements followed the music perfectly, forming what looked like pure art in his eyes. From the sound of the guqin alone, he knew that the one playing it was no ordinary person.

He could sense the skill of the performer, and whoever this person was, they had mastered both the guqin and sound laws.

Even though it was only a recording, the sound of the guqin still guided his emotions with its melody. Combined with Baek Jimin's dance, the result made it impossible for him to focus on anything other than her.

At this moment, the only things that existed were her figure and the music that accompanied her dance.

As time passed, her movements became faster and more complex. Thanks to the large room, she could perform freely without worrying about hitting any furniture.

Her movements slowly changed from elegant to inviting, as if trying to allure him. They became more sensual, as though she was deliberately showing her curves more clearly. Her dance now focused on displaying her belly and legs, along with arm movements that made her even more alluring.

He truly did not expect Baek Jimin to be able to dance like this, and watching her stirred his desire. Beneath his robe, his arousal was already obvious, forming a tent at his crotch.

His imagination ran wild as he thought about how he would pierce her with his sword, a sword that would make her cry out in pleasure.

Baek Jimin, who was still dancing, noticed Aldrian's reaction, seeing how his robe had clearly risen at his crotch. She smirked as she realized her performance was working, and she could not help feeling proud and pleased.

Still, she did not stop and continued dancing.

After dancing for more than twenty minutes, the sound of the guqin finally stopped, and the dance came to an end at the same time. Her final movement returned to elegance, and after that, she bowed respectfully to Aldrian.

"I hope that my lord liked my performance."

Aldrian truly wanted to take Baek Jimin right there and then after holding himself back until the dance finished. However, he thought that this was still not the time.

She had already played her role seriously, so now it was his turn to play his. He showed a smile and spoke to her.

"I like your performance. It was truly excellent, but seeing your performance just now really made me realize that I am still not satisfied. I think it would be better if you did another kind of performance to satisfy me. You know what I mean, right?" he said as he slightly bent his body backward, as if intentionally showing the tent formed at his crotch.

Baek Jimin blushed when she saw the tent at his crotch and lowered her head. Her behavior truly made her look like a shy woman who had come to perform in front of a noble.

Aldrian could not help but think that Baek Jimin's acting was truly good, as if she were an innocent woman who had stepped into a tiger's mouth, ready to be devoured.

After a few moments of silence, Baek Jimin finally walked toward Aldrian and stood in front of him. She looked at the tent at his crotch for a few moments before kneeling down and slowly beginning to open his pants.

Aldrian let her take off his pants on her own, and after a few moments, she finally freed his sword. It was already hardened, and she could clearly see the bulging veins on its surface.

Baek Jimin blushed deeply and slightly lowered her gaze, which caused her eyes to fall on his balls instead.

She lowered her head further, yet she still slowly reached out and touched the sword. Her fingers wrapped around the hilt, and she could feel it throb in her hand. She began to stroke it slowly, then glanced up at Aldrian's face.

She saw that he was enjoying her touch, his eyes closed and his breathing growing uneven. Seeing his reaction, she quickened her movements, and it became even clearer how much he enjoyed it.

He hissed and released a sigh of pleasure as she continued stroking, until he opened his eyes and smiled at her.

"Use your mouth. I want to feel it," he said.

Baek Jimin blushed even more, but she still obeyed. She opened her veil and parted her lips before, without hesitation, taking his cock in one motion. The wet, enveloping sensation immediately overwhelmed his cock, making his expression twist with intense pleasure.

She gobbled his sword and licked it with her tongue inside her mouth while moving up and down. From her technique and how smooth her movements were, it was obvious that she was already used to it.

Aldrian grabbed Baek Jimin's head as she continued pleasuring him, sucking his cock as if it were candy.

At times, she released his sword and licked it from the base of the hilt to the tip before swallowing it again.

The constant change in techniques gave Aldrian many kinds of pleasure, and he truly enjoyed it.

After a few minutes of blowjob, Aldrian finally could not hold back anymore and pulled Baek Jimin toward him.

"Ah," she yelped as he made her lie down on the bed.

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Chapter 988 - 988: The Pleasure in Bridal Chamber (R-18)

[1,582 words]

Aldrian's gaze lingered on Baek Jimin's face after he laid her on the bed, making her feel shy. His gaze then moved to her neck, then to her breasts. His glance kept traveling downward to her belly.

Her body was glistening with sweat from her dance performance. He smiled at her before kissing her lips, and at the same time, both of their attire disappeared.

Baek Jimin instantly felt the cold air against her body as she became naked, but she did not feel too cold because the heat of the situation overwhelmed her senses.

He kissed her, and she kissed him back. She hugged his head while one of his hands began to play with her breasts. He grabbed and stroked them before teasing her nipple. He pinched it, making her moan into his mouth.

"Mngh, my lord," she mumbled between their kisses.

He did not answer. Instead, he continued playing with her breasts for a few more minutes before moving his hand down toward her slit. He could sense that she was already wet from all the stimulation she had felt earlier. Her entrance seemed ready to receive his cock.

His cock was already screaming to quickly enter the place where it belonged, but he held himself back as he still wanted to kiss her while stimulating her more.

He finally inserted his finger into her pleasure hole and started to play with it.

After a while, he stopped kissing her so she could moan freely and he could hear her ecstatic moan.

"Angh, my lord."

Aldrian smiled and then sucked on her neck while he kept fingering her, then slowly moved lower toward her breasts. He kissed both of them before sucking on one nipple.

"Aahh." She moaned the moment he sucked her nipple hard while continuing to finger her. The attacks from both sides made her feel like she was going crazy as the pleasure became quite intense.

The way he sucked her tits was as if he were trying to draw milk from them.

This was one of his favorite parts of his women.

After tormenting her with the assault on her two fronts, he finally released her nipples, letting them free, while his lips continued to move downward.

He stopped fingering her, allowing her to catch her breath as the pleasure paused.

But she felt a tingling sensation in her pleasure hole and she wanted Aldrian to play with it again.

Aldrian did not make her wait long. His lips reached her belly, kissing it repeatedly before moving lower until he finally reached her slit. The moment it came into his view, he admired its shape for a brief moment, but his sight was soon blocked by Baek Jimin's hand.

"No, don't look, my lord," she said in embarrassment.

Aldrian smiled, took her hand, kissed it, and gently moved it aside.

"Why are you shy to show such a beautiful shape?" He said before kissing her slit, making her body tremble.

She was already wet there, and she could no longer wait for Aldrian to pierce her, yet he continued to stimulate her like this, driving her crazy inside.

After kissing her slit, Aldrian slipped his tongue inside.

"Aah!" she moaned as the slippery object entered her hole, exploring within it. His tongue licked against her clitoris, nearly making her come, but she struggled to hold it back.

However, under the relentless assault of his tongue, she could no longer endure it and finally—

Spurt! Spurt! Spurt!

"Anghh!"

She came, her yin essence squirting onto Aldrian's face with considerable force. He closed his eyes as if enjoying the rain, and his hair becoming wet as well.

After the squirt stopped, he brushed his hair back and smiled while looking at her face, which still appeared ecstatic after her climax.

Now, it was time for the main course.

He loomed above her, positioning his sword at her scabbard, ready to pierce it.

He smiled at her, and in Baek Jimin's eyes, his figure was reflected as he loomed above her.

Looking at his face, she could not help smiling, truly happy as she remembered once again that she had finally become his wife as of today.

She unconsciously opened her legs wider, the sensation at her slit telling her that this was the moment he would pierce her.

Aldrian did not wait any longer as he thrust in with full force.

Pak!

"Ahh!~"

He did not stop and continued thrusting.

Pak! Pak! Pak!

"Ah, agh ah aah ah~!"

Erotic squelching sounds mixed with sharp slapping noises resounded throughout the bridal chamber.

As he kept pounding, his gaze never left her face. He liked seeing her expression of pleasure, showing how much she was enjoying his cock. Her half-closed eyes and the way she stuck out her tongue with each thrust made him feel proud that he could make his woman wear such an expression.

As he continued thrusting, he leaned down and kissed her lips. The tongue that had just explored her pleasure hole now explored her mouth instead. Her moans were blocked by his lips, and with each thrust, the only sound that escaped was a muffled noise.

And of course, the squelching sound coming from her pleasure hole.

After pounding her many times, he released her lips, then kissed her neck while sucking on it, creating hickeys as if he wanted to leave marks showing that she was his woman. He kept moving downward and finally found her right nipple, sucking on it. He sucked it hard while continuing to thrust, making her moans grow louder.

"Aghh! My lord, agh! Slowly, angh, my lord~"

After sucking her right nipple, he moved to her left and sucked it as well. His focus was not only on her nipples but also on her breasts as a whole. He sucked their entire surface, leaving many hickeys across her breasts.

She felt like she was going crazy with the way Aldrian treated her tits, as if they were his baby pacifier.

Because of his repeated thrusts and the way he handled her breasts, she already felt like she was about to cum again. Aldrian could feel it too, and he himself was close to climaxing.

He quickened his thrusts and moved closer to her face.

"Receive my cum, Jimin," he whispered between his panting breaths.

"Ah, ah, yes my lord, ah, ah~"

His thrusts became faster and faster until he finally released his yang essence inside her womb.

Spurt! Spurt! Spurt!

She climaxed as well, her face contorting with extreme pleasure as if her soul were about to leave her body. Their yin and yang essences mixed inside her, struggling for space within her vagina due to its limited capacity.

Aldrian did not want to spill even a little, so he kept pushing his dick deeper to seal her hole. Her womb no longer had any room to contain the mixed yin and yang essence, causing it to become bloated.

However, slowly, his yang essence was absorbed by her body, while her yin essence was absorbed by his. Despite feeling the pleasure of ejaculation, Aldrian was still able to use his dual cultivation technique.

He looked at Baek Jimin's face and knew that she was still in the highest heavens, unable to circulate the dual cultivation technique they had comprehended together. That was why, at this moment, he helped her circulate the energy and absorb his yang essence into her body.

That's right.

He could move the energy inside her as if it were his own body, allowing her to cultivate even though she was not circulating her energy on her own.

For others, this kind of feat would be impossible. The flow of energy in each body cannot simply be controlled by another as if it were one's own. Forget controlling it to the point of making someone cultivate normally.

However, he could move Baek Jimin's energy within her body, making it seem as though she was cultivating by herself. If this were to spread, it would shock countless people.

But the thing was, it only worked when he united with his women. In other words, he could only do this when his cock was inside their vagina. The moment his dick entered them, it was as if his women opened all access to him, including their flow of energy.

He did not know why this was the case, but it truly helped him make his harem stronger. He knew that sometimes the pleasure would be unbearable, making his women unable to circulate their dual cultivation technique, and this method fixed that problem.

Although he also felt pleasure from ejaculation, he could still control the flow of energy in both of their bodies.

After cumming for almost a minute, Aldrian did not pull out immediately. Instead, he kept his dick buried inside her until all of the yin and yang essence within her womb was absorbed.

Only after it was emptied did he finally pull out.

"Ah~" Baek Jimin moaned weakly as she felt his sword slipping out of her scabbard. She felt weak after climaxing again and felt too lazy to move. However, she could sense a warm feeling flowing through her body, making her smile as she knew it must be Aldrian's energy rejuvenating her.

"Ah!" She yelped as her body was suddenly flipped by Aldrian, leaving her back facing him. She widened her eyes and looked back, where she could see his smiling face.

"Let's go for round two," he said.

"Wait, my lor—wait, Aldrian—" She did not get the chance to finish as Aldrian thrust into her from behind without hesitation.

She could only moan and receive his onslaught. Later, throughout the entire night, she could do nothing but receive his burning affection.

Tonight, Aldrian truly pampered her and gave her pleasure unlike anything she had ever felt before.

The love of a husband for his wife.

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Chapter 989 - 989: Open Recruitment

[1,465 words]

Aldrian and Baek Jimin stayed at the Thorny Flower Garden Sect for the next two days. As for his parents, they returned to the palace a day earlier than him.

While he and his harem stayed at the Thorny Flower Garden Sect, there was not much they did besides staying inside the sect or taking a stroll in some places across the demon territory.

When it was time for Aldrian to go back, Sect Master Baek sent them off.

"Take care of my daughter, Aldrian," she said.

"I will, Mother-in-law. You do not have to worry about her well-being. I will make sure to keep taking care of her," Aldrian replied.

Sect Master Baek nodded with a smile. "I did not doubt that you would do that." She then looked at Baek Jimin.

"Jimin, do not give Aldrian trouble. He is already busy, and instead you must always support him and help him."

"I will, Mother," Baek Jimin replied.

Sect Master Baek also said goodbye to Sylphia and Angelica before Aldrian teleported all of them back to the palace. After they arrived, Sylphia and Angelica instantly dragged Baek Jimin away from Aldrian, and Aldrian could only smile at their behaviors.

He then met with Ao Tianhai, who stayed at the palace throughout the wedding ceremony. If this guy attended the ceremony, he would undoubtedly attract a lot of attention. The spiritual beasts would likely be affected the most by his presence, especially the dragons.

The dragons would be affected by the presence of a dragon who had already reached the divine realm, even though Ao Tianhai was in a sealed state. His divine presence could not be hidden the moment he met with those dragons.

However, Aldrian wondered, between Ao Tianhai and the Dragon King, which one had the purer bloodline that was closer to Long Shentian if they were at the same cultivation level.

Ao Tianhai, the Storm Dragon, or the Dragon King, a dragon known as the Firestorm Dragon.

"Congratulations, Your Majesty, for the wedding. May Your Majesty and Empress Baek live a fulfilling life forever," Ao Tianhai said the moment he saw Aldrian.

Aldrian nodded with a smile. "Thank you for the congratulations."

"Your Majesty, I truly did not expect you to declare such extreme vows, and I was even more shocked when the heavens showed their reaction. Did the heavens change after all this time, to the point that they consider you just like any other being?" Ao Tianhai asked.

"Well, not really. I simply asked them not to give me any privilege at that time. I just wanted to show that I am not joking regarding my vow," Aldrian replied.

"I see," Ao Tianhai said, truly admiring both Aldrian and Baek Jimin for daring to declare such an extreme vow.

Even for him as a divine being, he would not recklessly declare vows that carried the name of the heavens.

As a divine being, the heavens would surely send harsh or even far more powerful punishment, one that could bring the entire universe's power down upon him if he somehow broke his vow. That would be catastrophic for any god.

Whatever the case, challenging the heavens would have consequences for any being.

After a few days of enjoying his time with his harem, Aldrian then continued with his own business.

Time kept passing, and a month had already passed since Aldrian's wedding. At this time, there was another matter that caused the entire continent to fall into an uproar and made many people journey to the region of the Eternal Sanctuary Forest.

A few days ago, Aldrian openly announced that he was opening recruitment for those who wanted to become his troops, or more specifically, his newly created knight order.

The moment he made the announcement, it caused an uproar, and many people instantly began their journey to the Eternal Sanctuary Forest to register.

The registration only opened in the cities inside the forest's region after all.

The requirements for the recruitment were quite simple. Everyone above the earl stage was eligible to join, and they had to be indigenous to the Aster Empire. They also must not have any affiliation with other parties.

Even if they were from noble families, they would have to sever their connections to their families entirely before they could attempt to register.

Millions of people instantly flocked to register themselves, which made the city officials quite overwhelmed. Moreover, Aldrian only gave three days for registration, which caused many to rush and nearly turned the situation into chaos.

Aldrian had to issue a stern warning toward anyone who caused chaos, which brought the situation under control.

Even so, the cities were still truly crowded with people who wanted to register.

On the last day of registration, the atmosphere became even more festive and crowded. At this moment, Aldrian was in his throne hall, receiving reports from an elder of the Xin family.

"As of now, the number of those who have registered is 3,546,212 people, with average cultivation at duke stage. Most of them were cultivators without any affiliation even before registering, while the rest have already severed their connections with their former parties. They come from noble families and some organizations outside of those families."

Aldrian nodded. "Alright, you may go back to your post."

"Yes, Your Majesty," the Xin family's elder replied before he left the throne hall.

Watching the elder leave, Aldrian then thought about tomorrow, when he would test those who had registered. He decided to establish his first knight order at this moment so they would have time to develop before he truly needed them in the near future.

He did not expect them to fight alongside him against an army like the one led by the Vampire King, as that would still be too much for them, and the time was far too short. According to his estimation, the Vampire King and his army would arrive within the next six to eight months.

The matter of the Vampire King and his army was his responsibility to handle, and he had already prepared something for that so-called one of the four overlords of the Central Region of Heaven.

His private troops would be used after he finally made the entire First Heaven his domain. He knew that with how vast the First Heaven was, he would need some time to clear it entirely of the invaders' influence. If he did it himself, it would take far longer.

Even with Ao Tianhai's presence, it was still not enough.

That was why he still needed his own troops that he could order anywhere across the heavens. With his troops taking care of one place while he handled the others, the work would be much faster.

With his cultivation-made techniques and all the resources he possessed, he would make sure that everyone who joined the knight order would grow stronger faster and become more powerful than others.

As he kept thinking about tomorrow's selection, he then saw Xin Haotian entering the hall. He was wearing knight armor bearing the symbol of the newly created knight order. The symbol showed a dragon and a phoenix intertwined, circling a sun that illuminated everything at the center.

With this kind of armor, he gave off a completely different vibe compared to his usual calm and elegant presence in robe.

Now he looked dashing, and there was an aura about him that made him truly powerful, causing others to think twice before looking for trouble with him.

Aldrian smiled at him. "How is the armor?"

It was a low divine grade armor, one of the treasures left behind by his followers. He had slightly modified it by adding the symbol of the new knight order. The armor suited Xin Haotian well, and it also accepted him.

"Good. This armor is truly light yet incredibly strong. There is nothing lacking in it. As expected of a divine grade artifact," Xin Haotian replied.

Aldrian nodded. "I'm glad you like it."

"Regarding the recruitment, how many will you accept as your troops this time? I expect it will not be much," Xin Haotian suddenly asked.

Aldrian nodded. "You are correct. I will only accept two hundred people for this recruitment. This is for the best of the best, after all. They will enter your knight order,

and you will lead them. After they officially enter the knight order, I will leave the rest to you to train them until they are ready. Could you do it?"

Xin Haotian slightly lowered his head. "I can, Your Majesty. Leave it to me."

"Good. I hope that in the next two or three years, I can see much stronger troops. I might need them at that time," Aldrian said, which made Xin Haotian raise his eyebrows.

"That is quite a short time to prepare. Are you planning to do something that requires the troops?"

"Yes. I will need them if everything goes according to my plan," Aldrian said, then looked upward.

"That will depend on the situation at that time. I might need them sooner or much later."

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Chapter 990 - 990: The First Test

[1,596 words]

On the next day, the registration was already closed. Many were still not registered, which left them disappointed, and Aldrian was firm with his schedule.

Those who managed to register felt glad that they were on time, but they could not feel relieved yet, as there was still a test ahead. They had heard that Aldrian would only accept hundreds of troops, so they knew that the competition would be fierce.

Today, everyone who had already registered was asked to gather outside the cities they registered to and wait for the test to start. Those who did not register or join the competition could only watch from afar, wanting to know what would happen next.

After waiting for an hour, a giant head projection suddenly appeared from the core region of the Eternal Sanctuary Forest. The projection showed Aldrian's face, and the moment everyone saw him, they shouted in unison,

"To the brightest star and eternal light, we greet Your Majesty, the Great Emperor!"

They then kowtowed to him.

"Rise," Aldrian's voice resounded across the forest region.

The people rose and looked toward the projection.

"First, thank you for coming and for registering yourselves for this recruitment. I truly appreciate your enthusiasm, with millions of you registered," Aldrian spoke.

"But unfortunately, what I am looking for at this moment is more than your enthusiasm. What I am looking for from you is your commitment, your spirit, your will, and your strength. I want to see your determination to join me, to become my troops, to join the first knight order that I have created. The Divine Vanguard."

Many put on determined expressions upon hearing that. They believed that they had already prepared themselves for whatever Aldrian would throw at them.

"I will take the best of the best, and they will become my spear that I can depend on without having to step in myself. But make no mistake, the best of the best here is not solely in terms of how high your cultivation is, or how genius or talented you are."

"The ones who will join me will be those who are truly determined and have strong will. I guarantee you that the test after this will give even geniuses a high chance to fail. I do not care if those who successfully join have low cultivation, trash talent, or are not geniuses. Once you enter the Divine Vanguard, I can change you into geniuses and powerful cultivators that meet my standards."

Many became more determined, while others sighed in relief. That was because many of them were not quite confident when comparing themselves to cultivators with much higher cultivation.

They were still thinking about how the test would be conducted and wondered whether they would have a chance to join Aldrian's troops when those strong cultivators were also participating in the test.

Now, at least, they felt relieved. From Aldrian's announcement, the test would be fair, and they would also have a chance to join his troops.

"Now, for the first test—"

Suddenly, the ground near the participants trembled, and a platform rose not far from them. Outside each city, a large circular platform could now be seen, one that could contain even hundreds of thousands of people upon it.

The platform had seven stairs to reach the top, and each stair was a hundred meters wide and two meters in height. The stairs circled the platform, allowing anyone to reach the top from any direction.

The participants looked at the platform as Aldrian continued.

"This is what I call the Platform of Worthiness. The test will be held only in this place, and those who successfully pass all the tests will join the Divine Vanguard."

"For the first test, it is quite simple. What you have to do is reach the top of the platform through the stairs. The stairs themselves are called the Seven Deadly Sins Stairs, starting from pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath, and sloth."

"It will give you an illusion that you have to pass if you want to reach the top of the platform. Inside the illusion, you have to look for a way out to break the illusion."

"If you fail this test, you will be instantly thrown to the side of the platform. Do not even think about stepping on the stairs again. I will know if anyone steps on the stairs again after they fail."

The others understood and looked toward the stairs. They knew that the test would not be simple, and they wondered what the Seven Deadly Sins Stairs would show them. Hearing the name alone already gave them an idea of what they would have to anticipate later.

They prepared themselves, determined not to be swayed by a mere illusion!

"Alright, I think all of you are ready. Then I declare that the test starts... now!" Aldrian declared.

Millions of participants spread across many cities instantly rushed toward the platforms near them.

Once the participants stepped onto the first stair, they suddenly stopped. Their eyes turned blank, looking soulless. There was no one moving the moment they stepped on the stairs.

However, a few minutes later, some participants suddenly showed signs on their faces, as if they wanted to move their facial muscles. A moment later, they were suddenly thrown off the stairs, which left them shocked as they looked around their surroundings.

Their expressions showed confusion, their breathing was erratic, and they looked disoriented, as if they had suddenly appeared in an unknown place.

However, after realizing where they were, they released a sigh. The spectators who saw them did not know whether it was a sigh of disappointment or a sigh of relief, but they were curious about what those participants had seen in their illusion.

Aldrian, who was observing the test from his throne, sensed that in this short amount of time, tens of thousands had already failed.

It was as expected, as the illusions were strong, and these people would not even remember that they had entered an illusion.

He even dared to say that the illusion was borderline creating a new reality. The strength of the illusion also adjusted to each individual who stepped onto the stairs.

No matter if those entering the illusion were Emperor stage cultivators, they would experience the same sensation as everyone else.

The illusion also had a hypnotic effect that could make them forget their own character and try to trap them within the role shaped by the illusion.

The only ones who could pass were those with strong will, those who did not forget who they were and what they came for.

As the name suggested, the Seven Deadly Sins Stairs tested their will against those seven temptations.

The moment the participants stepped onto the first stair, they were given an illusion that tested their will and how they controlled their pride.

If they drowned in their own pride, they would instantly fail.

After more than a minute, finally, someone was able to step onto the next stair, which made Aldrian focus at this participant. The participant was male and had Middle Marquess stage cultivation. He was taking the test in the northernmost city of the forest region.

Aldrian was quite impressed that he could pass the first illusion in such a short time. Soon, however, he was not the only one who managed to pass the first stair, as some of the other participants also finally continued to the second stair.

Before long, thousands reached the second stair, while thousands of others failed. Those who failed could only sigh in disappointment and did not try to trick Aldrian by stepping onto the stairs once again.

Besides not wanting to challenge Aldrian's warning, they had already experienced the illusion on the first stair. The illusion was so strong that it truly made them forget themselves, making them think that they were living inside the illusion, with pride consuming them.

The sensation was incredibly real and terrifying.

Another thirty minutes passed, and finally, the first person to step onto the third stair appeared. This participant was a different person from the one who first stepped onto the second stair. The participant was a woman with Low Duke stage cultivation.

Soon, others joined her on the third stair, and the number of failed participants continued to increase.

The onlookers watched the participants on the third stair with anticipation, wondering who would be the first to step onto the next stair.

However, as time passed, some of the participants standing on the third stair suddenly had their crotches wet before being thrown off the stairs. They were shocked and looked around their surroundings before finally realizing that their pants were wet as they looked down at their crotches.

Their eyes widened as they tried to hide the wet spots or make them disappear in their own ways, filled with embarrassment. No matter whether they were male or female, they showed the same sign upon failure.

The spectators who witnessed this felt that it was as expected, knowing which sin was being tested on the third stair.

Lust.

However, to think that even these participants ejaculated in real life showed just how strong the illusion truly was.

No one mocked the failed participants, as the onlookers also did not dare to underestimate the test given by Aldrian.

Time continued to pass, and three hours later, the number of those who had failed had already surpassed a million. Even at this point, not a single person had stepped onto the top of the platform, though all of the stairs had already been stepped on by participants.

The spectators had already heard testimonies from some of the participants who failed, describing what they experienced inside the illusion. This gave them a better understanding of what the participants had faced within it.

After another hour passed, someone finally reached the top of the platform.

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Chapter 991 - 991: The Second Test

[1,649 words]

The one who reached the top first was the same person who reached the second stair first. Aldrian once again focused on this male participant. He looked young for a middle marquess stage cultivator.

'Revanus Alberin, sixty years old. That is young for someone to reach that cultivation level. Was he from a noble family in the past?' Aldrian thought after he saw his information through his system.

'It seems I have found a truly potential figure in this recruitment.'

After Revanus, there were others who finally reached the top. After waiting for another two hours, there was finally no one still standing on the stairs of the platforms across all cities.

"Congratulations on passing the first test. 202,564 people have passed the first test. I am really impressed with our empire's potential," Aldrian said as his head projection appeared once again.

"Now, for the next test, it will test your strength. I want each of you to keep a distance of at least one hundred meters. Do you remember the grand tournament in the past where gravity was used as a challenge? It will be the same as that, but you will have to withstand it purely using your body's raw power for three minutes. Easy, right?"

"Of course, the gravity's heaviness has already been adjusted to each cultivator's cultivation level. You might struggle while facing it, but I do not think that would be a problem. Also, in the midst of you withstanding the gravity, I will give you a surprise, so be prepared. For now, I will give you fifteen minutes to prepare yourselves."

After that, the projection disappeared.

Many participants sighed in nervousness and started doing what was instructed, making distance from each other. They did not know what kind of surprise would be waiting for them in the next test.

Although the test sounded easy and Aldrian gave them time to prepare, they knew it would not be so simple. Just like the first test, they knew that the second test would be challenging, or even more difficult.

Revanus, the one who reached the top platform first, took a deep breath to calm himself and prepare for whatever might come in the next test. His expression was truly determined.

'I have to successfully join the Divine Vanguard. I have to,' he thought.

After fifteen minutes, suddenly Aldrian's voice resounded across the forest region without any projection.

"All participants, you may stand up. The test will commence soon."

Hearing the announcement, the participants took their positions and readied themselves for the second test. After all of them were ready, Aldrian continued.

"The test starts."

A split second after that, heavy gravity hit all participants. Because they were already prepared, there was no one who collapsed, but it could be seen from their expressions that they were struggling to withstand the gravity.

The onlookers who saw this wondered what kind of surprise Aldrian would give in this test, because from what they could see, at least visually, this test was not so challenging.

Even compared to the first test, this kind of test could be said to be much easier, especially if the participants were body cultivators. They might be able to withstand it until the end easily.

The people who watched from many places across the continent through the screen also thought the same.

Actually, Aldrian did not intend to spread the selection's process through screens across the continent because he thought he did not need to.

The ones who made this possible were various news organizations that thought they should spread the participants' test across the continent. Aldrian also did not mind and allowed them to record the test.

As time passed and almost a minute was about to pass, there was still no one who collapsed.

The people were confused.

Was this test only like this? Where was their emperor's surprise?

However, the moment a minute passed, suddenly a strong sword will spread across the continent, along with killing intent focused on each of the platforms.

The sudden, terrifying sensation instantly caused tens of thousands of people to collapse, and they were immediately thrown outside the platforms.

Those who were still concentrating on withstanding the heavy gravitation truly did not expect to receive the sudden sensation of sword will and the terrifying killing intent.

Even the killing intent caused the weather to start changing with the appearance of overcast clouds. The onlookers near the platforms sensed their swords trembling as the sword will did not disappear and instead combined with the killing intent.

All people were truly shocked as fear gripped them at how terrifying the killing intent was.

They seemed to have never seen their emperor showing his killing intent.

But then many remembered a few strange phenomena in the past, where they suddenly sensed killing intent from nowhere that spread across a wide region, killing intent that so terrifying it could even affect the weather.

Was that Aldrian's killing intent?

Now that killing intent appeared again, it seemed even more powerful.

It made sense, since their emperor was much stronger than in the past and had killed more enemies since that time.

However, that terrifying killing intent was directed toward the participants and was still combined with powerful sword will. The sword will from Aldrian alone was already terrifying. Now they also had to endure his killing intent.

This was truly crazy!

The onlookers could finally see the real difficulty of this second test.

Those who only watched already felt goosebumps from the sensation they received even from afar. The sword will gave them a piercing sensation, while the killing intent gave them the feeling of death.

They could not imagine the participants who had to endure all of this, especially when they also had to withstand heavy gravity.

As expected, as time passed, the number of failed participants kept increasing. Those enduring the combined three challenges experienced something entirely different from those who were only watching.

The sword will alone already made their souls tremble, and it felt as though death was looming above them. The killing intent gave them the illusion that they would truly die if they continued to remain in their positions.

They began to fall into an illusion where they were surrounded by death, and it started to consume their souls. Many failed as they instantly collapsed under the heavy gravity.

They simply could not concentrate anymore to withstand the gravity when both their souls and bodies were being attacked by the combination of sword will and killing intent.

"This is crazy. Is this test even possible to pass?" one of the onlookers said in astonishment.

"I don't know, but the ones still standing are truly amazing. Even if they fail later, holding on for this long is already an achievement in itself. Withstanding the gravity combined with His Majesty's sword will and killing intent is no easy feat. Even I have goosebumps just watching from here," another replied.

Many commented on how difficult the second test was, wondering if Aldrian might not get any recruits today.

However, as time passed, they were truly astonished that there were still participants standing. Despite their bodies already bending, they did not let their knees touch the ground. Even when their faces showed fear and extreme struggle, they still held on.

When two minutes passed, Aldrian strengthened his sword will and killing intent. Those who had been withstanding it earlier also started to collapse one by one. The number of failures increased at a rapid speed, and at this moment, some of the participants who were forcing themselves began to show signs of internal injury.

Blood started to flow from their noses, and a few seconds later, from their eyes. Then, blood began to flow from all of their orifices.

Many collapsed as they could no longer withstand the pressure. The onlookers were truly shocked by those who were still standing and even worried that they might die at any moment.

They started to pity these participants and even began to think that Aldrian might be too excessive in this test.

Still, they were truly amazed and admired the ones who were still standing, knowing that they were the best of the best that their emperor had spoken about.

Finally, after what felt like forever for the participants, the three minutes passed, and at that exact moment, the gravity, the sword will, and the killing intent instantly disappeared.

The moment they vanished, the participants who were still on top of the platforms instantly collapsed. They were sweating so much as if they had taken a shower, and they closed their eyes because blood was blocking their sight.

But a second later, they felt a warm sensation flowing through their bodies. They felt comfortable, and they could feel the wounds in both their bodies and souls being healed.

Aldrian healed them with his energy from his throne. In fact, he also did the same for those who failed in the second test after the appearance of his sword will and killing intent.

He had to do that to prevent any aftereffects that might remain after experiencing his killing intent. He knew how terrifying his killing intent was for these people, after all.

After a few moments, the participants who lasted felt healthy again and were able to open their eyes. They blinked a few times and looked at their surroundings.

They sighed in relief, having truly succeeded.

Aldrian's projection then appeared once again.

"Congratulations to those who passed the second test. It is truly amazing, and I truly admire your will and strength. I knew the test would be difficult, but the number of those who remained surpassed my estimation."

Hearing that, the remaining participants felt proud, but their hearts still could not rest as they thought there might be another test. The second test was already truly difficult, so what about the third test?

"From more than five million participants to only two hundred and fifty three, be proud, as you are the best of the best for reaching this point," Aldrian continued.

"Once again, congratulations on reaching this point. All of you who remained on the platform are worthy of becoming knights of the Divine Vanguard. You have passed all the tests."

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Chapter 992 - 992: Moving to Core Region

[1,567 words]

The participants still on the platform blinked a few times before their eyes widened.

Done?

Only that?

There were no more tests?

The onlookers were also stunned. They had thought there might be another test, but it turned out that everything was already over.

That was it?

However, many instantly put away the words "only" and "just," as if they were underestimating the tests.

What they had experienced just now was not something just anyone could endure.

To withstand gravity combined with their emperor's sword will and killing intent was already something they could be proud of. The fact that hundreds of people were still standing on the platform was already a result beyond their expectations.

Those from outside the empire thought the same. They could sense how strong Aldrian's sword will and killing intent were. They did not expect that this many people would succeed, and it made them think more deeply about the potential of the Aster Empire.

The populace of this empire had great potential if they could endure something like that.

"The next is, I will give you time to go back to your family and prepare to move to the core region. Tomorrow morning, officials will bring you to the core region beneath the floating land, and there, you will officially become the Divine Vanguard Knight Order," Aldrian said.

"For those who want to bring their family, you have to inform the officials so we can prepare the accommodations."

"That's all from me. I will see you tomorrow."

After that, the projection disappeared.

The participants who succeeded finally accepted that this was truly the end of the test, and they could not help showing their own reactions. Some were crying in happiness, some cheered for themselves, and others simply lay down and looked at the sky.

Revanus, who was also one of the successful participants, looked at the sky and smiled. He was glad that he had succeeded. Besides serving Aldrian being one of his

dreams, he had his own main reason that pushed him to be determined to serve directly under Aldrian.

After laying down for a few moments, he stood up and ran as fast as possible toward the city. The onlookers could only watch him run as he entered the city, unable to say anything to him.

There were many who wanted to offer their congratulations, and those from news organizations wanted to interview him. This was a good chance to make acquaintances and also a good headline by interviewing someone who had succeeded in joining the first knight order Aldrian had created.

Seeing that Revanus did not seem to want to interact, they looked for other successful participants instead.

Besides Revanus, there were only eight people who succeeded in this city, so they quickly flocked toward them.

Revanus, not caring about anything at this moment, kept running with a happy expression amid the busy roads. With his agile movements, he avoided many people so that he did not crash into them.

After thirty minutes of running, he finally arrived at the residential area and stopped in front of a house. It was a simple house with a fairly spacious garden.

Although it was "simple," the word simple here followed the standards of this city. The cities inside the Eternal Sanctuary forest region had high standards, so it was not like other cities on the continent.

This simple house was good enough for a commoner to stay and live a comfortable life inside.

Revanus rushed into the house, and he finally saw a woman with pale skin standing in the kitchen. The woman was wearing a simple casual dress. She had long black hair and a beautiful face that gave off a motherly vibe.

However, her pale skin and the bruised spots that could be seen on her body showed that she was not in good health.

At this moment, she seemed to be preparing a dish, slowly chopping vegetables.

Sensing his arrival, the woman looked in his direction and smiled at him.

Revanus smiled as well when he saw her, and he could not wait to announce his success, so he spoke immediately.

"Mother, I succeeded. I will serve His Majesty directly in his newly created knight order."

Hearing that, the woman's expression turned joyful as she covered her mouth with both hands. Revanus walked to his mother and hugged her.

"I succeeded, Mother. Now we have the means to cure your illness. I believe His Majesty can help you," he said softly as he held her tightly.

The woman smiled and stroked her son's head.

"The most important thing is that you achieved what you truly wanted from your heart, son. If what you wanted was to serve His Majesty, then you achieved it because it came from your heart. This mother of yours can only support you from behind, and anything else that follows can be considered a bonus."

"What I did is still what I want from my heart, Mother. You are still my main motivation for joining His Majesty's troops. I want Mother to be healthy again," Revanus said, which made the woman smile.

"How sweet of you." She then looked into his eyes. "You must be tired after the tests. Even from here, I could hear how difficult the tests were. I wanted to prepare a dish for you, but you already came back. You can wait until the dish is ready."

Revanus smiled and gently separated from his mother.

"No, Mother. Let me be the one to prepare the dish. Just tell me what you want to make, and I will make it. You should rest, since this is the time for you to take a break."

"I'm not that fragile, you know? Moreover, this is a special day, so just for today, I want us to at least celebrate your achievement," the woman said. However, she could see that her son was still reluctant.

"Alright. To make you satisfied, how about you help me? We will prepare the dish together," the woman relented, which made Revanus smile.

"That sounds good," he said before moving toward the kitchen counter.

The woman followed him, and they began preparing the dish together. The mother and son enjoyed their time together with full happiness, talking about what Revanus had experienced.

Revanus was truly glad that his struggle and determination had paid off, allowing him to join Aldrian's troops.

On the next day, the officials of the cities that had successful participants gathered all of the recruits and guided them toward the core region. The core region of the Eternal Sanctuary forest, where the border was vast grassland, was a place that not just anyone could enter.

Only with approval from the Xin family could one enter the core region. No one dared to barge into the core region without their approval, as many considered this place to be a sacred region where their emperor stayed in his palace.

Now, more than three hundred people appeared in the teleportation formation beneath the floating land inside the core region. They were the recruits, and some of them had brought their families along.

The moment they appeared inside the palace complex under the floating land, they were amazed by its grandness. The place, rich with heaven and earth energy unlike any other, refreshed their bodies.

They could not help but feel touched that they were able to step into this place. If even the palace beneath the floating land was already this grand, then what about the main palace on the floating land itself?

They truly wanted to visit it.

All of them were guided by Xin family elders toward the vast plaza. As they walked, they observed their surroundings like country bumpkins. They had never seen architecture like this anywhere else.

The families of the recruits were guided to their accommodations. This was also one of the benefits of joining the Divine Vanguard. Their families could be given a place to stay inside the core region.

The palace complex beneath the floating land was already like an independent city, so it could be used as accommodation for the families of the chosen troops. It was much better than leaving it empty without any purpose besides showing off its grandness.

The recruits finally arrived at the vast plaza, where a Xin family elder ordered them to form lines based on their cultivation levels.

"Later, when His Majesty arrives, after I signal his arrival, you only need to kneel and lower your heads. You do not need to kowtow. Do you understand?" one of the Xin family elders said.

"Yes, sir!" the recruits replied in unison.

After all of them were done with their preparations, they stood there for a few minutes, waiting in silence.

After waiting for a few more minutes, they finally sensed someone approaching from the side. They instantly knew who it was, and it was confirmed the moment the Xin family elder shouted,

"To the brightest star and eternal light, we greet Your Majesty, the Great Emperor!"

All of them instantly went down on their knees, and only a few seconds later did they finally hear Aldrian's voice.

"Raise."

They stood up again. The recruits could finally see Aldrian, and behind him was another person. They instantly recognized who it was, which made them inwardly astonished.

The person behind Aldrian was Xin Haotian, wearing his armor.

They truly did not expect to see Xin Haotian here, and he was wearing armor that gave him a different vibe. However, they quickly returned their focus to Aldrian, who was looking at them with a smile.

"Welcome to the place where you will reach glory, recruits who have passed all of my tests. You are now the knights of the Divine Vanguard."

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Chapter 993 - 993: Becoming Divine Vanguard Knights

[1,555 words]

"Welcome to the place where you will reach glory, recruits who have passed all of my tests. You are now the knights of the Divine Vanguard." Aldrian said.

"To be honest, I initially only planned to accept two hundred people to join this knight order. However, I truly did not expect that there would be this many who could pass my tests. I am truly proud of all of you, and I simply did not want to throw any of you away."

"However, the moment you step into this place, there is no way back. Without the need for any fancy ceremony, the moment you step into this place, you have officially already become members of the Divine Vanguard Knight Order. Even if, for now, you are only members in name and not in strength."

"One hundred and fifty-six marquess stage, fifty-three duke stage, thirty-nine grand duke stage, and five emperor stage. In the normal mindset, emperor stage cultivators should already be the most worthy of becoming members of this knight order because of their strength, right?" Aldrian swept his gaze to all lines.

"Wrong. For me, you are all the same here, still not enough to reach my standard. If I were only looking for strength, then I would only accept those at the Immortal Transition Realm into this knight order."

"For me, creating formidable troops with powerful strength can be done as long as the right method is used. The real journey will begin after you start your activities as members of the Divine Vanguard."

"No matter even if you are emperor stage cultivators..." Aldrian looked at the line of emperor stage cultivators for a moment before looking at the others again.

"All of you will be reshaped into new individuals who will reach my standard in terms of strength. So you had better throw away any arrogant attitude because of higher cultivation here. There is no arrogance in this knight order, only a sense of unity and camaraderie among the members of this knight order."

"That is why my tests emphasized your character as a person, not only your strength. As I said before, for me, strength can be shaped, but character is much more difficult to change."

"I want to see how you will face all of those challenges and temptations. Will you drown in temptation? Will you give up under despairing situations? Will you forget who you are or what you will become under all of those pressures?"

"With the tests that I gave you, all of you passed them. You are the best of the best, and I have already set my eyes on all of you, those with great potential and talent to become my finest knight order. You will not only be powerful cultivators but will also possess great character, the true quality of the Divine Vanguard Knight Order."

"You have already become my force, one that will obey my command in the future, even if it means fighting in the harshest battle conditions. Are you afraid?"

"No, Your Majesty!" the knights replied in unison.

Aldrian nodded. "Good. Now let me introduce you to your commander, your leader in the Divine Vanguard Knight Order. I know all of you already know who this person is, but there is no harm in introducing him again here, as you will be working with him. Xin Haotian, or what you are more familiar with as the Sword Saint."

The others looked at Xin Haotian. They still did not expect that Xin Haotian would actually become a knight under Aldrian. They had thought that, with how solitary this man was, Xin Haotian would not join someone or work under anyone.

"He will be the one who will personally train you to reach my standard, so be prepared," Aldrian continued.

"Now, before you truly start your training as members of the Divine Vanguard Knight Order, I want you to cultivate this cultivation technique that I have created especially for this knight order."

The Xin family elders then gave each member a scroll.

"As you may have heard, I can create cultivation techniques that can be used without you having to destroy your cultivation foundation. From this moment on, I want you to cultivate this and abandon your current cultivation techniques."

The eyes of all the knights glimmered as they looked at the still-sealed scrolls. They had already heard about their emperor's ability to create revolutionary cultivation techniques that caused an uproar everywhere.

Now, they could finally experience such a cultivation technique for themselves.

"I will give you one week to get used to this place and this cultivation technique. After that, your training will start for real. Once your training begins, you will enter what I call the time of evolution. For seven months, Xin Haotian will train you according to the training methods we have already formulated."

"During that time, you will be completely separated from the outside world, as you will spend your days inside secret realms. And this is only the first step for you to reach my standard, so please enjoy the training and whatever comes to you in the future."

"Don't worry. You will not die, as we will not allow you to die. However, you might feel that you would be better off dead. But, I don't think you will give up, right?" Aldrian asked with a smile.

"Yes, Your Majesty!" Although the knights shouted in unison, they could not help but shudder inside upon seeing Aldrian's smile. They knew it would be truly difficult training if their emperor had already given such a warning.

"Now you may return to the houses we have already prepared, as I promised when I first announced the selection for those who could join the Divine Vanguard. Those houses will become your properties."

"For those who brought their families, you don't need to worry about their lives here. They may live normally here. Although there are certain rules they must obey, I do not

think those rules will affect their lives much." Aldrian swept his gaze across all the knights one last time.

"I hope you succeed, ladies and gentlemen. Dismiss."

After saying that, the knights instantly dispersed to look for their houses. The Xin family elders also helped guide them so they would not get lost.

However, there was one person who stayed behind and approached Aldrian, causing Aldrian to look at him.

He instantly recognized this person as Revanus, the one he had taken note of during the tests. Aldrian looked at his face, which showed hesitation, as if he wanted to say something but was holding it back.

"Revanus Alberin, do you have anything you want to say?" Aldrian asked.

Revanus was stunned. He did not expect Aldrian to know him and call his name directly, but he did not find it too surprising, as he believed Aldrian must know everyone who had become part of the Divine Vanguard.

He immediately bowed to Aldrian.

"Your Majesty, I have something that I would like to request, if Your Majesty permits."

"What is it?"

Revanus released a sigh of relief when Aldrian showed willingness to hear his request, so he continued while still bowing.

"I have a sickly mother whom I brought here. Her condition has never improved since she fell ill, and it could even be said that as time passes, her condition worsens. This humble one's request is whether Your Majesty knows someone who could heal her."

He actually wanted Aldrian to personally check on his mother, but he felt that would be too presumptuous. He would already be satisfied as long as his mother could be healed, no matter who healed her.

Aldrian raised his eyebrows and smiled upon hearing the request.

'I see. That might be his greatest motivation for passing the tests,' he thought.

"I see. Then let me see your mother. I would like to check her myself," he said, which made Revanus lift his head and look at him with widened eyes.

Aldrian would check his mother personally?

His eyes glimmered as he bowed again. "Thank you, Your Majesty, for your generosity."

He really wanted to cry at that moment, as he believed that with Aldrian personally checking her condition, his mother would most likely be completely healed.

After that, an elder guided them to the house that had already been assigned to Revanus. The moment they arrived in front of it, Revanus was truly shocked.

He had not yet seen the house given to him, so he had no idea what to expect from his new home.

He had only thought that the house would be better than his previous residence, and as long as the place was comfortable enough for his mother to live in, he did not care what kind of house it was.

However, the house he received for joining the Divine Vanguard was nothing like what he had expected.

The place given to him as a home was more appropriate to be called a villa, and a large one at that. A villa surrounded by a vast and beautiful garden.

He wondered if he had been given the wrong house.

But he could only accept that this was indeed his house when the elder entered through the front gate and guided them toward the main doors, passing through the beautiful garden.

The elder opened the main doors and entered the villa, followed by Aldrian and Revanus.

After they entered, they immediately saw a woman standing not far from them, looking in their direction.

The woman looked astonished upon seeing the incoming guests, and her gaze quickly settled on Revanus.

"Revanus," she said.

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Chapter 994 - 994: Curing His Mother

[1,728 words]

Revanus' mother was astonished by the arrival of several guests, and she froze when she recognized one of them. She saw her son standing beside the emperor, which made her call out to him.

"Revanus."

"Mother." Revanus replied with a smile, before he looked at Aldrian.

"Your Majesty, this is my mother."

The woman's heart trembled upon hearing how her son addressed Aldrian, as she realized she had not mistaken the guest for someone else. She then tried to kowtow before him.

"To the brightest star and eternal light—"

"Please, Madam Cellis, you do not have to do that. We are in a private setting, after all." Aldrian said as he prevented her from kowtowing. He had already seen her information through the system.

Madam Cellis stopped her movement as Aldrian continued with a smile.

"Your son has requested that I look for someone to cure your sickness, and I thought that I might check on you personally. It seems that the situation may be serious."

The fact that Madam Cellis was actually a duke stage cultivator yet appeared sick meant that her body's attempt to heal itself was not working. Whatever caused it was likely not simple, and it also made him start guessing the background of Revanus' family.

From what he knew based on the information he had been given, Revanus had been a noble in the past. However, the only Alberin surname he found was from the Atria Kingdom, a fallen noble family.

When the civil war was still raging in the past, one of the families that fell was the noble House Alberin. It was an earl household and one of the families that became an opposing force against Wilmar at that time. The Alberin family was destroyed by Prince Wilmar's forces during the civil war, and it was said that all of their family's members had been killed.

Could Revanus and his mother be from that fallen family?

Madam Cellis, who heard the reason why he had come here, widened her eyes and looked at Revanus for a moment before bowing toward Aldrian.

"My apologies, Your Majesty, for my son's rudeness. Please do not take offense at his request, as he is truly a filial son. Instead, it is I who made him experience hardship and even caused him to make such a request to your great self," she said.

Revanus' expression showed pain as he saw his mother defending him, afraid that Aldrian might take offense at his request. He opened his lips to speak.

"Mother—"

"No, it is alright, Madam. I did not take offense at all. It was my own will to look into your condition. Revanus has already become one of my troops, and it is only right for me to look into my troops' condition and their situation. Healing you will give Revanus peace of mind, which will allow him to focus more as a knight in the future," Aldrian said, cutting off Revanus' words.

"So without further delay, let us check your condition, Madam, so that I may heal you." He added before looking toward the Xin family's elder who had been guiding them. He gave the elder a nod as a signal that he could leave, and the elder understood. He bowed toward Aldrian and left the villa.

Revanus' mother could only sigh in relief upon hearing Aldrian's words. It would be impolite if she continued to hesitate and refuse the emperor's help, so she bowed to him.

"Thank you for your generosity, Your Majesty."

They then walked toward one of the rooms, where they could sit on the sofa.

After Aldrian checked her body, he could sense that her dantian was badly cracked. Energy was seeping out from her dantian, weakening her cultivation as time passed.

Some of her meridians were also torn, as if she had forced herself to use a technique that could tear them apart. The torn meridians caused bruised spots that were visible on her skin.

With this, he could guess why Madam Cellis had not yet been cured.

Healing her would be extremely costly and could only be done by a physician capable of reconstructing her meridians and curing her dantian. This was not even counting the pills that might be needed during the healing process.

After understanding the problem within her body, Aldrian cured her using his golden energy. This kind of injury was manageable with only his golden energy, even without using life laws.

Madam Cellis felt Aldrian's energy as a warm and comfortable sensation flowing through her body.

She felt it for more than twenty seconds before the sensation faded, replaced by a feeling of health, as if she had returned to the time before she fell sick.

"Done," Aldrian said.

Madam Cellis looked at her body and skin, which had already returned to a healthy state. She was truly astonished by how Aldrian's method made it look so effortless for him to heal her sickness.

She knew that her dantian and meridians had been severely damaged, and that such injuries were not easy to heal.

Revanus was also surprised by how easily and quickly Aldrian had healed his mother. Because he understood how complex his mother's condition was, he knew how costly and challenging it would normally be to heal her.

Seeing Aldrian treat her so simply made him wonder what physicians would feel if they witnessed this.

Were they even needed if someone like Aldrian existed?

He quickly set that thought aside, knowing there was only one Aldrian, and that he could not spend his time solely healing others.

Seeing that there was no longer any problem with her body, Madam Cellis looked at Aldrian again and immediately bowed while still seated.

"Thank you for healing me, Your Majesty. I do not know how I will ever repay your kindness."

Revanus wanted to cry, but he held it back and also bowed toward Aldrian. "Thank you, Your Majesty, for healing my mother."

Aldrian smiled at them. "No problem, and you do not have to think about it, Madam. Your son's existence in the Divine Vanguard Knight Order is already enough to repay me. He has great potential and talent. You must be proud of raising someone like Revanus."

Madam Cellis raised her head and could not help but feel proud that her son was praised by Aldrian like that, while Revanus felt embarrassed upon hearing it.

"I am truly proud of him, Your Majesty, and truly thankful to the heavens for giving me him as my son," Madam Cellis said.

"Mother," Revanus said, touched by his mother's words.

"Madam, if I may ask, are you and Revanus from the Alberin noble family of the former Atria Empire?"

Both mother and son were stunned, but then Madam Cellis sighed before nodding.

"That is correct, Your Majesty. I am the second wife of Earl Alberin, and because I rarely appeared in public, I may not be well known to others."

Aldrian nodded. "I see. I had heard that the entire Alberin family was purged by Prince Wilmar's faction at that time, but to think that there were survivors."

"Well, even though we survived, it was because of many sacrifices, Your Majesty. I also had to push myself beyond my limits, which caused harm to my own body, so that both Revanus and I could live. If not for my family's sacrifices, I do not think we would still be breathing today," Madam Cellis replied.

"My condolences, Madam. May they rest in peace, as all those responsible for that civil war have already been punished by me personally."

Madam Cellis nodded, while Revanus showed sadness as he remembered the past. At that time, his desire for revenge had been truly great. He wanted to join the war against Prince Wilmar's faction.

However, he knew that he could not simply leave his mother behind, nor could he allow the sacrifices of so many to be wasted by recklessly throwing himself into the war. He could only plan for revenge in the future.

But that time never came, as there was already someone who punished those villains and indirectly enacted revenge on his behalf. That person had become the emperor, and at this very moment was right in front of him.

Since that day, he had truly idolized him and wanted to become like him. Moreover, Aldrian was much younger than him, yet had already achieved many things that were impossible for others.

Seeing how Aldrian saved their continent and led it to this point made Revanus want to work for him in any way he could.

However, his mother's condition greatly limited his movements, as he had to take care of her. He worked as an adventurer and mercenary to gather the cost of her treatment and to buy pills that could lessen her pain caused by her damaged meridians and dantian.

That was also why he had passed on joining the war in the Northern Star Cluster, as he had to stay by his mother's side.

Although he felt sad that he could not follow Aldrian back then, at least he could stay with his only remaining family. For now, his mother was the most important thing to him.

But it was as if the heavens had given him a chance. Aldrian suddenly announced that he was opening recruitment for his knight order, and Revanus did not let that chance pass. Moreover, with all the benefits offered, his mother might be cured.

That was killing two birds with one stone.

With great determination, he registered himself, undeterred by the many participants. He focused only on passing the tests and curing his mother.

Fortunately, his determination was not in vain, and he was able to join the Divine Vanguard Knight Order.

"Alright, I think I have already done what I can here. There is another matter that I need to attend to, so I will excuse myself," Aldrian said as he stood up.

Madam Cellis also stood up. "I thought that Your Majesty might stay for a longer time, but if Your Majesty has other matters to attend to, then it cannot be helped. My apologies if I could not offer anything, as I am still trying to get used to this place."

Aldrian smiled. "No problem, Madam. I hope you are comfortable living in this place." He then looked at Revanus. "Revanus, I am waiting for your performance as a knight of the Divine Vanguard Knight Order. I hope that you can meet my expectations."

Revanus' expression turned serious as he suddenly went down on one knee.

"I will not disappoint you, Your Majesty!"

Aldrian nodded. "Good. Keep that in your mind."

After that, Aldrian left the mother and son to attend to another matter.

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[1,589 words]

Six months later,

In the Eternal Sanctuary Forest, it was already known to the populace that the secret realms within the forest region were like worlds of their own. Everyone who had been trapped there in the past described them as separate worlds that could support life for a long time.

Those who were lucky would enter secret realms that did not have harsh environments. But the unlucky ones had to live inside harsh environments such as extremely hot deserts, extremely cold tundras, or chaotic storm territories.

The place that was once called the Everlasting Silent Forest was truly like a place where various kinds of environments were gathered together.

Since Aldrian made the entire Barisan Continent his domain, most of the traps in the forest region have disappeared, as Aldrian closed almost all of the spatial nodes that were triggered by anyone passing through them.

Because the traps were deactivated, the region could be safely used for various activities and development.

Cities could be built, people could pass through safely, and they no longer had to worry about being trapped in separate spaces.

However, although the triggers of the traps had already disappeared, the secret realms that served as trapping spaces were still there. The only difference was that people could not enter them unless they could find the entrances to these secret realms, which were the spatial nodes that had already disappeared.

To enter them, people had to comprehend space laws, find the disappeared spatial nodes, and forcibly open the entrances so they could enter.

Some people were still able to enter certain secret realms because they wanted to explore or train inside. Some of the secret realms provided good cultivation environments for certain cultivators, which attracted them to train in those places.

Places with various kinds of environments were truly a blessing for many cultivators. Moreover, these places were said to have been created by ancient gods who descended to the Barisan Continent.

Since the gods created these places, they possessed rich elemental comprehension.

At this moment, inside one of the secret realms where there was a snowstorm and a high mountain covered with thick snow, groups of cultivators could be seen climbing the mountain.

They were wearing armor with dragon and phoenix symbols as they continued walking. They did not protect their bodies using energy, with strong winds and heavy snowfall, they kept climbing with gritted teeth.

Withstanding the cold and the strong wind, they kept pushing themselves as they walked along the slope of the mountain, which was already covered with thick snow.

Among one of the groups, Revanus gritted his teeth as he continued walking. Despite the tiredness, heaviness, and coldness he felt, he kept pushing himself forward.

His expression was determined, and each of his steps was powerful and without hesitation as he stepped into the thick snow.

After walking for a few moments, he could see a red flag not far from him amidst the strong snowstorm. He then looked behind him and saw the others who were part of his group.

"Come on, guys. We can do this. I can already see the next place where we can take a rest," he shouted.

The others who heard him felt glad, and they continued walking without stopping.

Not far from them, on the edge of a cliff that was at a higher elevation than the group, Aldrian and Xin Haotian were observing them.

"That Revanus has the most potential compared to all the marquess-stage cultivators. His character is good, his leadership is good, and his talent is good. He is truly perfect for this knight order," Xin Haotian said.

"Good. He has met my expectations all this time," Aldrian replied.

"As for the others, they are also showing great talent and spirit. Even when I push them to their limits, they still keep going and continue passing all the parameters we already decided. At this point, all knights will reach every parameter by the end of this training session," Xin Haotian continued.

"Good, good," Aldrian commented while observing Revanus and his group for a moment before he touched Xin Haotian's shoulder.

"Continue with the training and keep pushing them," he added.

"Yes, Your Majesty."

After that, Aldrian's figure disappeared and reappeared inside his throne hall. He then sat on his throne and fell silent as he pondered something.

At this time, he was already prepared and ready for the arrival of the vampire king and his army.

They could arrive at this time or perhaps later, which kept him constantly on edge and ready to greet their arrival.

In the past year and a half, he had already spread his domains along the paths of the interstellar vessels that might come from the Central Region of Heaven or from the Northern Star Cluster.

He had also prepared for the possibility that the vampire king would first visit the Northern Star Cluster by spreading his domains along the possible path from the direction of the Central Region of Heaven.

Of course, he did not create a tight wall of his domain, as that would take too much of his time. All he needed was for a few of his domains to detect spatial movements caused by the warp capabilities of interstellar vessels.

With the sheer size of the armada brought by the vampire king, he estimated that at least a few of his domains would instantly detect the space disturbances. They would reveal that it was not a normal vessel passing through, but a large group of vessels moving together.

The moment he detected them, he would intercept them at the edge of the star cluster and prevent them from advancing any further. That was where the true battleground would be, and he hoped that what he had prepared would be enough to obliterate them all, or at least most of their forces.

As he continued thinking about the vampire king and his army, someone entered the throne hall.

Angelica, wearing a beautiful dress, stepped inside and approached him with a gentle smile.

Aldrian smiled warmly as his gaze followed her figure approaching him. He stood up and walked toward her, and the moment he reached her, he gently took both of her hands and kissed them.

"I did not expect to receive a visit from the Saintess. Is this my lucky day?" Aldrian said, which made Angelica smile shyly.

"Even without my visit, your life is already covered with luck. I do not think my visit will affect you at all," she said embarrassedly.

"Then your visit will double my luck," Aldrian replied while holding her hands. However, he soon noticed Angelica's expression turn into one of worry, and she let out a sigh.

"I hope that you will always be surrounded by a fortunate destiny, but you seem to always attract great trouble toward you. I am worried that in the near future, you will have to face many enemies," she said.

Aldrian raised his eyebrows, instantly realizing that Angelica was talking about the vampire king and his army.

"Did you receive another vision?" he asked.

Angelica nodded. "Yes. And this time, what I saw was a large group of armies of devils, so huge that its scale is unlike anything we have ever seen before. It was a sea of devils, with many powerful devils that made my heart tremble. Even if we gather the entire force of the Central Star Cluster, I am afraid it might not be enough."

Aldrian nodded in understanding. If Angelica described the incoming army like that, then it would truly be massive and might reach trillions in number.

He did not find it surprising, as the vampire king would certainly mobilize almost the entire force that was directly under his command.

He wondered how many cultivators from the Higher Heavens were among the vampire king's troops. He doubted that the vampire king would be the only one coming from the Higher Heavens to face him.

He could not help but feel his heart pound with anticipation as he thought about facing such a massive army.

Moreover, with the thing he wanted to test on them, a large army would be good subjects for it.

"Do we need to warn the other powers? With the scale of what I saw in my vision, I think we need to unite once again to create an alliance force, as this is a serious matter. And we need a much larger alliance than the one we had when we attacked the Northern Star Cluster," Angelica said worriedly.

Aldrian smiled when he heard that and shook his head. "No need. I have actually been anticipating their arrival for a long time, and I have already prepared to face them. This matter is for me to face, as it started because of me."

Angelica widened her eyes, and her expression turned even more worried.

"Aldrian, I know that you are really strong, but I think that for this one, you also need other forces to face the devils. When I said that their scale is unlike anything before and that a sea of devils is coming, I truly meant it. The devils come like a wave, and their momentum is terrifying, spreading widely across space. It is as if space itself is filled with them," she said in a persuasive tone.

Aldrian still smiled and tightened his grip on her hands.

"That is also something I have already prepared for. I did not underestimate my enemies. With how massive the devils are this time, my preparations have already been adjusted to the incoming threat." He then gently touched Angelica's cheek.

"You do not have to worry, my dear," he said, which made Angelica's face turn red like a tomato as she instantly lowered her head.

This was the first time he had called her "my dear"!

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Chapter 996 - 996: Getting Closer

[1,536 words]

Hearing the words "My dear," filled with affection, from Aldrian made Angelica's heart flutter.

However, she was extremely happy that Aldrian had called her in such an endearing way. This was the first time he had ever addressed her like that, and she knew he would only do so for a woman he had strong feelings for.

Does this mean that Aldrian has started to fall for her?

Her mind was so muddled by his words that she forgot about her worries for a moment.

Angelica took a deep breath before nodding, while she also touched his hand that was cupping her cheek.

"Alright, I believe in you, but please be careful when you face them. The vision of the devils, like a never ending sea, still makes me feel unsettled and tremble. I don't want anything bad to happen to you," she said.

Aldrian smiled and suddenly kissed her forehead before hugging her tightly, which left her stunned.

"I will be careful, and thank you for telling me this. At least now I know that they might already be close," he said.

Angelica blinked a few times. Then, she smiled shyly in his embrace and hugged him back.

While the two lovers felt each other's warmth, far from their location, the very thing they had spoken about was rapidly approaching in their direction.

The Vampire King and his army were inside a wormhole, and the number of interstellar vessels compared to when they first departed had already increased greatly. During their journey, many vessels joined them from various star clusters that were already under the devils' occupation.

At this moment, it would not be an exaggeration to say that more than a million interstellar vessels were moving in the same direction, carrying trillions of devils within them.

This level of strength was enough to crush any power at the star-cluster level and was sufficient to wage war against multiple star clusters.

Even conquering a galaxy was not out of the question.

The Vampire King was inside the control room of his vessel when he heard a report from one of the operators.

"If there are no problems, we will arrive at the central star cluster in three weeks."

With a calm expression, the Vampire King replied, "Make sure there are no problems. I want to reach that place as soon as possible."

"Yes, Your Majesty."

The Vampire King then left the control room and walked away. As he moved through the corridor, he encountered a vampire with the same cultivation level as himself. That vampire bowed deeply.

"Your Majesty," he greeted.

The Vampire King stopped in his tracks.

"Arkios, how are the troops' condition and preparations?" he asked.

"All is good. The only thing they need is to know where the battle is, and they will win it for you, Your Majesty," the vampire named Arkios replied.

"Good," the Vampire King replied with a nod as he continued walking. However, Arkios followed behind him and spoke again.

"Your Majesty, may I ask something? This is a question I have not asked since we departed, but it has made me wonder all this time."

"What is it?" the Vampire King asked.

"Are all of these troops really necessary? I mean, did Your Majesty truly need to declare Code Devils' Judgment just to make those who killed His Highness pay for their sins? I believe that sending one or two divisions from the star clusters would already be enough to make those without self-awareness understand the immensity of heaven and earth and pay for their crimes."

"Even with those divisions combined with cultivators from the higher heavens, it would already be enough to occupy the central star cluster," he added.

If it were anyone else asking such a question, the Vampire King would have already killed them for raising unnecessary doubts. He despised others questioning his decisions.

However, Arkios was one of his trusted men, someone who had also come from the higher heavens like himself. There were only a few people toward whom he could act with less cruelty in the First Heaven, and Arkios was one of them.

"This is a precaution. I have an instinct that the bastard who killed Rulleus is strange, and that he may have something hidden that could even threaten us," the Vampire King answered.

"The fact that the killer dared to kill Rulleus despite knowing who he was, and even dared to mock me despite surely knowing who I am, is already a sign. Added to that are several other matters that have weighed on my mind."

"Our god calling off his intent to descend, the lack of communication from the apostles, the sudden warning from the higher-ups, and the fact that they are sending more cultivators from the higher heavens despite the difficulty of doing so. There is also the possibility that the northern star cluster is no longer within our grasp and has fallen under the central star cluster's control."

"All of these events that have occurred within my territory of jurisdiction recently have made me realize that something is wrong, and it has left my heart unsettled. The source of this unease comes from the central star cluster."

"I want to make sure we uproot the source of this unsettling feeling before I can put my mind at rest. Only by occupying the entire central star cluster will my heart be at ease."

We will strike as quickly as possible so that the troops do not need to leave their posts for too long, ensuring that the various fronts are not endangered.

Arkios understood the Vampire King's concern after hearing this. The more he thought about it, the clearer it became that everything that had happened recently revolved around that central star cluster.

This also answered another question lingering in his mind regarding the many worlds affected by the Code Devils' Judgment.

With the Vampire King having declared Code Devils' Judgment, many troops had left their posts, and many of them were key figures within their territories.

With so many departing, several fronts of the Vampire King's territories would inevitably weaken.

If their enemies became aware of this and took advantage of the situation, Arkios feared that the conditions across the various fronts would worsen.

If his king wanted this war to end quickly, then Arkios found no problem with it. They only needed to ensure that the war was kept as short as possible.

"I see. Your Majesty is truly wise. I had thought that Your Majesty declared Code Devils' Judgment solely out of anger," Arkios said.

The Vampire King smirked. "It is true that I am furious and that I want to tear apart the bastard who dared to kill my son. However, there is a greater picture that I must consider. The Code of the Devils' Judgment is not merely an outlet for my anger, but a move I had already planned."

"Now, the only thing I want is to face that bastard and give him a horrible death." The Vampire King's eyes glistened dangerously.

On the next day, Aldrian visited a place that he had only visited once in the past. This place was a secret realm where the Rosalind family lived.

In the distant past, they had been one of the four guardian families of the Everlasting Silent Forest, known as the Ragius family. They were forced to flee from annihilation three million years ago.

Now, the Rosalind family had returned to this ancestral realm, where their ancestors once developed the family into its glorious era as one of the four guardian families.

As Aldrian appeared inside the secret realm, he could see life thriving, with people engaged in various activities. Given how vast the secret realm was, the inhabitants of this separate space were able to do many things freely.

He could see vast fields of crops and farms, and not far from them, several villages had been built.

In the distance, an independent city was already taking shape, and a large mansion complex stood at the northern end of the city. The size of the city was not as large as those outside, as the population was also far smaller.

This made sense, as not everyone was allowed to stay in this city.

Because the secret realm was entirely under the Rosalind family's control, they could decide who was permitted to live here and who was not. They did not want too many people residing within their secret realm.

Aldrian flew toward the large mansion, and since he did not bother to hide his presence, many sensed him instantly and turned their gazes toward him.

The moment many people saw his attire and his face, they were truly shocked. The guards of the Rosalind family who were stationed in the city immediately warned the main family within the mansion of Aldrian's arrival.

As Aldrian neared the mansion, he could see frantic movement among the cultivators of the Rosalind family, as if they were preparing for his arrival. He could also see Patriarch Rosalind already standing outside, directing his family members on what they should do.

When Aldrian finally reached the mansion and landed within the mansion complex, the cultivators of the Rosalind family had already completed their preparations. They formed lines on both sides of the large path leading toward the main doors of the mansion.

Patriarch Rosalind and all the members of his family who witnessed Aldrian's arrival shouted in unison,

"To the brightest star and eternal light, we greet Your Majesty, the Great Emperor!"

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Chapter 997 - 997: Like in the Past

[1,388 words]

The people of the Rosalind family then kowtowed to Aldrian.

"Rise," he said as he walked forward, approaching Patriarch Rosalind.

They all rose to their feet and once Patriarch Rosalind stood up again, he quickly approached Aldrian with a smile.

"Your Majesty, it is truly surprising for you to visit without any prior notice. I was truly shocked the moment I heard that you flew toward the mansion. My apologies if our welcome was quite lacking," he said.

"Ah, no worries, Patriarch Rosalind. I only wanted to visit to talk to you about something. Instead, it should be me who apologizes for coming without notice and disturbing your time," Aldrian said.

"Of course not, Your Majesty. You do not need to apologize. This way, Your Majesty. We can talk in a much more comfortable place."

Patriarch Rosalind then guided Aldrian inside the mansion and toward one of the large guest rooms. The maids served them tea as they sat on the sofas, then quietly left the room.

"So, Your Majesty, may I know what you wish to talk about?" Patriarch Rosalind asked with curiosity.

Aldrian nodded. "Patriarch Rosalind, do you want the Rosalind family's status as one of the guardian families back, just like in the past?"

Patriarch Rosalind was stunned, as he did not expect such a question. But his eyes then glistened, and his expression turned serious. He did not know what to expect if his family were to bear the status of a guardian family once more.

However, since hearing the truth of his family's past as one of the four guardian families that guarded the core region of the Everlasting Silent Forest, it made him determined to try to reach those glorious days once more.

His family was one of the families that made an agreement with the gods in the past and guarded the core region, which was actually an important place that had now become the center of the empire.

Thinking of how glorious his family could be if he could regain his family's status as a guardian family like in the past, his thoughts shifted to the Xin family. They had become one of the most prominent families of the empire, known by all.

The Xin family, as the only family guarding the core region and granting permission to anyone who wished to visit Aldrian's palace, had become one of the most influential families in the world.

Even powers from other worlds would not dare to casually disrespect them.

Moreover, there was the honor of helping Aldrian directly. They were always in contact with Aldrian, and Aldrian entrusted the safety of the core region to them.

Just thinking about how honorable it was for the Xin family to become the only family the emperor could depend on regarding the core region's order filled him with a strong sense of desire.

He also wanted his family to be relevant in Aldrian's eyes. Moreover, after Aldrian gave his permission for them to return to the secret realm where their ancestors once lived, they did not want to merely stay here just because it was their ancestral land.

They wanted to do something meaningful for Aldrian. They wanted to help Aldrian with something, just like how the Xin family helped him.

"Pardon me, Your Majesty. A guardian family? I truly did not expect this offer, and it made me unable to answer instantly. However, we are ready to be anything Your Majesty wishes us to be. If becoming a guardian family can help Your Majesty, then we will do so," Patriarch Rosalind said.

"No, if we can become one of the guardian families again like in the past, then it will be our family's greatest honor."

Aldrian smiled when he heard that and nodded.

"Good. After all, the Xin family has started to feel overwhelmed, as they are the only ones guarding the teleportation formation to the core region. To quickly enter the core region, people must pass through the teleportation formation guarded by the Xin family, and only from that place can they reach the core region instantly," he said.

"With so many people trying to visit the core region, it is not good to leave the Xin family alone with the task of guarding the gate."

"That is why I think another family is needed to help them share the burden. What could be more appropriate than a family that was once a guardian family in the past? You will become another gate connecting to the core region."

"Moreover, as I begin to build my own forces, they will also need to bring their families into the core region. It would be better to add one more gate to allow easier movement for their families to go back and forth from the core region."

"There is also the matter of the size of the core region, which is extremely large. The Xin family alone is not sufficient, and they need additional support."

Patriarch Rosalind nodded in understanding.

"I see," he said, but then his expression turned worried.

"But is it truly okay if we lack strength, Your Majesty? We are not as powerful as the Xin family at this moment. Although I said it would be our greatest honor to become a guardian family and serve you, I am afraid that due to our insufficient strength, we may fail to meet your expectations and instead become a burden."

"You don't have to worry about that, Patriarch Rosalind. Even if the Rosalind family currently lacks strength compared to the Xin family, I believe your family can do it. Moreover, most of the time, there will be no circumstances that require your family's strength," Aldrian said.

"Fortunately, everyone who wants to step into the core region has been self-aware and has never sought trouble until now. Even if someone seeks trouble in the future that is beyond the Rosalind family's ability to handle, direct punishment will come to them immediately." He added before he sipped his tea.

Patriarch Rosalind nodded before he also sipped his tea.

Knock! Knock!

They suddenly heard a knock on the door and looked toward it. They saw Patriarch Rosalind's wife and Elena entering, dressed neatly.

Aldrian smiled at them and stood up as they approached him, then gave a respectful bow.

"To the brightest star and eternal light, we greet Your Majesty, the Great Emperor."

"It is nice to see you again, Madam Cynthia, Elena," Aldrian replied. Both of them straightened their bodies and smiled at him.

"It is nice to meet you as well, Your Majesty. Please forgive us for not greeting you earlier. We truly did not expect your visit and had to prepare before coming to meet you." Madam Cynthia said.

"It is fine, Madam. Instead, I am the one who should apologize for coming without any notice and causing you and Elena inconvenience."

"No, Your Majesty. How could we make you apologize? Instead, it is our honor that you visited us," Madam Cynthia replied.

Aldrian nodded and looked at Elena with a smile. "Miss Elena, it seems you have grown stronger since I last saw you at my wedding with Baek Jimin. You are already approaching your next cultivation breakthrough. As expected of one of the geniuses of this era and one of the strongest swordmasters of our empire."

Elena smiled and slightly lowered her head. "Thank you for the compliment, Your Majesty. It is also because of the environment of this place that my cultivation has progressed much faster."

"I am glad to hear that," Aldrian replied.

They then joined the conversation and learned why Aldrian had visited them. It astonished them, but they supported whatever decision Patriarch Rosalind made.

In the end, the Rosalind family regained their status as one of the guardian families. They then discussed the details of what needed to be done and what they had to prepare in the near future.

Aldrian spent three hours with the Rosalind family before leaving the secret realm and returning to his palace.

Now, the matter regarding the guardian family was already settled, and it would reduce the Xin family's workload in the future.

For the rest of the day, he continued handling his duties as emperor while also keeping watch over any movements from the domains he had spread across space.

Time quickly flew by, and two weeks had already passed.

The situation of the empire was peaceful, and no trouble arose.

At this moment, Aldrian was receiving another visit from an acquaintance who had come from afar. He smiled the moment he saw Patriarch Geodard from the Blue Pearl World visiting again.

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Chapter 998 - 998: After He Left

[1,482 words]

Patriarch Geodard came alone, smiling as he approached Aldrian.

"Your Majesty, it is good to see you again and in good health," he said as he bowed the moment he arrived at the stairs that led to Aldrian's throne.

Aldrian approached Patriarch Geodard. "It is good to see you too, Patriarch. How is Sir Alric doing?"

"He is as healthy as ever, Your Majesty," Patriarch Geodard replied. "Anyway, although I am late, congratulations on Your Majesty's marriage with Empress Baek. We hope that Your Majesty lives a long and loving life with Empress Baek and all of Your Majesty's harem. This is our gift for Your Majesty's marriage."

Patriarch Geodard then took out a box from his storage ring and showed it to Aldrian before opening it.

"This is a ten-thousand-year dried red lotus from Berun Mountain. It can be used as one of the ingredients for making pills. However, it can also be eaten raw like this, and it will give a boost to cultivation. Even cultivators at the Emperor stage can still gain benefits from it," Patriarch Geodard explained.

"For demon cultivators, this lotus is an even more valuable treasure, as this herb is the most compatible with them and will give twice the benefit compared to other cultivators who consume it," he added.

"I hope that Your Majesty likes our gift." He then closed the box to prevent the lotus from losing its spiritual properties due to prolonged exposure to the air.

Aldrian understood whom this gift was directed toward, and he appreciated it. He smiled and took the box.

"Thank you for the gift, Patriarch. I really appreciate it," he said before storing it inside his storage ring.

Aldrian then brought Patriarch Geodard to walk toward the palace garden while they continued to chat.

"Is your family's situation good? Did you encounter any problems after I left? I thought that those families from other worlds might try to cause trouble after my departure," Aldrian asked.

"We are doing well, Your Majesty. As for those families, this is something I would like to talk to you about. Your Majesty must remember the intruders that Your Majesty warned us about at that time, right?"

Aldrian nodded.

"Not long after that, we managed to catch half of them alive after thorough preparation. We had to kill the rest because they intended to commit suicide by blowing themselves up. They were truly determined not to be captured. After a thorough and detailed investigation, we finally learned their identities. They were assassins from the Underworld's Feeder."

"The Underworld's Feeder is a famous assassin group in the White Ring Star Cluster. We still do not know where their main base is, but the group is known for successfully assassinating many powerful cultivators in the past."

"They were truly tough. We had to use unconventional methods to extract information from the ones we captured, and we also learned why they infiltrated our mansion." Patriarch Geodard then looked at Aldrian's face.

"Their target was you, Your Majesty. They intended to assassinate you."

Aldrian raised his eyebrows, and he could not help but smile.

"Assassinate me, huh? What a bold move."

Patriarch Geodard nodded. "However, they knew that Your Majesty is different from any other target they have killed in the past, and they were actually planning to use a method they had never used before."

"They planned to kill Your Majesty by blowing up the interstellar vessel that would bring Your Majesty back to the Central Star Cluster. We found a large amount of explosive powder in their possession, which they intended to place in any vessel that would carry Your Majesty."

"They would detonate the vessel while it was inside the wormhole. Essentially, they intended to kill everyone inside. Once a vessel is destroyed within a wormhole, the explosion would likely tear space apart and create a spatial rift, which would eventually trap in chaotic space."

"If the victims were lucky, their bodies might be thrown out somewhere. If not, they would not even leave behind a corpse, as the chaotic space would shred them to pieces."

Patriarch Geodard then snorted, his expression turning mocking. "However, unfortunately for them, they did not know that Your Majesty did not need to use an interstellar vessel to return to the Central Star Cluster. Those fools kept waiting and grew confused by Your Majesty's absence."

"In the end, we managed to catch them off guard, but as expected of members of the assassin group, they did not allow themselves to be captured easily."

Aldrian nodded. "Do you know who hired them?"

"Well, all of them died before they could say who hired them. However, we can guess for sure that those who hired them must not be far from the parties of the other worlds. With how Your Majesty humiliated them, I do not think those bastards could endure it, so they resorted to this kind of trick," Patriarch Geodard answered.

"However, because we do not have any proof, we cannot do anything for now. There is no way we can accuse that many families, as that would be the same as inviting trouble. While we are still restoring our world after the war, it is not wise to make many enemies at once."

Patriarch Geodard's expression turned irritated.

"Maybe they already predicted this, so they did not worry even if the assassins were caught. They thought we would not do anything even if we were suspicious of them."

Aldrian nodded. "That is true, and I also think that your decision to hold back is a wise one. Although you may find it irritating that your family cannot do anything because there is no evidence, it is still the best decision for now. And I believe that since they targeted me first, the Alfemin family will be fine as long as you do not act excessively against them,"

"With them targeting me, at least we know their priority target. They need to make sure that I am dead first before they come after your family or any power from Blue Pearl World. As long as I am alive, they will not touch your family or anyone from Blue Pearl World."

Patriarch Geodard frowned upon hearing this, then let out a sigh.

"Aish, with Your Majesty coming to the victory banquet, Your Majesty instead brought a problem to worry about. I am truly apologetic for this. If I had known, it would have been better if Your Majesty had not come to the victory banquet."

"Don't think about it. Instead, I am thankful that you invited me," Aldrian said as he waved his hand. "I enjoyed your world and also gained many benefits from it. As for those families, I don't care much about them, at least for now. They are not worthy of my attention, as there is a bigger problem that I have to focus on, and they also cannot do much considering how far they are from this place."

"They might be able to do many things in the White Ring Star Cluster, but in the Central Star Cluster? This is my home ground."

Patriarch Geodard nodded. They then conversed about other matters for an hour before Patriarch Geodard excused himself.

Aldrian then continued with his duties as emperor for the rest of the day.

Time continued to fly by, and another week passed. Aldrian was with his family, gathered in the garden as he played with Celestina and Sylvia. His parents, his harem, and Eleine were not far from Aldrian, and they laughed as they watched the happy expressions on Celestina and Sylvia's faces.

Ao Tianhai also observed them from a distance. Sometimes, he liked to observe how Aldrian lived, and that included his relationship with his family. He had never seen how Aldrian was in his past life, when he was still the Great Emperor who ruled all beings.

From the stories he had heard about him, Aldrian was a solitary being, yet he also had compassion for many beings.

He was someone who stood above all and knew everything. He was perfect, without even a single flaw or weakness.

However, what Ao Tianhai saw of Aldrian in this life was that he was a family man, full of affection. He liked to be surrounded by his family, and it made him appear full of weaknesses due to how deep their relationships were.

To him, family bonds could be considered weaknesses, points that could be taken advantage of by someone who wanted to harm Aldrian.

But looking at how happy Aldrian was, Ao Tianhai knew that for Aldrian, family was not a weakness. Instead, it was a source of his power.

This also made him more determined.

As long as Aldrian was happy, he would protect that source of happiness.

Aldrian carried the hope of the entire universe, and Ao Tianhai wanted to do as much as possible to help him.

Aldrian was still smiling as he played with Celestina, lifting her body several times. She liked it and kept giggling with her adorable voice.

However, Aldrian suddenly stiffened and stopped his movements. A few moments later, his expression turned solemn.

'They are finally coming.'

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Chapter 999 - 999: Arrival!

[1,415 words]

Looking at Aldrian, who suddenly turned silent, the others knew that something was bothering him at that moment. When they saw his serious expression, they realized that this was something he could not underestimate.

The atmosphere that was initially full of happiness and joy suddenly turned tense.

Aldrian then approached his parents while holding Celestina in his arms.

"Excuse me, but I think I have to go for now. There is something that I need to take care of," Aldrian said to his parents and his harem. He put Celestina down, which made her show a sad expression as she still wanted to play.

"Ah, no," she said as she stretched both her hands toward Aldrian, wanting to be lifted by him again. Aldrian smiled warmly at his little sister and instead stroked her head.

The others could not help but show worried expressions.

"Is it dangerous, son? You look so serious. What happened?" Irene asked.

Aldrian looked at his mother and smiled. "No, Mother, it's not dangerous. I will come back safely," he said.

Although Aldrian said that, the others knew that from his earlier reaction, this problem was not simple. However, Aldrian did not seem to want to explain further and instead showed that everything was alright with his smile, just like how he normally handled problems.

"Is it about the vision?" Angelica suddenly asked, which made the others look in her direction before turning their gaze back to Aldrian. They only saw him give her a smile before looking at Ao Tianhai in the distance.

"Tianhai, do you want to come with me to greet the large army of those so called devils?" he sent a voice transmission, which made Ao Tianhai stunned. But then his eyes glistened and he slightly bowed.

"I would like to follow Your Majesty, even to the hardest battle," he replied.

Aldrian then looked at the others again. "Please don't worry. This matter is still within my capability to take care of. If this were something I could not take care of, I would have already told all of you and brought all of you to escape." He said in a joking tone.

He never told them about the vampire king and his armies that were on their way to their world, as he did not think it was necessary. He did not want to add unnecessary worry to his family, and just like he said, this was a matter he could take care of.

"Alright, but whatever it is, please be careful," Irene said.

"My love, be safe. Whatever it is, you must come back," Sylphia also said.

The others remained silent, and their expressions were already obvious, as what the two women said represented their feelings and what they wanted to say to him.

Aldrian nodded and then stroked Celestina's and Silvia's heads one last time before he spoke to them.

"I'll leave for a moment. I will be back." His and Ao Tianhai's bodies instantly disappeared.

After they were gone, the others immediately looked at Angelica, as she seemed to know what had happened. Angelica then told them about her vision and how Aldrian planned to face them.

Aldrian and Ao Tianhai appeared in space, far from any planets. They were truly in the middle of nowhere, as this was the edge of the central star cluster.

Aldrian had already spread his domain throughout this vast region of space, and earlier, he had already sensed countless space disturbances.

He knew that this kind of disturbance could only be caused by a large group of interstellar vessels traveling through wormholes.

For such a large group of interstellar vessels to journey to the central star cluster at this moment, who else could it be other than the vampire king and his army?

With a calm expression, he looked ahead. He could sense the countless disturbances drawing closer at an incredible speed.

Ao Tianhai, who was still amazed by how they had suddenly appeared here, suddenly looked in a certain direction and narrowed his eyes. He could sense subtle space disturbances in the far distance, and their number was truly great.

"Your Majesty, there are countless space disturbances in the distance. They are coming in this direction."

Aldrian nodded. "Yes, I could sense it."

'As expected of a god. Even though his real cultivation is sealed, his sharpness and comprehension are still those of a divine being. If he were only a normal mortal, there is no way he could sense space disturbances from that far away,' Aldrian thought.

What Ao Tianhai could do was already beyond any mortal ability, no matter how much of a genius they were. Even if some mortals at the pseudo immortal stage could sense the space disturbances caused by interstellar vessels, they could only sense them a few moments before the vessels came out of the wormhole.

But this case, the vessels still quite a distance away. Even Aldrian could only sense it through his domain.

"Tianhai, I want you to hunt down any devils that could escape or survive from what I am about to do." Aldrian said.

"Yes, Your Majesty. Leave it to me. I will not let even a single one of those bastard followers live," Ao Tianhai replied firmly.

Aldrian nodded as he continued looking ahead.

"Here they come," he said.

Not far from them, a large group of interstellar vessels was already about to emerge from the wormhole.

The devils were already preparing themselves, wearing their armor and equipping any artifacts they needed. Their expressions showed no tension or fear.

Instead, they were filled with excitement and anticipation.

They could hardly wait to enter the battlefield and feel the thrill of it. They already missed the smell of blood and the screams of their victims whenever their weapons claimed lives. They wanted to feel the sensation of ripping and cutting through the flesh of their enemies.

They wanted chaos and war!

"We are already near. Be prepared. Once you get out of the vessels, kill anyone who is not our kin," one of the commanders shouted to the other devils.

"You can look for treasures or anything else later, after we make sure that we have conquered the entire central star cluster. Remember, do not embarrass our army and our god. Show them the horror of His Majesty's troops, the ones feared across the First Heaven!"

"UWOOO!" The devils' war cry echoed throughout the large hall. They were truly full of fighting spirit.

"I can't wait to kill. I wonder how many times they can withstand my blade's strike. I hope they are not too fragile," one of the devil commanders said as he licked his blade.

"I wonder how strong the cultivators of the central star cluster are. They must be strong to dare kill His Highness," another said with a calm expression, as if the war meant nothing to him.

"I doubt they are strong enough to withstand our overall strength. We have more than a trillion troops, and some of them are even from the higher heavens. No matter what, the fate of the central star cluster has already been sealed after this," another commented.

"How dare they kill His Highness? Forget about His Majesty. Even I will storm them myself with my battalion. I will show them the horror that awaits those who mess with us!" a woman said with a furious expression.

This woman was one of Rulleus' women, so to the others, her fury was understandable.

They thought that this woman would go crazy in the coming war and might personally look for the one who killed Rulleus.

As all the devil troops were already ready for war, the Vampire King was inside the control room of his vessel.

He heard one of the operators reporting to him.

"We will arrive and exit the wormhole in five, four, three, two, one."

The sudden sensation of deceleration swept through all the devils inside the vessels, and one by one, the vessels emerged from the wormhole. Their number kept increasing, and they soon began to cover a vast region of space.

The sight was truly terrifying, as if there were no end to the interstellar vessels continuously emerging from the wormholes.

The Vampire King finally saw a different sight in front of his vessel other than the wormhole, and his eyes glistened dangerously.

Finally, he had arrived at the central star cluster.

As the large armada kept moving forward, one of the operators suddenly reported to him.

"Your Majesty, we have detected two figures in the distance."

The Vampire King then looked at the screen and saw the silhouettes of two figures.

As the vessel continued to approach, he could finally see them clearly.

The moment he saw the face of one of them, he froze before his expression turned furious.

'That bastard!'

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Chapter 1000 - 1000: Observing Each Other

[1,770 words]

The Vampire King's furious expression could not be contained, and he unconsciously released his aura. His powerful aura caused the surrounding space to become wobbly, and immense pressure fell upon the entire control room.

"That fucking bastard!" he growled as he walked out of the control room.

"Stop the vessel!" he ordered while leaving.

The vessel stopped a moment later, and when the other vessels saw the lead vessel halt, they also began to stop one by one. They had already sensed two figures ahead of the armada's path and wondered who those two individuals were to make the lead vessel stop.

One of them seemed human, while the other was clearly a dragon in human form.

Normally, they would instantly kill anyone who stood in their path without stopping. However, their king had ordered the vessel to halt, prompting the rest to do the same.

Some commanders from different vessels wondered about what had happened, and they wanted to leave their vessels to see for themselves.

As the armada stopped, Aldrian and Ao Tianhai observed them. The fact that they had stopped meant the Vampire King could see him, which caused that angry father to halt his vessel.

Aldrian had already expected the devils to arrive with a large army. The vision described by Angelica was enough for him to imagine how massive the devil troops were

However, seeing them directly gave a different sensation. The large number of massive interstellar vessels filling the space in front of him was truly intimidating. It was as if there were no end to the lines of vessels stretching into the distance. Aldrian estimated the number of the devil troops might reach hundreds of billions or even trillions.

If this army were to truly invade the Ancient Blue Gate World, it would surely turn into a disaster. Although the Ancient Blue Gate World had many strong cultivators, their numbers were too much for them to contain.

Even the entire central star cluster would fall into chaos if this large army began to spread across other worlds.

That was why he had to stop them here, right before they could move deeper into the star cluster.

"They surely sent many insects here. Ah, I really want to crush them all. After being sealed for who knows how long, I feel like I want to warm my muscles, Your Majesty," Ao Tianhai commented.

"I know you are excited, but at this moment, your true cultivation is sealed. This number of enemies could endanger you if you fight them recklessly. You might kill many of them, but their numbers are their weapon. They will overwhelm you," Aldrian replied.

If Ao Tianhai had his true cultivation, facing this number of armies would be easy. He would not even need to lift a finger to kill them. A single breath alone would be enough to obliterate this many troops.

To a god, mortals were not even insects. They were like specks of dust. They were nothing before divine beings.

"Yes, Your Majesty. I just said what was inside my mind without much thought, but I can still think clearly. I know that I cannot use most of my powers, so I also know that I cannot underestimate them," Ao Tianhai said.

Aldrian smiled slightly. "Good, but you might have your chance later, so be prepared."

They then finally saw someone come out from the lead interstellar vessel, and that figure was followed by several others. The moment Aldrian saw who this figure was, he smirked.

He had finally met one of the four overlords of the central region of heaven. The one who was given control over the southern territory of the First Heaven by his higher-ups, or even by Tarius himself, as the vampire king's jurisdiction.

The Vampire King, Virusius van Reinfer.

'Virusius van Reinfer. His true cultivation is at Immortal Saint stage, so it is safe to say that he has reached the top of the pyramid of the Second Heaven,' Aldrian thought after reading the Vampire King's information through the system.

He also looked at the people behind the Vampire King, and all of them were cultivators who had come from the higher heavens.

As Aldrian and Ao Tianhai observed the Vampire King and his group, the Vampire King and his group also observed Aldrian and Ao Tianhai.

Although at this moment he was truly furious after finally meeting his son's killer, he could still think clearly and did not simply dash forward to try to kill Aldrian. The first thing he did was observe Aldrian, and he had to admit that he was astonished deep inside.

He had thought that Aldrian was at least at the Pseudo Immortal stage, considering how Aldrian had sent a powerful karmic attack that was enough to endanger him.

But to think that Aldrian was still only a Pseudo Immortal Establishment stage cultivator. And he was even in the middle realm of that stage.

Did that not mean that he, the Vampire King, had been harboring vengeance all this time over a mere Pseudo Immortal Establishment stage cultivator? The source of all his wrath was actually caused by a mere Immortal Establishment stage cultivator?

An existence that should be like an ant before him could make him, the great king, feel this way?

The veins on his forehead and neck bulged more visibly as he felt he had been played by his own judgment. But then confusion settled in as he finally noticed a problem.

"If he is only a Pseudo Immortal Establishment stage cultivator, how could he destroy the manifestation of my spiritual sense and send that powerful karmic attack? If he is

only at the Pseudo Immortal Establishment stage, there is no way he could withstand even the power of my spiritual sense manifestation." The Vampire King thought.

Then there was also a dragon beside Aldrian. He did not know what kind of dragon it was, but he could not help feeling a certain pressure coming from it. His soul even gave off a sensation that made him want to revere that dragon.

This single sensation alone was enough to shock him even more.

How was it possible for this dragon to make him feel this way?

He suddenly remembered a moment from the past when he had felt a similar sensation. Back then, when he stood upon the altar and his god communicated with him, even though he could not see his god, he could clearly feel how his soul instinctively worshiped that presence.

It had felt as though it was only natural for him to prostrate himself before that existence and its aura.

And now, as he approached that dragon, he felt more or less the same sensation.

How could that be? Who was this dragon?

Yet despite what he felt, he resisted that sensation and forced it aside. He continued approaching Aldrian and finally stopped a few kilometers away from him.

Silence followed as both sides merely looked at each other. But in the end, the Vampire King was the first to speak.

"You... are you the bastard who killed my son?"

Aldrian smiled when he heard the question. "What do you think?"

Hearing that answer, the Vampire King no longer needed confirmation. He had already confirmed that this person was truly the one who killed his son. He gritted his teeth as his oppressive aura leaked into the surroundings. Space trembled, and even those near him began to retreat, unwilling to be affected by the Vampire King's wrath.

Aldrian suddenly stretched out his hand, and another figure appeared in his grasp. It was a man in a haggard and shabby condition. At first, the man's eyes were dull and lifeless, but they quickly cleared as he realized he was no longer in the same place.

He had been inside his cell just a moment ago, and now he was in open space.

But he instantly saw what was in front of him, and the moment his gaze fell upon the Vampire King, his soul trembled as fear instantly gripped him.

"Your Majesty?" he blurted out unconsciously before immediately falling silent.

The Vampire King was also stunned when another figure suddenly appeared in Aldrian's grasp, but then he finally recognized the figure.

"Xarz? You are still alive?" he asked.

Xarz, frozen in fear, did not answer. He did not know what to do. If he chose the wrong words, he would likely die right here. Aldrian was behind him, and the Vampire King was before him.

"Do you know that thanks to this man, I was able to get your son so easily?" Aldrian suddenly said, causing Xarz's heart to turn cold. "I am truly thankful that he sold Rulleus to me in exchange for his own life."

The Vampire King froze for a moment before his aura erupted.

"XARZ!" he roared. His crimson aura burst outward violently and swept toward Aldrian.

However, Aldrian easily shielded them with a spatial barrier that protected them from the bloody aura. The aura itself was extremely dangerous as he could sense powerful curse laws embedded within it.

He was quite impressed, because even with just his aura, the Vampire King could kill someone at the same cultivation level as himself.

One of Rulleus' women, who had become one of the commanders, gritted her teeth and looked at the Vampire King.

"Your Majesty, please let me bring all of their heads to you. I will avenge His Highness's death," she said.

The Vampire King did not answer immediately and continued to stare at Aldrian with a fierce expression.

He himself wanted to move personally, as he was close to losing his mind under the weight of his fury. However, after thinking it through, it would be better to first test what these people were capable of.

Only after a few seconds did he finally speak.

"Bring their heads to me."

Hearing the order, the woman's eyes glistened as she bowed. "I will bring their heads to you." After that, she flew toward Aldrian with a cruel smile.

She was a vampire, but she also wielded a sword as she unsheathed it from its scabbard.

"I can finally avenge His Highness myself, you bastard who doesn't know the immensity between heaven and earth!" she shouted fiercely at Aldrian.

She was not deterred by Ao Tianhai, even though she felt the same unsettling sensation that the Vampire King had felt. She continued to approach them regardless.

Her fury was far greater and at this moment, she only wanted to kill.

Her smile turned crazy as her sword suddenly turned crimson. Her figure dissolved into red mist, which rapidly surrounded Aldrian.

"I will enjoy torturing you, so please don't die too easily," her voice echoed within the thick mist.

However, not even two seconds after that bold declaration, Ao Tianhai merely swept his hand.

A split second later, blood splattered everywhere, and a small portion of the mist condensed into the shape of a head that flew to the side.

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