

## U. Warlord 1181

Chapter 1181: Gift of the Worlds

Fang Yi, who was already skilled at using karmic power for his ultimate attack, saw the hall draped in radiant golden light formed from dense ropes of golden thread. At that moment, his sight was clearer than even Zhang Lie's.

As he followed the threads to their other end, he saw a glittering light illuminate the hall, like stardust.

The king of chaos explained, "Following these threads will allow you to find the remaining map fragments scattered across the three thousand worlds. Step forward, Nightdemon."

Nightdemon sighed as he stepped forward. The king of chaos commanded him, "I think you've had enough fun as a spectator. Command all the other clones to do their best to search for the map fragments. I've transmitted the coordinates to the fragments to all of you—I don't expect it'll be too difficult."

Nightdemon grumbled, "All you ever do is leave us with the menial errands!"

"Scram!" the king of chaos called out.

Nightdemon's white coat, stained by blood, slowly turned a dark-red color. The red of Nightdemon's coat deepened and darkened until it was almost black. Then, it flashed and opened wide, transforming into a pair of bat's wings.

The black wings wrapped around Nightdemon as he took to the sky. When they unfurled again, he had morphed into a gigantic bat with a brilliant white smile the shape of a crescent moon, as though he were mocking the entire world. A fiery-red eye widened, then split into three. Everyone nearby felt a deathly sense of fear.

The king of chaos recalled something.

"Right, I forgot. Tell the Black Pharaoh and the Faceless God to remain behind. There's something important I'll need them to do."

The black bat nodded, then flew out of the hall as it flapped its wings.

The king of chaos tossed Zhang Lie the map fragments in his hands. Zhang Lie hurriedly reached forward and grabbed them all before they scattered, his hands leaving afterimages through the air.

From a rough count, the king of chaos had over fifty thousand such fragments.

"If there's nothing else, king of chaos, I'll be leaving now. Once you gather all the map fragments, have Nightdemon bring it to the draconian world—he's familiar with the location, after all."

The king of chaos called out to Zhang Lie, "Hold on! Collecting the map fragments might be tedious, but my clones work quickly. Before they return, let's discuss a problem."

"What?"

The king of chaos continued, "Your previous wish."

Collecting the map fragments was his wish...?

"Unifying the three thousand worlds." The king of chaos reiterated Zhang Lie's original wish.

Zhang Lie hesitated.

The members of Team Zenith glanced at each other, nervous.

Neither the king of chaos nor the members of Team Zenith knew that Zhang Lie had no interest in unifying the three thousand worlds at all. He had never boasted such ambitions; rather, that had been the collective wish of Hong Tianqi and the members of Team Zenith.

When the king of chaos asked for his wish, it had come to mind—but only as a conversation starter. After all, the king of chaos was also a part of the three thousand worlds, and unifying the worlds would involve taking the king of chaos as subordinate.

The world of primordial chaos was counted among the three thousand worlds, and for Zhang Lie to control them all meant that he would also control the world of primordial chaos, and correspondingly also the halls of chaos and the king of chaos himself.

The king of chaos wanted to make Zhang Lie his subordinate, not to become Zhang Lie's subordinate. That would be too far-fetched.

The king of chaos, the strongest of the kings of the realm, would hardly deign to be someone else's subordinate.

Even though the world of primordial chaos was located in a high-dimensional space removed from the third realm, the high-dimensional space was connected to it and part of it in its own right.

It would be far too unrealistic for the king of chaos to agree to this wish of unification, and Zhang Lie had known that going in.

The reason he had done so was to agitate the king of chaos.

Collecting all the map fragments from among the three thousand worlds was a tedious and time-consuming task. If he had started with that wish, the king of chaos might not have agreed so readily, and might have even asked Zhang Lie questions that he didn't want to answer.

In contrast, by stating the wish immediately after one that could not be fulfilled, the king of chaos would agree to it much more readily. However, why was the king of chaos bringing up the original wish now?

The king of chaos continued, "Given your current abilities, it wouldn't be too difficult to unify the three thousand worlds, and there's no need to make a wish to accomplish it. You've taken down all the superior kings of antiquity, and the remaining three newly ascended superior kings are your companions. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to claim that you're only one step away from unifying the realm."

"You're not wrong."

"The only thing barring your way is me."

The guests understood what the king of chaos meant. "If the world of primordial chaos were to fall to Zhang Lie, he would have unified the realm..."

They were again shocked by Zhang Lie's feats. They knew that Zhang Lie had defeated all the superior kings of antiquity, but hearing it stated outright, and by the king of chaos, no less...

The king of chaos continued, "That was why you made such a wish, wasn't it?"

With the king of chaos' permission, Zhang Lie would have unified the realm.

Zhang Lie didn't respond. He looked toward the king of chaos silently, waiting for him to continue.

"Actually, I wouldn't mind fulfilling this wish, but it'll take more than a simple match to do so." The king of chaos raised three fingers. "For as major a wish as unifying the third realm, one match isn't enough. We'll have to do three, at least."

Zhang Lie's eyes widened.

"What?!" The members of Team Zenith were shocked stiff by the implication.

Zhang Lie asked, "Do you really intend to fulfill this wish? Could you construct another set of three thousand worlds?"

The king of chaos shook his head. "I am hardly omnipotent, and I have no such ability. Perhaps the king of keys could have done so, but you killed him and destroyed this possibility."

"In that case—"

The king of chaos continued, "I've simply lost interest in the three thousand worlds, and it makes no difference to me whether I hand them to you or not. Of course, this is predicated on your victory. If you lose, not only will you be unable to unify the realm, you'll also have to join the halls of chaos."

Chapter 1182: The Revived Death Spirit King

The king of chaos didn't want to give up on Zhang Lie so easily. As long as he managed to secure Zhang Lie, the rest of Team Zenith would also fall into his hands.

Zhang Lie frowned. "Are you crazy? Unifying the third realm would mean that everything in it belongs to me—even the world of primordial chaos and the halls of chaos!"

The king of chaos smirked. "Are you scared?"

"Not me—I'm just worried the stakes are too high for you."

The king of chaos laughed again. "Predicated on your victory."

Despite the Null Source being no match for Zhang Lie, the king of chaos remained confident. There was clearly something up his sleeve.

"You won't be competing with me yourself, will you?" Zhang Lie frowned.

The king of chaos replied, "I will—"

Zhang Lie made to back down.

"—but not with my main body. With my clones, instead."

Zhang Lie relaxed. He stood a chance, in that case. The king of chaos' clones were very strong, boasting supreme power among the three thousand worlds—but they were still weaker than the king of chaos himself.

There wasn't a big difference between three matches and one.

The king of chaos called out, "What, don't you dare? Think of the prize—the three thousand worlds!"

Zhang Lie gritted his teeth. "I'll accept the challenge."

The king of chaos laughed. "Haha! Think of this as some entertainment while waiting for the fragments. My clones are on their way."

Dressed in a long, elegant robe, with a black steel mask on his face, his eyes as dark as the river Lethe, a scepter in his left hand, and a black tome in his right, came the king of chaos' clone. Black bandages trailed down his arms; his prideful appearance was imbued with a force of primal attraction, one that belonged to a deity of darkness or a fallen angel.

Zhang Lie was shocked by the sight of the clone. Flustered, he cried out, "What are you doing here?!"

When the king of chaos saw Zhang Lie's reaction, he smiled in satisfaction. "How's my clone?"

This was the most out of sorts Zhang Lie had been since the start of the banquet.

"Your clone?"

The king of chaos nodded. "My newest clone, the Black Pharaoh."

To Zhang Lie, however, this clone was clearly the death spirit king. Zhang Lie's hands trembled in overwhelming shock. The death spirit king, whom Zhang Lie had defeated and who had perished in the aftermath of the war, had appeared before him once more as the king of chaos' clone...

Zhang Lie quickly understood what had happened. "I see. The reason you wanted to kill the death spirit king yourself, and the reason you claimed his corpse, was in order to create a new clone for yourself. You have the ability to transform corpses into clones—I don't think you should be called the king of chaos, but rather the king of the dead."

The king of chaos shrugged. "You've got one part right, at least."

Zhang Lie glanced all around him as he sucked in a deep breath.

To Zhang Lie, all the guests of the halls of chaos suddenly looked as though they were marionettes."

The king of chaos sighed. "They're all my guests, not my clones."

Zhang Lie continued to frown. He was unable to identify whether or not the guests really weren't the king of chaos' clones. He wanted to confirm something.

"Do you want to make me into your clone?"

Upon hearing Zhang Lie's hypothesis, the members of Team Zenith all looked toward the king of chaos with wild looks on their faces.

The king of chaos scowled. "I'm not a maniac—I wouldn't turn my companions into clones."

Zhang Lie's face darkened. He had promised to fight, and he wouldn't back out now. Regardless, one thing was clear: he couldn't lose this match.

Although he couldn't sense the same energy on the guests of chaos as on the king of chaos and his clones, who knew whether this was a ploy on the king of chaos' part?

Despite what the king of chaos claimed, if Zhang Lie really were to lose to one of the king of chaos' clones, what awaited him might not be revival via time reversal, but instead immediate cloning.

Zhang Lie turned to comfort the members of Team Zenith.

"There's no need to worry. We simply have to win."

The thought of unifying the three thousand worlds was too tempting to give up on, especially when it was offered so freely.

The king of chaos returned to his seat.

"Begin, then."

With a wave of the Black Pharaoh's black scepter, the river Lethe surged forward. Along the river, countless dead spirits congregated and were propelled toward Zhang Lie.

"[Fists of the Silent Sea: Soar]!" Pale blue genetic energy rippled about Zhang Lie's arms. He flicked his wrists, causing a frightening aura to descend on the world. The hall began to darken, and a fish the size of a whale materialized in the air.

A howling gale swept over the hall. As more and more genetic energy gathered around Zhang Lie's arms, it looked as though he were at the heart of a whirlpool.

A huge wave soared into the air. As Zhang Lie punched forward, the fish slammed its huge tail on the ground and sent a torrent of water surging.

Ripples of energy spread out from Zhang Lie, warping the space around him. The towering waves looked like enraged black dragons, flooding the arena.

A huge rumble shook the heavens, and the entire hall quaked.

The river and the spirits it conveyed were all smashed to pieces. A frightening burst of energy emitted from Zhang Lie in the aftermath of the attack, causing the world of primordial chaos itself to quake.

The explosion of energy was like a ravenous beast that swallowed up all life in its vicinity.

Countless black bandages appeared on the Black Pharaoh's body, each inscribed with incomprehensible runes.

The black bandages somehow managed to block the waves of energy in their entirety.

The Black Pharaoh pointed at the ground with his scepter, drawing a circle around himself. His voice was hoarse and sounded like the screams of hellbound spirits. "Wind, forbidden."

The Black Pharaoh's invocation seemed to touch on natural law itself. The next moment, all the air went still in his vicinity, the air that had been rampaging an instant before turning as calm and docile as a puppy.

The Black Pharaoh struck forward with his scepter, parting the tides of energy in twain.

"[The Boundless Blade: Yawning Wave]!"

Zhang Lie extended his pointer finger like a sword, and water-attuned genetic energy gathered around it. As he waved his finger, sword energy erupted like a wave, accompanied by a giant shark.

Sword energy flew toward the Black Pharaoh, who intoned once more, "Swords, weapons, forbidden."

The moment the Black Pharaoh spoke, the sword energy winked out. However, the shark composed of genetic energy continued to surge toward him, and he had to fend off the attack with his scepter.

Zhang Lie called out, "What an interesting ability."

Black genetic energy poured from his body, corroding the surrounding air, and gathered by his back.

"[Ninecarp Transformation]!" The black serpent, which resembled the world-swallowing serpent Jormungandr, let out a threatening hiss as its scales clicked together.

Chapter 1183: Time Reversal

"You're able to temporarily impose a rule in the vicinity of the arena, extending into the hall, but only one rule. Once the imposition on bladed weapons took effect, that on the wind was nullified. Furthermore, you can only restrict a certain object or class of objects—in my previous attack, you only blocked the sword energy, not the shark." Zhang Lie pointed out the flaws and restrictions on the Black Pharaoh's ability.

The Black Pharaoh didn't reply. With his scepter in hand, he formed a cordon of annihilation energy around himself in the form of black sand.

The death spirit king's energy of annihilation grew even more frightening in the king of chaos' hands.

Each grain of black sand boasted enough energy to destroy a small world. The black sand rose up in a torrent around the Black Pharaoh, whose scepter turned the sand into a terrifying sandstorm.

"[Fists of the Silent Sea: Fade]!" Zhang Lie punched forward, and the black serpent behind him shot forth.

The black serpent, which corroded everything in its wake, smashed into the sandstorm of annihilation. The serpent was unable to penetrate through the sandstorm and perished by its outskirts.

The death spirit king, after transforming into the king of chaos' clone, gained more abilities and even grew stronger.

As Zhang Lie activated his blood ant and dragonwolf soulshards, he transformed into a dragonwolf with russet fur and limbs covered with dragons' scales. His aura became magnified as a hurricane of blood spawned around him.

Swiping forward with his claws, he tore apart the black sandstorm with blood-red genetic energy.

The Black Pharaoh waved his scepter and gathered up the sand to form a black lion. The lion opened its jaws wide, intending to swallow Zhang Lie.

"[Fists of the Silent Sea: Fade]!" As Zhang Lie punched forward, a blood dragon roared in outrage and shot forward.

The blood dragon smashed into the black lion, knocking it back and causing a cavity to form in its 'flesh'. Subsequently, the energy of annihilation exploded around itself, quickly encountering Zhang Lie's version of the same and counteracting one another.

"[Fists of the Silent Sea: Hundred Dragons Soaring]!"

Blood-red genetic energy burst forth from Zhang Lie as though there were hundreds, thousands of dragons surging throughout his body. Each muscle formed a dragon, and a horde of dragons launched out of Zhang Lie's left arm as he expended half his genetic energy in one supercharged attack.

Howling with the force of thunder, a horde of over a hundred blood dragons flew through the air, swooping down like meteors at the Black Pharaoh.

The Black Pharaoh waved his scepter, weaving black sand in a shield over the sky.

The blood dragons struck the black sand and formed eddies of destruction that swept over the arena. The Black Pharaoh drew a circle by his feet and shouted, "Destruction, forbidden."

The burgeoning energy of destruction that filled the air winked out. The next moment, Zhang Lie appeared before the Black Pharaoh, skewering his chest with sharp claws. Even the Black Pharaoh's bandages were unable to stop the attack.

The Black Pharaoh's sharp eyes revealed fear for the first time. While he was dealing with the blood dragons, Zhang Lie had made use of his exceptional speed to launch a sneak attack on the Black Pharaoh, whose bandages reacted automatically to the attack. Zhang Lie unsheathed Guicang and cut the bandages to shreds.

Then, he spun his body and cleanly bisected the Black Pharaoh.

The king of chaos praised, "Excellent, excellent! As expected of you. An opponent you defeated, even when converted into my clone, can't best you."

If the king of chaos had hands, he would be furiously clapping right now.

Upon witnessing the fight between Zhang Lie and his clone, the king of chaos grew even more invested in recruiting Zhang Lie to the halls of chaos.

Zhang Lie raised his head. "King of chaos, this is enough probing, I should think—show your true strength, or the three thousand worlds will be forfeit."

The king of chaos reverted time, reconstituting the Black Pharaoh's body.

"Don't be so agitated—there's no need for us to be enemies. It's just a match to while away the time. My next clone will be different. I created and tended to it over the course of many years, so you'd better be careful."

The Black Pharaoh retreated to the king of chaos' side. Perhaps because it had just been created, this clone was far less agile and lively than Nightdemon and the others, and seemed more like a puppet.

The doors to the halls of chaos opened once more, and a winged human-faced lion, with two pairs of wings on its back, walked in.

Where its face should have been, there was only a sunken depression, like a swirling whirlpool, though with the contours of a face around it. The whirlpool seemed to be bottomless, like a portal to the abyss that swallowed up the rays of light around them.

There was a hoop of light on its back, like a clock of some sort.

The king of chaos introduced, "This is the second clone who will be participating in this battle, Faceless."

Faceless flapped its wings and flew into the air, the bottomless whirlpool facing Zhang Lie.

The king of chaos continued, "This is the second most recent clone I created. Before I did so, it was once the subordinate of the death spirit king and a superior king in its own right. After Nightdemon slew it, he brought it here."

Zhang Lie murmured, "How pitiful! Not only did his subordinate become your clone, he became your clone as well."

Faceless flapped its wings and swooped downward, its claws raking the air and making tearing noises.

"[Ninecarp Transformation: Golden Tiger]!"

The image of a golden tiger appeared behind Zhang Lie's back, and its roar echoed through the air. A golden aura suffused Zhang Lie. A mountain of blades rested atop the tiger's back, and Zhang Lie's body itself underwent a transformation. His hair turned silvery-white, until they became akin to silver needles.

His genetic energy likewise became more honed. Silvery-white genetic energy gathered over his body, and tigers' stripes appeared on his arms. His eyes became those of a tiger's, and steely sharpness erupted from every pore.

"[Fists of the Silent Sea: Fade]!"

The [Fists of the Silent Sea] formed a fist in combination with the black serpent form and a mallet with the golden tiger. The condensed genetic energy solidified into sharp silver crystal, which speared through the air and penetrated deep into Faceless' abdomen. The overwhelming momentum pinned Faceless' body to one wall of the hall, and fresh blood leaked out from the wound.

Zhang Lie taunted, "Faceless? How about Useless?"

For it to have lost in one blow... even the members of Team Zenith, watching from a distance, were tittering among themselves.

"King of chaos, is this a joke?"

The next moment, however, everyone was dumbfounded.

The loop of light to Faceless' back glowed, then reversed direction as though time were turning backwards. Fang Yi's eyes widened. "Temporal manipulation!"

Faceless, who had just been pinned to the wall, reappeared in front of Zhang Lie's face.

Zhang Lie didn't launch an attack, but sharp silver crystals still speared through the air and flew toward Faceless once more.

#### Chapter 1184: The Last Match

The white crystals shot through the air like spears. This time, however, they didn't pierce through Faceless' abdomen.

Faceless flapped its wings and avoided the attack. Time flowed backwards—no, time had reversed. Faceless, shockingly, had the power to travel through time.

"Once, twice, thrice—even if we were to repeat this scenario a hundred, a thousand times, nothing would change!"

"[Fists of the Silent Sea: Fade]!" A crystal wall appeared behind Zhang Lie, reflecting light in five colors, so dazzling it dazed any who looked at it, so beautiful it sparked their desire.

As Zhang Lie manipulated the high-dimensional space, that crystalline genetic energy shot out of the wall behind him in the form of sharp daggers, able to penetrate anything thanks to Zhang Lie's mastery of space.

The daggers tore through space in a storm of silver.

Faceless, overwhelmed by the barrage, was struck clean through—before the hoop of light on his back began to rotate counter-clockwise, as though time were turning back.

The daggers shot backwards from where they had been embedded in the wall, transforming back into genetic energy and spatial force.

The daggers tore through space in a storm of silver.

Faceless' wings caused him to revolve in mid-air, knocking the daggers aside and covering him in a burst of yellow sand.

"[Fists of the Silent Sea: Hundred Dragons Soaring]!"

As Zhang Lie cocked his fist, dozens of crystalline dragons formed behind his back, roaring in unison and causing the hall to tremble. The next moment, they shot out through his fists. Hundreds of crystalline dragons interwove through the hall in a stunning, dazzling display.

The crystalline dragons were inordinately strong and beautiful. They tore apart the barrier of yellow sand and attacked Faceless behind, shredding him within moments. Time turned back again, and the crystalline dragons again interwove through the hall.

Faceless' claws smashed apart crystal dragon after crystal dragon.

Those dragons that had been shattered burst open into a rain of crystalline flecks, each as sharp as a blade. They perforated Faceless as the hoop of light to its back flowed counterclockwise, and the crystalline dragons again interwove through the hall.

Faceless dodged the crystalline dragons in the air, but there were simply too many of them. The beautiful dragons swooped through the air and bit at Faceless as it reversed time once more. The

hundreds of dragons returned where they had manifested, and Faceless seized the opportunity to attack Zhang Lie head-on.

Zhang Lie morphed into a beam of bloody light and appeared before Faceless, smashing a leg into its face and sending it flying. The crystalline dragons to his back took the opportunity to pounce on Faceless as time reversed once more. The king of chaos shouted, "That's enough!"

The crystalline dragons hovered in the air, not swooping down on Faceless, while Faceless also remained motionless as it waited for the king of chaos' command.

The king of chaos grumbled impatiently, "If the match were to continue, we'd end up in a loop. It's not an interesting fight at all—let's call it a victory for you, Zhang Lie."

Zhang Lie grumbled, "What do you mean, call it a victory for me? I would have won if we were to keep fighting!"

The king of chaos asked, "You mean to say that Faceless wouldn't be able to take you down no matter what?"

Zhang Lie nodded. "The fact that this clone boasts power over time is interesting. I was initially quite scared when I saw its time reversal, but its own strength is too limited."

The king of chaos agreed. "After all, it was originally the death spirit king's subordinate, and it makes sense that it's not too strong. However, time reversal is a very rare ability, and it's well worth collecting."

"It's not that I'm weak, but rather that you're strong," Faceless corrected. "I did my fair share of research before fighting you based on the information I obtained from Nightdemon, and I was familiar with your techniques—only for you to change things up at the last second." Despite being faceless, Faceless was somehow still able to speak.

Zhang Lie rolled his eyes. "While fighting the Black Pharaoh, I surmised that Nightdemon had to have informed the king of chaos about the techniques I used in the past. As fellow clones of the king of chaos, all of you became aware of my techniques and their counters—but thinking that those are all the techniques I know is far too naive."

The king of chaos opined, "That's not so certain. In truth, the ultimate victor would be difficult to predict. Although the cost of time reversal is as exorbitant as expected, considering that ordinary superior kings would hardly be able to grasp such temporal manipulation in full, you must be aware that I'm connected to my clones, and they can draw power and energy from me as necessary."

Faceless concluded, "You might very well run out of energy first."

Zhang Lie grumbled, "Isn't that cheating?"

The king of chaos replied, "They're all my clones; from a qualitative perspective, we're all a single entity. Whence the cheating?"

Zhang Lie snorted. "Regardless, I was the winner."

"Don't be so happy just yet," the king of chaos warned. "You might have won two matches, but there's a third one left."

Zhang Lie appeared unbothered. "If they're all so weak, I'd be able to face twenty more such opponents."

"Indeed? You'd best be prepared, then."

The king of chaos' remark left Zhang Lie with an uneasy premonition.

Somehow, on the king of chaos' unspoken order, a layer of high-dimensional space peeled away from before Zhang Lie like an onion. This was a very familiar scene.

After six layers of space were peeled away, a giant black bat was revealed, with a brilliant white smile the shape of a crescent moon, as though he were mocking the entire world. A fiery-red eye widened, then split into three. Everyone nearby felt a deathly sense of fear.

"You really are a slave driver, aren't you? First dispatching us to collect all these map fragments, then back here to participate in a match. Don't we clones have human rights?"

Of course, this black bat was none other than Nightdemon.

The king of chaos was unruffled. "Am I not you?" You insulting me is equivalent to insulting yourself.

Zhang Lie asked, "Is Nightdemon my next opponent, then?"

Nightdemon sighed. "Don't do this—Zhang Lie and I are comrades in arms!"

The king of chaos asked, "Don't you want Zhang Lie to join the halls of chaos?"

Nightdemon pursed his lips. "Of course I do, but Zhang Lie's unwilling to do so. It's never a good idea to force someone against their will."

The king of chaos continued, "If you win, I'll give you a vacation."

Nightdemon flapped his wings in excitement, the Shining Trapezohedron hanging off his feet. "Come, Zhang Lie, let's have an exciting fight to the death!"

Zhang Lie:...

Nightdemon roared, "You fellow, I've been wanting to punch you for quite some time now. Aren't you going to fight me?"

Indeed, compared to the Black Pharaoh from before, or even Faceless, Nightdemon behaved not like a clone but rather like a living alien in his own right, with his own mentality and thoughts.

Nightdemon radiated an invisible light as its three red eyes stared at Zhang Lie, magnifying his aura of fear.

Even so, Zhang Lie's willpower was extremely strong, and he brushed off much of the mental effects.

Chapter 1185: Spatial Relic

"[Fists of the Silent Sea: Soar]!"

Pale blue genetic energy rippled about Zhang Lie's arms. He flicked his wrists, causing a frightening aura to descend on the world. The hall began to darken, and a fish the size of a whale materialized in the air.

A howling gale swept over the hall. As more and more genetic energy gathered around Zhang Lie's arms, it looked as though he were at the heart of a whirlpool.

A huge wave soared into the air. As Zhang Lie punched forward, the fish slammed its huge tail on the ground and sent a torrent of water surging.

Ripples of energy spread out from Zhang Lie, warping the space around him. The towering waves looked like enraged black dragons, flooding the arena.

A huge rumble shook the heavens, and the entire hall quaked. The Shining Trapezohedron began to emit light, and Nightdemon hid within a layer of space.

Zhang Lie called out, "This is a scam!"

The layers of space split apart again as Nightdemon appeared where he had been standing. "This is my weapon..."

No wonder the king of chaos was so confident—Nightdemon's abilities were all but fraudulent.

Zhang Lie hurried to attack before Nightdemon could phase away again.

"[The Boundless Blade: Yawning Wave]!"

Zhang Lie extended his pointer finger like a sword, and water-attuned genetic energy gathered around it. As he waved his finger, sword energy erupted like a wave, accompanied by a giant shark.

Zhang Lie didn't switch up his techniques again. The king of chaos and Nightdemon were largely aware of what he could do. Of course, there were a few trump cards up his sleeve, but he wasn't planning on revealing them readily.

As Zhang Lie's sword energy flew toward Nightdemon, Nightdemon hid once more within the folds of space.

When Nightdemon reappeared, the shark spun around the hall and continued chasing after him. His Shining Trapezohedron emitted another burst of light, dividing the shark's body into six fragments.

Clearly, in the eighteenth layer of space, even the Shining Trapezohedron's abilities were weakened to some extent. In ordinary space, the shark would have been cleanly divided into 24 fragments.

"[Ninecarp Transformation]!"

The black serpent, which resembled the world-swallowing serpent Jormungandr, let out a threatening hiss as its scales clicked together.

Nightdemon flapped his wings as he swooped forward, the Shining Trapezohedron glowing once more. Zhang Lie's shadow fuzzed as it too was torn into six pieces.

Blood-red light flashed as Zhang Lie appeared atop Nightdemon's head.

"[Fists of the Silent Sea: Fade]!"

Zhang Lie punched forward, and the black serpent behind him shot forth.

The Shining Trapezohedron began to emit light, and Nightdemon hid within a layer of space.

The next moment, the space above Zhang Lie's head began to peel, layer by layer. Not only did the Shining Trapezohedron allow Nightdemon to hide within deeper layers of space, it even allowed him to pass through those layers.

Nightdemon swooped down with fangs revealed as Zhang Lie dodged to the side and simultaneously grabbed at the Shining Trapezohedron.

The space around Nightdemon separated into six portions. Zhang Lie didn't dare step inside, and he hurriedly retreated. His black serpent shot into the distorted space and was broken up into six fragments.

If Zhang Lie had charged forward recklessly, he was the one who would have been torn apart.

The Shining Trapezohedron was an incredible relic, one that would make it incredibly difficult to take down Nightdemon.

"[Fists of the Silent Sea: Fade]!"

As Zhang Lie punched forward, a blood dragon roared in outrage and shot forward.

Nightdemon had seen [Fists of the Silent Sea: Fade] multiple times, and knew that he wouldn't be able to block the attack easily. He hurriedly flapped his wings to distance himself from Zhang Lie, then activated the Shining Trapezohedron to isolate the space around him.

The blood dragon swam among the deepest six layers of space without exploding. As that space contracted, it became trapped within the Shining Trapezohedron.

"[Fists of the Silent Sea: Hundred Dragons Soaring]!"

Blood-red genetic energy burst forth from Zhang Lie as though there were hundreds, thousands of dragons surging throughout his body. Each muscle formed a dragon, and a horde of dragons launched out of Zhang Lie's left arm as he expended half his genetic energy in one supercharged attack.

Howling with the force of thunder, a horde of over a hundred blood dragons flew through the air, swooping down like meteors.

Nightdemon activated the Shining Trapezohedron once more and captured all the blood dragons within, filling all 24 layers of space.

Zhang Lie unsheathed Guicang and slashed forward. A red beam shot out of each of Nightdemon's three red pupils, but Guicang shattered them all.

"[The Boundless Blade: the River Lethe]!"

Zhang Lie raised the blade in his hand high into the air, encircled by black genetic energy. The temperature of the arena dropped to sub-zero values, and a strong wind buffeted all combatants present. Blood-colored frost appeared around them all.

An underworld river materialized in the air, one that almost filled the halls of chaos. As though the doors to hell had just been thrown open, tens of thousands of serpents rushed out in a flood.

Nightdemon activated the Shining Trapezohedron once more, capturing all the serpents within the relic. The space within the relic was quickly filling up, and at that moment, Zhang Lie caused the hundreds of dragons within to explode.

As huge waves of energy exploded within the Shining Trapezohedron, it began to shake violently.

"[The Boundless Blade: the River Lethe]!"

Pitch-black energy expanded to fill the entire halls of chaos, forcing the king of chaos to step in. With the purest of chaotic energy, he neutralized the effect of Zhang Lie's technique and covered the arena with a barrier.

Waves surged forward, sounding like peals of thunder, like stampeding hooves.

Everyone in the hall was shocked to see the roiling genetic energy that Zhang Lie had produced.

The surface of the sea frothed with angry waves, like dragons emerging with the tide. The entire sea roiled, and lightning crackled amidst the void.

Countless serpents swam across the raging sea as lightning flashed ominously overhead, a scene right out of an apocalypse.

As Zhang Lie struck, an underworld river hurtled into existence, roaring into the sea. The sword energy roiled like black waves.

The sea had morphed into a boundless battlefield. The sea breeze was as a horn to action, and the serpents, thousands of courageous soldiers heeding its call.

The serpents swarmed Nightdemon, who attempted to summon the Shining Trapezohedron to his side. Because of the explosions that had wrecked its interior, however, the relic was momentarily unable to be controlled.

#### Chapter 1186: Passing Through Space

Nightdemon's eyes widened. He had personally witnessed the catastrophic effect of this technique on the death spirit king.

He hurriedly flapped his wings to draw some distance between them as he waited for the Shining Trapezohedron to regain functionality.

However, he belatedly realized that Zhang Lie's serpents had filled the entire hall. The explosion of a hundred blood dragons released more energy than a superior world possessed, and it would take quite some time for the relic to work again.

Nightdemon had no choice but to charge at the serpents in his path and clear a route forward, flapping his wings and burning them with beams of energy from his eyes as he tore at them with his claws.

The spirit serpents weren't living creatures, and they weren't affected by Nightdemon's innate aura of fear. To him, they were certainly among the most troublesome class of opponents.

The serpents came in a massive drove. As Nightdemon killed one, it would respawn from the sea of black genetic energy. Countless serpents bit and tore at Nightdemon's wings, their fangs filled with corrosive genetic energy. Nightdemon's wings grew pockmarked within an instant.

Just then, finally, the Shining Trapezohedron regained its functionality. Overjoyed, Nightdemon activated it immediately and caught all the serpents within.

"[The Boundless Blade: Dragon's Wrath]!"

Zhang Lie thrust forward with Guicang, summoning a blood dragon. The blood dragon's howls shook heaven and earth, and Zhang Lie's attack shot toward Nightdemon.

Nightdemon immediately activated the Shining Trapezohedron once more and formed a spatial barrier in front of him.

The blood dragon penetrated the barriers and charged straight at him, but by then, he had already hidden within a dimensional fold.

"[First Form: Parting the River]!"

A frightening force descended on Nightdemon, energy rumbling and rippling around him. As Zhang Lie swung the blade in his hand, a huge slash of sword energy shot toward him.

This layer of space, along with the subsequent six layers, were all crushed by Zhang Lie's technique. Nightdemon, scared by the ferocity of the attack, hurriedly emerged from hiding—behind Zhang Lie.

The Shining Trapezohedron let out a bright glow as Zhang Lie tried to dodge, but the range of the attack was too large for him to do so. In the end, he was caught by the relic

and forced into the Shining Trapezohedron, where he saw 24 overlapping regions of space. Each region was about the size of a superior world, and the horizon couldn't be seen. The overlapping nature of the space within meant that it was nearly impossible to escape. Wherever he flew, he would return to his original spot within moments.

If he were to fly to his left, he might suddenly find himself in the region above him. Furthermore, the relic was like a Rubik's cube that Nightdemon could manipulate at will.

Nightdemon roared in laughter. "Haha, Zhang Lie, I've finally caught you! I've won!"

"This match isn't over yet."

Nightdemon taunted, "Oh? And what can you do from within the Shining Trapezohedron? Escape?"

"We'll see, won't we?"

A pitch-black sun appeared behind Zhang Lie, and a blood moon by his feet. His aura was magnified tenfold, and a halo of black sun appeared above his forehead. Natural law seemed to warp around him. Runes likewise appeared on the bloody moon by his feet, forming an intricate array.

"[Syzygy]!"

Zhang Lie's genetic energy began to fluctuate wildly.

Zhang Lie crossed his twin blades. The blood moon resonated with the blade in his left hand, and the black sun with the blade in his right. He simultaneously slashed forward with both blades, forming a huge celestial web.

The combination of the black sun and blood moon destabilized the space within the relic.

Nightdemon's eyes widened. "Impossible!"

"[Blades, Reverberate]!"

A blood dragon materialized around Zhang Lie. Energy poured out of him in waves, honing the edge of his blade. The pulses of energy struck the realm like a tsunami, devouring everything within.

The twin blades Guicang and Hanguang emitted a fearsome aura, shining as brightly as the sun and moon. Sword energy materialized from Guicang into a blood dragon that revolved around his body.

Hanguang's light swept up all the serpents that had been caught within the Shining Trapezohedron and transformed them.

The blade Hanguang morphed into a black dragon, and the blade Guicang into a blood dragon. The two dragons, coiling together as one, shot out toward Nightdemon like a hurricane, bearing down on him with the might of Zhang Lie's spiritual sea between them.

Infused with the blood moon and the black sun, the twin dragons formed a black whirlpool.

The dragons shattered the interior of the Shining Trapezohedron, causing Nightdemon's face to turn pale. He was extremely shocked.

Nothing had ever managed to escape from the prison of the Shining Trapezohedron, and the king of chaos himself had personally refined 24 disparate regions of space to create this relic.

In a matter of moments, however, Zhang Lie had smashed six of those regions to pieces, and a huge hole had been carved into the seventh. Moreover, his attack didn't stop there—the other regions were in danger of being destroyed, as well. Even the king of chaos' face was turning dark, and he barely hid his shock.

The Shining Trapezohedron, which even he had toiled over... Despite the fact that he had outgrown the relic, he was still sovereign within the third realm, and this relic had been particularly difficult to create even for him.

The king of chaos roared mentally to Nightdemon, "Enough! Let him out!"

If Nightdemon were to perish, he would be able to reverse time and revive him, but the Shining Trapezohedron would be far harder to restore.

Nightdemon instantly did as he was told—not just because of his main body's shouts, but also because the destruction of the relic would swiftly lead to his destruction as well.

Nightdemon released Zhang Lie instantly, but Zhang Lie's attack was still ongoing.

Chapter 1187: Play With Me

The moment Zhang Lie was released from the Shining Trapezohedron, he continued launching his half-finished attack. The twin blood and black dragons shot forward in a spiral, distorting even the king of chaos' sturdiest barrier and demonstrating just what sort of attack had managed to destroy the Shining Trapezohedron's interior structure.

Eight of the regions within the trapezohedron had been shattered, and were no longer able to be used.

Zhang Lie's [Blades, Extinguish] was a powerful attack, but unlike Fang Yi, he wasn't panting or visibly tired after executing it.

The domain of Eclipse spread to Nightdemon, who had already grown heavily injured. Upon being struck by the effects of the domain, he visibly sagged.

"[Shadow and Light]!"

Zhang Lie whirled around. Time suddenly sped up in the vicinity of Zhang Lie, and shining light arced across the hall. Nightdemon hurriedly activated the Shining Trapezohedron.

Before the Shining Trapezohedron could capture that light, Zhang Lie's sword struck Nightdemon and chopped off his claw holding onto the relic.

Only then did the relic activate its ability, forming six dimensional barriers around Zhang Lie.

Nightdemon immediately summoned the relic back—only to have the attack launched from Zhang Lie's other hand strike it and send it flying away.

Nightdemon flapped his wings in a forced retreat as his three red eyes shot out beams of light.

Zhang Lie formed a screen with his sword, blocking the beam.

"[Blade of the Heavens: the Sea Swells]!"

Energy poured out of Zhang Lie in waves, honing the edge of his blade. The pulses of energy struck the sea like a tsunami, devouring everything within.

Nightdemon summoned the relic back once again, but it was too late. Just as he was about to hide in extradimensional space once more, Zhang Lie's attack struck him.

The Shining Trapezohedron began to emit light, forming a dimensional barrier around Nightdemon, but the sword strike smashed through it and cleaved Nightdemon's body in two horizontally.

The halls of chaos fell silent as the king of chaos cleared away the barrier. "You've won."

The members of Team Zenith broke the pregnant silence with a cheer as the king of chaos reversed time and restored Nightdemon's body.

Nightdemon turned to Zhang Lie. "You've grown even stronger than when you were facing the king of keys."

Zhang Lie smiled without saying a word.

After the battle against the king of keys, Zhang Lie had absorbed more monarch gene fragments, so it was only natural that he would grow stronger.

More importantly, the fight against the king of keys had provided important experience.

The king of chaos retrieved the Shining Trapezohedron and began to play with it.

"My clones haven't returned yet. Would you like to have some fun with me for now, Zhang Lie?"

Everyone in the halls of chaos sucked in a breath. Was the king of chaos preparing to fight Zhang Lie himself? Had he still not given up on recruiting Zhang Lie?

The king of chaos then laughed. "I'm half-joking, but only half. They're on their way back now."

Darkness spread through the hall, and shadows morphed into a humanoid.

A thin humanoid male, whose body was uniformly ink-black, appeared before their eyes. This was none other than the clone whom they had seen by the world of black rain.

The dark man walked up to the king of chaos and presented him with the collected fragments.

Subsequently, a walking pile of tumors and tentacles, with a fan covering its chest, slowly walked into the hall. She held a huge scythe in her hands. To the members of Team Zenith, she looked like a ravishing young woman wearing a blood-red dress, with a fan covering her face.

She stepped daintily into the hall in high heels, making her way toward the king of chaos.

However, after having seen the witch of dreams and Nightdemon before, none of them were so naive as to believe that her appearance was as it seemed.

This was the clone that they had seen around the Zongming world.

Despite knowing this rationally, however, their minds kept suggesting that the young woman really was just a young woman.

The fan in her hands had the ability to influence thought in the form of mental suggestions, which would cause others to view the bulbous monster like a young woman of their race.

If not for the fact that Zhang Lie had witnessed the young woman's true form via his draconic pupils, he would have been misled by the fan's power as well.

A gust of strange black current and flame silently appeared in the hall as the king of chaos' third clone returned, a double-headed bat formed from live, icy darkness. The bat's heads were filled with venomous fangs, and countless starry eyes sparkled and shifted between its two heads.

The hall was blanketed by darkness, and a new moon hung in the air. Moonlight reflected off the various guests' faces, their shadows mingling, as a figure wearing pitch-black armor arose from the intersection of those shadows with the air of a tyrant.

The fifth clone returned, a bulbous mass with golden tentacles.

A shrill wail echoed through the hall as the sixth clone returned, a faceless mass that continuously produced and absorbed subsidiary limbs.

The seventh clone was a black-skinned man with a strange skeleton tattoo on his face, wearing a formal top hat and a long swallowtail coat, who walked slowly into the hall.

The eighth clone was a lion with the face of a human.

The floor quaked as the ninth clone, a black ox bearing a world on its back, stomped into the hall.

One by one, the clones of the king of chaos returned to the hall and handed him the map fragments they had gathered.

Zhang Lie, the members of Team Zenith, and even the other guests were all astounded. They knew that the king of chaos had many clones, but not this many.

The king of chaos' clones might well be a larger group than the guests of the banquet.

The king of chaos sighed. "What a pity that you all returned so quickly..."

The king of chaos was clearly very disappointed to not have been able to recruit Zhang Lie to his group.

The clones all handed the map fragments they had obtained to the king of chaos, and the result was a mind-boggling number of fragments. There were fifty thousand in all, all of which had been scattered across the three thousand worlds, and Zhang Lie didn't want to think how long it would have taken him to claim them all by himself.

The king of chaos proffered the fragments to Zhang Lie, who hastily accepted them.

The king of chaos continued, "These are all the fragments that my clones have collected among the three thousand worlds. Zhang Lie, your wish has been fulfilled."

The tentacular woman grumbled, "We had to run across the realm to get all these fragments!"

Chapter 1188: The Soaring Halls of Chaos

With its wings surrounded by a black current and flames, the double-headed bat called out, "I went to over a hundred worlds to collect my assigned fragments."

The tyrannical black armor commented, "You really had to make a bothersome wish..."

Zhang Lie bowed. "Thank you for your help, everyone."

The king of chaos asked again, "Zhang Lie, let me extend you an invitation once again. Won't you join the halls of chaos?"

Zhang Lie shook his head. "King of chaos, you already have many excellent subordinates. I would hardly contribute much; there's no need to insist upon having me."

The king of chaos sighed. "The three thousand worlds are now yours." He seemed to have no qualms whatsoever about handing over such an overwhelming prize.

The king of chaos retrieved the proof of kingship.

Zhang Lie had seen many such proofs, but that for the world of primordial chaos was undoubtedly the most unique. It had no solid form, and was instead a ball of chaotic energy.

The king of chaos sent the ball of energy floating toward Zhang Lie, but Zhang Lie didn't dare to touch it with his bare hands.

"Isn't this your wish?" the king of chaos asked.

Zhang Lie replied, "Are you really willing to cede control of the three thousand worlds, and even the halls of chaos, to me?"

The king of chaos replied, "The halls of chaos won't become anyone's possessions. From today onwards, the halls of chaos will no longer exist among the three thousand worlds."

Zhang Lie blinked in shock. "You're going to disband the halls of chaos?"

The king of chaos replied, "No, of course not! I'm simply bringing the halls of chaos beyond this realm."

"All of it?"

The king of chaos nodded. "I'll be ascending alongside the halls of chaos."

Zhang Lie was astounded. "Ascending—no, with the entire halls of chaos?!"

The king of chaos certainly had the ability to ascend to the fourth realm and become a lifeform there.

Just like Zhang Lie, he would be a high-ranked fourth-realm existence from the very beginning, rather than having to start from the very bottom of the food chain.

In addition, alongside the many strong entities of the halls of chaos, the king of chaos would be the leader of an extremely strong force even in the fourth realm. With a little investment and work, the king of chaos could easily reach the same status in the fourth realm as he boasted in the third.

But would all the members of the halls of chaos possess the qualification to ascend?

Perhaps half did, but the other half didn't.

For the king of chaos to ascend with the entirety of the halls of chaos would be an extremely arduous task, and the realm itself would place obstacle after obstacle in their way. Those entities who weren't qualified to ascend but who forcibly tried to do so anyway would receive retaliation from the will of the realm.

Unlike genetic hunters, who weren't indigenous, who could advance by filling up their mutated gene fragments, and who could experience a refinement process upon ascension, the indigenous aliens were treated very differently.

It seemed that the dimensional realm was very favorable toward visitors, and some researchers from the Milky Way had even hypothesized that the existence of the realm itself was as a training ground for genetic hunters. Many among the Milky Way agreed with this hypothesis.

This hypothesis was born from the assumption that the Milky Way was the protagonist of the dimensional realm, but whether that was true remained to be validated. One crucial piece of evidence against that assumption was the fact that kings of the realm in the first through third realms had to be indigenous.

Perhaps this rule was to promote ascension rather than stagnation, to incentivize hunters to access ever higher realms.

From this perspective, genetic hunters were like players in a game, while the indigenous peoples of the dimensional realm were like NPCs. For these NPCs to advance to higher realms would require near-constant cultivation, training, and tribulation administered by the will of the realm.

The king of chaos himself would easily pass through the tribulation, and he had the ability to bring a few dozen people along with him as well. To bring the entire halls of chaos, however... that would spike the difficulty of the tribulation a hundredfold at least.

Despite the fact that Zhang Lie thought this a foolhardy idea, he had to admit that the king of chaos was a bold and visionary leader.

"If you don't want to become my subordinate, you don't have to go as far as to run to a higher realm with your companions..."

Zhang Lie was joking, of course. This plan could not have been conceived of idle fancy alone. He must have been preparing for the ascension to the fourth realm for quite some time, and Zhang Lie's wish of unification wasn't at odds with his intentions.

Once he ascended to the fourth realm, the third realm would have no one to hinder Zhang Lie any longer.

The king of chaos had suggested the three matches knowing this information.

From the very beginning, he had been intending to use this trick to recruit Zhang Lie—though Zhang Lie had proven very difficult to trap.

The king of chaos asked, "Are you willing to accompany me through this tribulation?"

Zhang Lie shook his head. "I apologize. I'm very interested in the path you take, king of chaos, but I'm a human hunter, and we have our own route to ascension."

If he were to set off with the king of chaos, he would be viewed as an indigenious himself, and he would have to suffer tribulation by lightning.

That would lose him an opportunity through the refinement process, which would be a tremendous loss. He couldn't accept the king of chaos' offer.

The king of chaos sighed. "What a pity. Let's meet in the higher realms, then."

The king of chaos was certain that Zhang Lie would be able to ascend.

"In the fourth realm, then."

The king of chaos suggested, "In that case, all of you had better step outside now. From the outside, witness my last hurrah and determine whether I'm a crazed fool or a visionary."

Zhang Lie laughed. "So this was the true purpose of the invitation?"

The king of chaos joined in his laughter. "No matter how magnificent my legend, my history, my accomplishments, it would be pointless if no one knew of them."

Zhang Lie inclined his head. "You can't brag unless there's someone to brag to."

"That's right," the king of chaos agreed. "Among all the inhabitants of the three thousand worlds, I believe only you are qualified to observe my ascension."

Zhang Lie asked, "Have you considered the possibility of failure?"

The king of chaos raised his head to the sky and laughed. "If I fail, let my corpse remain here as a record of my madness."

The king of chaos was about to undertake a heroic feat, one that was only possible in the third realm because of the fragmented will of the third realm and the limited power it retained.

The entire hall of chaos shook as the king of chaos' slumbering main body entered the fray.

Space split open as endless waves of chaotic energy were emitted from the cracks, like an abyss leading deep into a stellar core, a limitless and liminal space in which all things were blasphemed...

Chapter 1189: Heavenly Tribulation

The king of chaos asked, "Li Feng, Sun Xiaowu, have you decided on your respective wishes?"

Sun Xiaowu waved a hand. "My captain has already fulfilled the wish I wanted. Let's wait until the fourth realm when we meet again."

"Very well."

The king of chaos turned toward the guests. "Will you all pool your strength to help me with this feat?"

"Absolutely, leader!"

Voices rang out from all corners of the hall, loud and quiet, low and high, but one and all filled with excitement and respect.

Zhang Lie and the members of Team Zenith hurriedly evacuated from the halls of chaos. Upon witnessing the king of chaos' true form, Zhang Lie felt as though he were about to be petrified.

It was a deep abyss filled with black worlds and suns.

The king of chaos' main body was so immense that he had to keep the major part of himself locked away within spaces of different dimensions—and not just in one dimension of space, but rather simultaneously in all dimensions.

The king of chaos' main body might well be the source of primordial chaos.

Huge quantities of chaotic matter seeped out from dimensional cracks, enveloping the halls of chaos. Countless feelers hung down from the sky, as if portending disaster.

The entire world of primordial chaos seemed to be splitting apart as a frightening energy gushed out from deep underground, destroying the world just by proximity alone.

Li Feng cried out, "What's about to happen?"

"This bastard!" Zhang Lie tossed the proof of kingship for the world of primordial chaos to the ground.

The world of primordial chaos was emitting huge quantities of energy, so Sun Xiaowu quickly picked up the proof of kingship before it could be flung out of reach.

"What's the matter, Captain? This is the proof of kingship of the world of primordial chaos, the largest superior world!"

Zhang Lie scoffed. "It might be the proof of kingship now, but after today, it'll be nothing more than a ball of chaotic energy. I was hoodwinked by this damned bastard!"

The members of Team Zenith hadn't come to the same realization yet. "What do you mean, Captain?"

Zhang Lie pointed at the cracking world below them. "Do you think the world of primordial chaos will last the day?"

The cracks on the ground were propagating as huge waves of energy erupted from deep within.

Zhang Lie continued, "The king of chaos has been storing huge quantities of energy deep within the world of primordial chaos for millions, tens of millions of years. All that accumulated energy is intended for use today.

Li Feng understood immediately. "The king of chaos is trying to use that explosive energy as a propellant to send the halls of chaos into space?"

Fang Yi added, "To take advantage of the energy hidden in the world to break through the barrier separating this realm from the next, then ascending to the fourth realm..."

Zhang Lie nodded. "And once that energy explodes, the world of primordial chaos will be no more."

Sun Mengmeng continued, "The king of chaos is planning to sacrifice the entire world in order to ascend.

Li Feng asked, "What should we do, then?"

Zhang Lie shrugged. "What else? We can't do anything but watch."

The king of chaos had been preparing for ascension for countless years, and he would surely notice any saboteurs. Furthermore, Zhang Lie had no chance at winning against the king of chaos' main body.

Even more importantly, Zhang Lie continued,

"We'll easily be able to unify the three thousand worlds even without the world of primordial chaos' proof of kingship."

The greatest obstacle in their way was the existence of the king of chaos.

Now that the king of chaos was about to ascend, he would no longer be an obstacle, regardless of whether Team Zenith controlled the world of primordial chaos.

All the underground energy within the world of primordial chaos exploded. It swallowed up the halls of chaos, shielded by a barrier of chaotic energy, and propelled it toward the sky and the fourth realm.

The unbelievable momentum caused the halls of chaos to destroy everything in their way.

The entire third realm was quaking as space itself tore apart. A huge storm began to form, and all the worlds could witness a huge pillar of light—though not from where it came.

The pillar of light consisted of the energy of a superior world, along with millennia worth of accumulated energy from the king of chaos.

What the pillar was burning wasn't just a single superior world, but instead the accumulated wealth of the king of chaos.

The higher the dimension, the closer was the next higher realm.

The pillar of energy smashed into the barrier of the third realm. The cracks in that barrier began to propagate before a hole opened up, allowing access toward the fourth realm.

The king of chaos guided the halls of chaos into that hole. Zhang Lie raised his head and murmured toward the skies. "It's coming!"

The fragmented will of the third realm appeared right then and there, triggering natural law and causing countless strikes of lightning to flash through the air.

A golden snake reared its head and swam out hundreds of miles through the void, illuminating the three thousand worlds with an unusually bright gleam.

Except for the sound of lightning, the entirety of the third realm was silent. The strongest entities of the realm were all glancing at the unusual phenomenon as they witnessed a historical moment.

A void storm formed, seemingly boundless in extent. Lightning gathered densely amidst the clouds.

"It's coming!"

An electric arc appeared that spread all around itself. The ink-black void was torn apart as golden streaks of light appeared.

The golden arcs fell toward the accelerating 'rocket'. The electricity was emblematic of a heavenly tribulation; it was controlled by none other than the will of the third realm.

The energy arced through the skies in beams of red light, in electric strikes that forked, as the king of chaos himself shielded the halls of chaos from the impact. As wind and storm grew fiercer, the chaotic energy that served as his shield began to fuzz and vibrate.

Zhang Lie stood dazed. He thought he had seen a small biological lifeform, but just for a flash. It was a blood-red horse, or perhaps a dog, whose exact shape couldn't be determined considering it had only been visible for a flash at best.

Even so, the implications were shocking. Could a group of biological entities be hiding within the lightning?

He had never heard of or seen the like. Just what was going on?

The air was heavy, the pressure intense, as though a thousand mountains were pressing down on them all and preventing them from being able to breathe.

This was a form of mental pressure.

Just then, the lightning forked into a thousand branches, smashing down toward the halls of chaos like sledgehammers.

To the king of chaos, passing through this layer of lightning wasn't a difficult feat, but he had to preserve the halls of chaos while doing so as well.

The lightning struck like a knife or blade, snowy-white in its brightness. It fell in an endless shower, incandescent with killing intent. Then, it formed a cage that trapped the king of chaos within, rattling in a metallic fashion.

Even the fragmented will of the world seemed to be doing its best to stop the king of chaos from ascending while sneaking a group of people with him.

Within the cage, a large fraction of the lightning transformed into mythical beasts.

#### Chapter 1190: Yang Ze's Return

It was bad enough for the king of chaos to ascend with one or two companions in tow, but he was doing so with dozens of people! Even the fragmented will of the world would grow furious at such flagrant violation of the rules.

The king of chaos, however, was immensely strong. An eruption of chaotic energy swallowed up the lightning and smashed the cage apart. Radiant light rained down from the heavens, crackling with charged energy.

The king of chaos broke through the enclosure with brute force and smashed into the firmament between the third and fourth realms.

The fourth realm visibly shook, and the barrier began to crack.

The fourth realm launched a retaliatory attack at the king of chaos. The will of the fourth realm was far stronger than that of the third, and even the king of chaos seemed to barely be able to weather the assault.

The chaotic energy that surrounded the halls of chaos stretched almost to the breaking point. Just then, the doors to the hall were thrown open, and the All-Mother, Star Devourer, Null Source, and other such entities swarmed out to help the king of chaos defend against the attack. The king of chaos struck at full force, smashing a hole in the firmament.

The will of the fourth realm roared as it made to strike at the halls of chaos, but the king of chaos was so strong that he could defend against the will's retaliation and steer the halls of chaos through the crack and beyond.

The will of the fourth realm quaked, but it was incapable of expelling the intruder. In the end, it went silent and slowly began to repair the damage that the king of chaos had caused.

The will of the third realm was doing the same.

As Zhang Lie glanced at the damaged sky, he sighed. "The king of chaos succeeded. He created a miracle."

After the world of primordial chaos in the eighteenth layer of space, only a pile of ruins remained. It would be difficult for the shattered will of the third realm to clean up the area; even after a millennium, the ruins might remain.

There was nothing valuable left behind.

Li Feng asked, "Have we forgotten something?"

Sun Xiaowu shrugged. "The fact that we forgot about them must mean that they're unimportant. We don't have to pay them any attention."

Suddenly, a hand reached out from behind Sun Xiaowu's body, bypassed multiple layers of space, and rapped on Sun Xiaowu's head.

Sun Xiaowu turned around. "Who hit me? Stand forward if you dare!"

"What do you mean, unimportant? Given what just happened, if not for the fact that my spatial control improved so much, I would have been sucked into the mess!" Yang Ze teleported through space to appear right behind Sun Xiaowu.

Sun Xiaowu jumped up in shock. "Yang Ze, what happened to you? You suddenly appeared behind my back like a ghost!"

Yang Ze glared evilly at Sun Xiaowu. "If I were to become a ghost, you'd be the first person I haunt."

Zhang Lie looked Yang Ze up and down.

Yang Ze's short stint in the 24th layer of space had clearly been very rewarding. Spatial force surrounded him, bending all light in the vicinity in a subtle fashion. Without careful observation and some mastery of space, it would be difficult to sense just how much Yang Ze had improved.

"Not bad, Yang Ze," Zhang Lie praised.

Yang Ze smiled with some embarrassment. "I did gain some improvement."

Sun Mengmeng asked curiously, "What's the deepest layer of space like?"

Yang Ze shrugged. "It's not too different from it is here. It's a location filled with spatial force, though that force is sluggish and difficult to utilize. It's a fascinating place, and cultivating spatial manipulation there is like training in a space with a hundred times the gravity. Upon returning to ordinary space, I feel like my understanding of space has developed dramatically."

"Let's go, then."

Zhang Lie turned and began to fly off. The explosion that the world of primordial chaos had caused destroyed five layers of space along with it, leaving a big hole where the world had once stood. The members of Team Zenith flew to the thirteenth layer.

As Yang Ze left, he grumbled, "However, I was almost unable to get out. One of the king of chaos' clones suddenly popped out and teleported me away before the space exploded. I was wondering what was going on, and almost ended up being swept away as well."

Zhang Lie clenched his fists tightly. Pale blue genetic energy rippled about Zhang Lie's arms. He flicked his wrists, causing a frightening aura to descend around them. A fish the size of a whale materialized in the air.

Upon noticing Zhang Lie's actions, Yang Ze went still.

"What are you doing, Captain?"

"Forging a path home."

A howling gale swept over the world. As more and more genetic energy gathered around Zhang Lie's arms, it looked as though he were at the heart of a whirlpool.

"[Fists of the Silent Sea: Soar]!"

A huge wave soared into the air. As Zhang Lie punched forward, the fish slammed its huge tail on the ground and sent a torrent of water surging toward the sky.

Ripples of energy spread out from Zhang Lie, warping the space around him. The towering waves looked like enraged black dragons, flooding the hall.

Huge booms resounded as shockwaves surged forth from Zhang Lie, as though a rampaging beast were devouring everything in sight.

Zhang Lie's attack broke a huge hole in the already strained 13th layer of space. Pale blue tides flooded the hole, widening it and sending a storm of shattered fragments of space through the air.

The hunters had made their way over easily thanks to Nightdemon and the Shining Trapezohedron, but now that the king of chaos and his coterie had left for the fourth realm, Zhang Lie and the others would have to return to the base layer by brute force.

Yang Ze grumbled, "Captain, there's no need for all this! I can handle it."

Zhang Lie seemed somewhat suspicious. "Can you?"

Yang Ze replied, "Not before I entered the 24th layer of space and trained there, but my understanding of space is incomparable to that from before. I can guide everyone back to the base layer of the third realm."

In truth, despite his momentary stint in the 24th layer of space, Yang Ze wouldn't have been able to accomplish such a feat in general, but thanks to the explosion of the world of primordial chaos, the natural structure of space had grown distorted and weakened, and Yang Ze would barely be able to succeed.

Zhang Lie extended a hand. "Very well."

Yang Ze stepped forward, a serious expression on his face. He couldn't falter now; he needed to demonstrate his strength in front of Zhang Lie.