

## U. Warlord 751

Chapter 751: Sun Mengmeng, Again

Behemoth was surprisingly clear-headed in times of crisis. He knew just how frightening the party before him was, and he was certain the Mengtai wouldn't be able to win in a direct confrontation.

All he could count on, then, were the hostages to his back.

His eyes glinting, Behemoth fled toward the draconian sage. He believed that the party was a rescue party for the humans, so they surely wouldn't allow the draconian sage to die. Only by capturing the draconian sage and using him as a hostage would Behemoth have the opportunity to escape with his life.

Although the party was braving the rifts with their bodies alone, even they didn't dare move too quickly. Hindered by the rifts, their mobility would surely decrease. Behemoth's only opportunity was now: once the party emerged from the rifts, he would surely die.

Following behind Behemoth were the rest of the Mengtai warriors. The aliens looked at each other, then the fleeing Mengtai, before shivering and joining the Mengtai ranks.

The humans shouted to each other, "Hold on! If we can buy enough time for Zhang Lie to pass through the rifts, he'll surely destroy these invaders!"

The draconians, understanding the severity of the situation, immediately tried to protect the wounded sage.

"Scram!" Behemoth roared, swiping his claws.

Three arrows, brimming with purple flame, flew toward Behemoth and exploded once they came in contact with his body, producing three fiery bursts. Three burns marred Behemoth's flesh, impeding his forward advance.

Zhang Lie blinked. Those three arrows with purple flame—he saw a young woman standing atop a portion of the wall that was still upright. She pointed her greatbow at the sky, dyeing the clouds with tints of purple and red.

Countless arrows of purple flame shot out of her bow like a meteor shower that tinted the air purple and gave the battlefield a phantasmagorical appearance. The air turned dry and arid, as though a cataclysm was nigh.

Under the brilliant purple sky, the Mengtai fighters and other aliens began to burn, drowned in a sea of purple flame.

As he glanced at the woman on the wall, Zhang Lie couldn't help but smile. Her exquisite features shone in the firelight, her hair like burning flames. The woman who carried a garuda bow was looking at Zhang Lie, who had just emerged from the spatial rift, and smiling radiantly.

Behemoth stumbled back. "Just who are you?"

He was shocked. No human had ever managed to force him back in a direct confrontation. The only one who had ever had a fighting chance against him was the draconian sage. Where had this woman come from?

"I'm Sun Mengmeng, from Team Zenith!"

Behemoth had never heard of this name.

Sun Mengmeng cast [Black Sun], forming a corona of purplish-black flame around her. She activated her most impactful soulshards for battle, transforming from a young woman to a fierce warrior with a chitinous carapace, wreathed in black flame. Her flames were so intense that they were burning even the stone at her feet, causing it to turn red.

The wall was made of specially reinforced stone resistant to penetration and to changes in temperature, so the fact that the flames surrounding Sun Mengmeng were able to heat up that stone shocked even the draconian sage himself.

Sun Mengmeng's eyes flashed red as her anger reached a crescendo. It melted into her flames, and she drew her bow taut. Black flame surged from either end of the bow, and the flames around Sun Mengmeng's body grew even taller and hotter.

Zhang Lie smiled. "You've truly grown, Sun Mengmeng. You can harness your emotions to fuel your strength now."

He hadn't expected the members of Team Zenith to ascend so quickly, but since she was here, the other members of Team Zenith had to be, too.

In that case, Zhang Lie had nothing to worry about.

"[Netherworld's Gaze]!" Hundreds of arrows, like beams of moonlight, shot toward Behemoth. Their flames felt as though they could destroy everything they touched.

The arrows struck Behemoth, who had just leaped upwards, and the black flames burst in a splendid explosion in mid-air, successfully blocking Behemoth's attack.

Zhang Lie nodded in satisfaction.

Sun Mengmeng had likely only ascended recently, with few gene fragments to her name. As far as he could tell, she was only considered a peak-grade lifeform, but that didn't mean Sun Mengmeng was weak.

Even ignoring the boost that her limit fragments gave her, the very fact that she had maxed out all her disaster gene fragments in the second realm meant that she was at least as strong as Behemoth, if not more so.

Zhang Lie expected that the current Sun Mengmeng already boasted the ability to kill a disaster-grade lifeform.

Xing Ying and the others, who had just walked out of the spatial rift, asked, "Zhang Lie, what should we do?"

"Clean up the battlefield. There's no need to worry about the invaders."

Indeed, the invaders weren't strong enough to be considered opponents—that was why Zhang Lie hadn't said "defeat the enemies".

There were fewer than fifty people in Zhang Lie's party, but all of them were warlord-level fighters. To them, the battle in front of them could hardly be considered a battle. The only fighter who could even pose the slightest semblance of a threat was Behemoth, no one else.

Zhang Lie had commanded them to ignore him, and they would listen to Zhang Lie's command.

"Yes, Zhang Lie!" the warlords replied, then shot into the battlefield, easily dealing with the Mengtai and the other aliens.

Meanwhile, Zhang Lie folded his arms and watched Sun Mengmeng fight against Behemoth, wanting to see how much she had advanced in the meantime.

"[The Nine Moons of the Underworld]!" Nine flaming moons appeared in the sky. The black moons overshadowed the sun's radiance and fell from the sky one by one toward Behemoth's body, each a meteor.

Behemoth roared and swiped at the moons, clawing them all apart and causing them to burst in an explosion of black flame. The flames fed on Behemoth's genetic energy and fur, causing him to scream in pain...

Chapter 752: Dozens, Hundreds of Zhang Lie

Black smoke poured from Behemoth's body, which was charred and smoking. His fur had all been burned away, and there were still a few small flames on his body that had yet to be extinguished.

Fortunately, the Mengtai champion's racial ability allowed him to regenerate quickly, sealing his wounds and preventing further damage from the flames.

Zhang Lie rubbed at his jaw. Sun Mengmeng still wasn't at full strength because she didn't have time to acquire gene fragments yet. If Sun Mengmeng had maxed out her peak gene fragments already—no, even just her superior gene fragments—she would have been able to seriously burn Behemoth, if not kill him altogether.

"And she's been working on her [Nine Moons of the Underworld], too," Zhang Lie murmured, nodding.

"[Lunar Apostasy]!" Sun Mengmeng struck again. Her entire bow was blazing. Sacrificing all her remaining arrows, she created a glowing black moon in the sky.

A torrent of a black, lava-like substance poured down from the moon. Behemoth was forced to shield himself with both hands, causing Zhang Lie to nod more vigorously. Anger was the catalyst that Sun Mengmeng used to grow her flames, but she wasn't blinded by her emotions.

She wielded her anger like a tool against a strong foe. Her initial technique, [Nine Moons of the Underworld], had been to induce Behemoth to jump up, before she followed up with [Lunar Apostasy] to strike him in the air.

Even Zhang Lie would have trouble dealing with this combination attack.

Zhang Lie suddenly thought of a possibility. "Sun Mengmeng can't have planned out this combination attack while thinking about fighting me, could she...?"

Behemoth howled as the lava burned his palms and trickled down his arms. Even Zhang Lie, standing quite a distance away, could smell his charred flesh.

Behemoth howled again and fled from the attack, but by then, Sun Mengmeng's next technique was ready. The flames surrounding Sun Mengmeng erupted like a volcano, distorting space in a huge area around her.

The warlords on the battlefield all glanced up at Sun Mengmeng, standing atop the ruined wall.

Xing Ying sighed. "And here I thought Zhang Lie was bad enough—but there are more humans like him?"

Ren Kunjing commented, "Indeed, all the new human hunters are monstrous..."

The winged warlord slaughtered a Mengtai fighter trying to run away as she continued chasing down the invading aliens.

"None of them can hold a candle to Zhang Lie, but it truly is shocking how quickly they're advancing—and in such great numbers. Looks like the rest of us had better work harder to keep up."

The nightdemon warlord rolled his eyes. "You haven't been paying attention to galactic news, have you?"

The winged warlord replied, "I focus largely on the third realm, though I do pay attention to the larger pieces of news galaxywide—you know, Zhang Lie, Hong Tianqi, and the like. Do you mean that you know who the woman standing on the wall is?"

"We're all warlords strong enough to be high up the leaderboard. Who has the time to be worrying about trivial news?" The aquatic warlord snapped her fingers, causing crystal lotuses to bloom on the battlefield, each one trapping an invading alien.

Few of the warlords had begun paying attention to Sun Mengmeng and the other members of Team Zenith.

Among the hunters of the second realm, of course, the members of Team Zenith were hunters that everyone knew of, but that knowledge didn't extend to the third realm.

Ren Kunjing smiled in glee. "The woman on the wall is known as Sun Mengmeng, one of the key members of Zhang Lie's team. She's known as the red rose of the battlefield, and she's the most eye-catching of the female hunters in his team. She even has her own fan club in the Milky Way!"

Xing Ying peered at him. "You seem to know a lot about this woman..."

Ren Kunjing shrugged. "I'm a fan myself. After investigating Zhang Lie some more, I knew that I had to pay attention to the members of his team, Team Zenith. During the Void Cup, she was also ranked very highly, and judged to be one of the hunters in the Milky Way bearing the most potential."

Ren Kunjing's commentary caused all the warlords to look twice at Sun Mengmeng. A human, one of Zhang Lie's favored subordinates, whose potential was through the roof...

Sun Mengmeng's fire-attuned genetic energy formed a black hurricane, one with explosive strength. By then, the entire wall had turned glowing red, and the stone beneath her feet was starting to melt, so strong was the fiery energy she emitted.

The warlords all turned serious. Even if Sun Mengmeng had been an unknown figure before this fight, all the warlords remembered her face now.

Xing Ying's voice was serious. "She's got real skill. Those flames are truly something extraordinary."

It would be difficult even for them to approach her, and Sun Mengmeng had just recently ascended to the third realm! If they gave her time to develop, who knew how much stronger she would become?

Only a few warlords present could even be confident of being able to defeat her.

Xing Ying guessed, "Is she already nearing the level of a mid-rank warlord, then?"

None of the warlords present took that information well. How much effort had it taken them to get to where they were? How much blood, sweat, and tears? How much time, and how much danger had they gone through?

Zhang Lie alone was incredible enough, and now, there were even more talented humans popping up! Elites like Zhang Lie weren't unheard of, but they were so rare that it would be lucky to see one from a given race in ten thousand years—but not only did the humans have Zhang Lie, they now also had Sun Mengmeng!

Xing Ying shook his head. "It would be too much to call her a female Zhang Lie. Zhang Lie's inscrutable even to us all—at most, she's a less developed Zhang Lie."

The winged warlord sighed. "One was bad enough, but two is worse. If a third pops out—I might just lose my reason to live."

Another warlord who had been in the third realm for years laughed. "Hah! This sort of existence might appear once or twice in a few thousand years. If a third or fourth warlord-class human shows up, we might as well quit our jobs and go into retirement!"

"Ah, well..." Ren Kunjing began. "It looks like it's time for us all to retire, then."

"What?! Don't scare me like that, my heart's weak! Do you mean to say that—"

Ren Kunjing laughed. "The six members of Team Zenith might not all be as strong as each other, but they're certainly all on the same level. Furthermore, Zhang Lie's sister and disciples are about as talented as the members of Team Zenith, so there might not be just a few—perhaps a dozen, and as time grows, a few dozen, a few hundred, a few thousand..."

Chapter 753: The Scorched Mengtai

Hundreds, thousands of humans as skilled as Zhang Lie?!

The warlords were speechless.

Sun Mengmeng was covered in a hurricane of black flame which swept across the battlefield.

The black flame burned at a frighteningly high temperature, and the flame melted everything it came into contact with.

The warlords had to stop chatting and protect the humans and draconians.

Pitch-black flames sparked to life across Sun Mengmeng's bow, causing the flames to grow even more intense.

"[Netherworld's Torrential Flame]!" A frightening fan of flames poured out from Sun Mengmeng's bow, an attack far stronger than the moons she had summoned. The flames arced in the air and fell toward the battlefield in a waterfall.

Behemoth, his movements restrained because of the hurricane of black flame, was struck full in the face by Sun Mengmeng's attack. He roared in outrage, but there was hardly anything he could do in response.

The waterfall of flame burst in mid-air and fell to the ground as fiery drops of rain.

Behemoth leapt backwards to avoid the attack, but Sun Mengmeng's attack splashed in such a wide range that avoiding it entirely was impossible.

Realizing that he couldn't retreat further, Behemoth sucked in a deep breath and rushed in the direction of the flame, intending to barrel straight through it with brute force. None of the warlords looked favorably on this plan of action.

Behemoth succeeded in his plan and escaped from the fiery waterfall, but he paid a heavy price in doing so. His entire body, recently healed, turned charred black again.

He swiped forward at Sun Mengmeng, who didn't panic. It was far too easy to think that Sun Mengmeng was an archer unskilled in close combat.

"[Baptism of Hellfire: Full Moon]!" Sun Mengmeng whirled her daggers all around her as a black moon rose into the air. She leapt into the air, bolstered by black flame. She swung her daggers to meet Behemoth's claws, flying backwards from the impact.

"[Lunarflame Shot: Ninefold Phantasmagoria]." Making use of the excess momentum, Sun Mengmeng launched yet another attack in mid-air. Her surroundings began to burn with dark flames. Nine purplish-black phoenixes rose around her and shot toward Behemoth from nine different directions, preventing him from escaping.

Behemoth howled again, destroying one of the phoenixes with the resulting sound wave. Swiping his claws, he took down two further phoenixes, which exploded like black roses and singed his already-damaged body, sending Behemoth staggering back.

Waves of heat saturated the battlefield, distorting the air all around them. The scorching heat stung everyone on the battlefield. A hot wind blew by, spreading the superheated air and causing everyone to wince—but that wasn't all. The exploding phoenixes set off a chain reaction that caused all eight remaining phoenixes to explode in quick succession, producing waves of such heat that everyone visibly recoiled. Behemoth, caught in the midst of the explosions, was burned alive.

With a huge crack, the parts of the wall that had yet to collapse from the Mengtai assault finally gave out.

The walls that the draconians had erected had withstood their fair share of assaults from the humans and the draconians, and generations of warriors had shed blood on the wall. Even so, it couldn't withstand the heat of Sun Mengmeng's flame.

The draconians were stupefied. Their wall had given out not once, but twice on the very same day! The sound of the wall crashing down reverberated between the two worlds.

Behemoth was gravely injured. Black smoke rose from every pore in his body, and the fact that he had survived at all was testament to the constitution of the Mengtai.

Zhang Lie nodded with approval. In just a single year, Sun Mengmeng had not only learned to control her emotions to fuel her fire, but also to enhance all her signature techniques.

Everyone believed that her [Lunarflame Shot: Ninefold Phantasmagoria] would only summon nine phoenixes, but the true power of her technique was when her opponents struck at those phoenixes to produce massive explosions of black flame.

Sun Mengmeng had wrapped up all that power within the facade of her phoenixes, a marked improvement from before. She had made great strides forward since the fight she had had with Zhang Lie.

"[Lunarflame Shot]!" Purplish-black flames gathered on Sun Mengmeng's bow once again, forming an arrow of pure black. The image of a golden garuda, limned in black, appeared behind her. It radiated such heat that everyone on the battlefield could feel it.

That heat had been compressed once and again, until it seemed almost like a miniature sun.

As she loosed her arrow, it seemed to transform into a beam of light, moving so quickly that it bypassed the constraints of time and space, piercing everything in sight.

The arrow caused no earth-shattering explosion; it wasn't at all flashy. As it shot forward, it impaled Behemoth through the chest before he could react, leaving a smoking hole behind where it passed through.

The arrow flew through the battlefield and shot into the wormhole, where it spawned a whole flock of spatial rifts. It finally exploded by the Mengtai wall, sending an inferno of black flame roaring into the heavens.

The entire battlefield and sky was dyed black.

The heat from Sun Mengmeng's attack had been so intense that it completely melted the rubble from the wall that Zhang Lie had knocked down.

The smoking hole in Behemoth's chest burned with that same flame.

Sun Mengmeng leapt down from the wall toward the ground, kept her bow, and gave Zhang Lie a 'V' sign—V for victory. Zhang Lie smiled at her, but Sun Mengmeng didn't move.

Just as she had made her hand signal, a black shadow pounced toward her from behind—it was none other than Behemoth. The Mengtai constitution was so incredible that, despite the hole in his chest, Behemoth didn't die instantly. His eyes were filled with hatred, with an aura of destruction that posed palpable danger...

Chapter 754: Team Zenith Reunites

Behemoth hated Zhang Lie, and he hated Sun Mengmeng even more. If not for Zhang Lie's sudden appearance, if not for Sun Mengmeng's interruption, the Mengtai would have long since taken down

the draconian world. All this was Zhang Lie and Sun Mengmeng's fault, so even if he had to die, he would surely drag them down with him!

Sun Mengmeng noticed Behemoth drawing closer, but she pretended not to notice him. If Behemoth's attack were to land, Sun Mengmeng would have been critically injured.

Moments before the attack hit home, a shadow suddenly appeared behind Sun Mengmeng. The appearance of the shadow caused Behemoth to feel a bone-chilling cold. His bestial instincts caused him to freeze for a moment.

Sun Mengmeng smiled brightly at the appearance of the shadow—whose identity was none other than Zhang Lie.

No one saw how Zhang Lie struck. One moment, Behemoth was about to strike; the next, he had been kicked flying like a rubber ball.

With a smile, Sun Mengmeng followed up on Zhang Lie's attack. She nocked her bow, and the image of a garuda appeared behind her. Black flame revolved around her and scorched the air.

"[Lunarflame Shot: Extirpation of the Garuda]!" Sun Mengmeng released her arrow, which morphed into a human-faced, golden-winged bird in mid-air, radiating red light as it arced through the skies. It began to pulse with red fire, brimming with such energy that it seemed as though it would set the world aflame.

Sun Mengmeng's attack scorched the heavens and the earth, dyeing black everything in sight. The black flame devoured Behemoth whole. He was already critically injured, and he couldn't muster up any further resistance against this attack. His body scattered to the winds as ash.

Zhang Lie ignored Behemoth and turned to Sun Mengmeng. "You've grown stronger, but also more careless. If I weren't here, you would be dead now because of your carelessness!"

Sun Mengmeng laughed. "I intentionally revealed an opening because you were here, Captain. I wanted to see if you would come rescue me!"

Sun Mengmeng's dominance in the second realm didn't cause her to become big-headed, but Zhang Lie thought it prudent to remind her to be cautious given how long it had been since their last meeting.

Zhang Lie narrowed his eyes. "I'll teach you a lesson later! Now, tell me, how is it that you chose such an opportune time to ascend to the third realm?"

Sun Mengmeng replied, "Captain, let me be clear on one thing: we all only ascended after maxing out our disaster gene fragments. We had intended on preparing further and finding successors for our positions in the kingdom of Limit, but we received urgent news about the aliens' invasion of the human homeworld in the third realm. After talking with Fang Yi and the others, we decided to advance prematurely."

Time passed even more quickly in the third realm than in the second. Zhang Lie had spent a year in the third realm, but that had only been three or four months in the second. It had only been a month since Sun Mengmeng and the others began working on their plans to ascend.

The difference between the rate at which time passed in the second and third realms was massive, but even that paled in comparison to that between Earth and the third realm. A year in the third realm corresponded only to roughly a dozen days on Earth.

Sun Mengmeng had intended on ascending a few days later, but the urgent news she received caused her to revise her plans.

The human homeworld was being attacked. If it were destroyed, hunters ascending from the second realm to the third would be sent to a randomized location, which would greatly increase the difficulty of ascension for humanity at large, not to mention the cost of building a new teleportation apparatus back to Earth.

As a result, in order to protect humanity, the members of Team Zenith chose to ascend.

Zhang Lie clarified, "Everyone's in the third realm, then?"

"Right, Captain, everyone's advanced!"

Zhang Lie was overjoyed—coincidentally, he was in need of helpers. He glanced all around him. "Where are the others?"

"They're still dealing with the invading aliens in the wormholes all around."

"[Heaven's Judgment]! [Tiger's Howl, Dragon's Bellow]!" Fang Yi's spear took on the aspect of a dragon of the winds and a storm tiger as he charged forward.

Wind and storm combined and crackled at the tip of Fang Yi's spear, and a dragon's howl echoed resoundingly in the air. As he manipulated his spear, a fusillade of lightning shot through the battlefield.

With his brilliant spear, Fang Yi dominated the battlefield.

"[Shadow and Light]!" At that very moment, Fang Yi morphed into countless clones, each of which moved independently through the battlefield. Flowers of blood bloomed where his clones passed by, in such great numbers that the tide of the battle turned toward the humans and draconians.

The invading aliens were particularly shocked. Why weren't such powerful humans at the main battlefield with the Mengtai? What were they doing guarding the other wormholes to the human homeworld?

Mist spread through the air. Hundreds of sharks formed a horde within that mist and roamed the battlefield, tearing at whatever alien they encountered. When any of the sharks were defeated, more spawned from the mist, an endless army.

Yang Ze stood atop a wall overlooking the battlefield. Lotus flowers made of pure water blossomed from the buds with which he had seeded the battlefield, each an intricate construct of genetic energy. "Looks like I have enough prepared now."

There were over a hundred lotus flowers blooming.

Yang Ze snapped his fingers.

Ripple after ripple of water-attuned genetic energy emanated from each flower, bursting apart in the air and forming huge waves that swallowed up all the aliens trapped within the cloud of mist. The mist dissipated, leaving no trace of any of the aliens behind.

One of the human hunters rushed forward. "Thank you for your assistance. Aren't you from Team Zenith?"

Most of the human hunters had tuned in to the Void Cup, and they had at least some impression of Yang Ze.

The strength he showed would have been absolutely incredible for a seasoned third-realm hunter, let alone one who had just ascended.

Yang Ze replied, "I'm Yang Ze, from Team Zenith."

Curious though the hunters might be about the source of his strength, there were more pressing matters. "The Mengtai are leading the charge against the human homeworld. The draconian sage, king of the realm, has headed to the Mengtai battlefield himself, but I'm afraid—"

Yang Ze held up a hand. "Don't worry. The strongest ranged attacker in Team Zenith was assigned to that battlefield. With her around, no Mengtai will ever claim the human lands."

"[Blinding Flash: Hundredfold Echo]!" Sun Xiaowu's body split into over a thousand clones, so many they seemed to fill the sky.

"[Golden Divide]!" The hundred clones all used [Golden Divide] simultaneously, coloring the sky in gold and raining down golden feathers in such numbers that they pinned down all the invaders on the ground. To them, Sun Xiaowu was a walking calamity.

#### Chapter 755: The End of the Battle

With a low shout, Sun Xiaowu and all his clones jumped up into the air, performing exactly the same action. Golden light flashed from their arms and illuminated the sky.

"[Goldenscale Palm: Qilin]!" The entire sky was covered in golden radiance. Thousands of clones merged into Sun Xiaowu's main body, and the countless activated copies of the technique merged into one.

Golden scales covered up Sun Xiaowu's arm as it grew thicker and thicker, and the image of a golden qilin appeared behind him.

As Sun Xiaowu punched forward, a golden qilin materialized out of nowhere and rushed toward the invaders.

The entire battlefield shook. The wall trembled violently, as though its very foundations were shaking. The attack struck like a nuclear warhead, sending the golden light flaring up for thousands of meters, so bright that it felt as though the sun had fallen to the ground.

Many on the battlefield couldn't even open their eyes, overwhelmed by the sheer brightness. The aliens who had dared to invade the human homeworld, stunned by the attack, all dropped their weapons and surrendered.

Over on his own battlefield, Li Feng was likewise putting up an excellent show.

"[Dance of the Incandescent Wyrms]!" Li Feng summoned dozens of serpents, flaring with blinding light. They swept across the battlefield, destroying whatever invader they came across—not a fight at all, but rather a one-sided slaughter.

"[Light Dragon's Remnants]!" Li Feng marshaled his genetic energy into the form of a large number of white dragons, which he sent flying at the invaders, who were unable to respond adequately to the attack.

Initially, the invaders had had the numerical advantage, and the humans and draconians were forced into the defensive, but with Li Feng's appearance, the flow of the battle began to shift.

The invaders were completely suppressed and forced to fall back, and the weaker among them had fallen prey entirely to the arclight dragons.

The invaders regretted their actions immensely. If they had known that there were humans of this caliber on the battlefield, they wouldn't have come—they didn't want to die!

Sensing an opportunity, Li Feng raised the sword in his hands high into the air and launched another attack.

"[Birth of the Holy Dragon]!" A light dragon descended from the heavens like a beacon of shining light. Li Feng leapt up to the head of the dragon, his sword gleaming brightly as though it had been dipped in liquid light. As he raised the sword to the skies, it glowed and expanded, morphing into a huge blade of light.

A dragon of light flew over the entire battlefield. Li Feng swung down and cleaved the sky, tearing apart the night and slashing at the veil of chaos. As the strike landed, an explosion of white light erupted from around Li Feng, annihilating the invaders.

If Zhang Lie were around, he would have been elated to see Li Feng's rapid improvement in strength.

The humans and draconians cheered.

An outburst of green light shielded Zhou Ying. Her hair grew long enough to reach her legs, turning into a green the color of sparkling jade. She looked so beautiful that the members of Team Zenith were immediately enraptured.

The vitality radiating from her was visible to the naked eye. She seemed to have become one with the land. An aura of vitality filled the battlefield. The injured humans and draconians found their wounds healing at a rate visible to the naked eye.

Zhou Ying made her move.

"[Avatar of the Fae: Earthbound Prison]!" As she released all her stored energy, the ground began to quake. Thousands of jade-green wood dragons rushed out of the earth like trains roaring out of the ground.

Giant vines broke through the earth.

The invaders tried to muster a resistance against this field-wide attack, but the dragons continuously poured out from deep underground like soldiers in Zhou Ying's command.

The humans and draconians cheered in triumph. They rushed onto the battlefield and slew the foes trapped by Zhou Ying's vines, which tangled up and wrapped around the invaders, absorbing their life force and sprouting boughs, branches, and leaves.

The trees grew over the captured invaders, leaving an imprint of their horrified faces in the bark. Even more frighteningly, the vines didn't stop at absorbing the live invaders' energy; they absorbed the corpses littering the ground, too.

The vines pierced the corpses and quickly absorbed the remaining blood and vital energy from their bodies, shrinking and desiccating them.

In a matter of moments, the ground, which had just been littered with corpses, became a lush, verdant forest.

However, none of the fighters found this greenery at all comforting; it was instead a source of fear. The forest had grown into existence from the life force of the living and the dead.

As Zhou Ying extended her control to the trees, their leaves began to rustle. They transformed into sharp blades that scoured the land, a storm of green leaves that quickly turned bloody as it struck the invaders. The humans and draconians watched with wide eyes as the invaders fell by the dozen.

The humans and draconians were very much relieved that Zhou Ying was on their side. The storm of leaves avoided them all, targeting only the invaders. The leaves themselves were like a reaper's scythe, continuously harvesting the lives of the invaders. The allied forces couldn't hold back a shudder.

The woman standing on the battlefield, surrounded by green motes of light, gave off an aura of life and vitality—but she felt more like a goddess of the dead. In some sense, she was a goddess of life, but the domain of life involved both granting vitality and taking it away.

Both the humans and draconians stared at her in awe.

In one fell swoop, she had taken control of the battlefield and devastated the enemy forces, leaving behind only human and draconian corpses strewn across a forest. No invader's body was left behind.

As soon as the members of Team Zenith took to the battlefield and dealt with the invading aliens, the human homeworld's crisis was fully resolved.

Zhang Lie smiled. "In that case, I won't need to worry about the other invaders."

The wounded human warlords stepped forward and extended their hands. "Thank you for your assistance. You must be the champion of mankind, Zhang Lie—we've all heard your name! I'm one of the two human warlords of the third realm, 85th on the ranking, ah, well, 86th now."

Zhang Lie shook his hand. "I know of you. Chen Fan, right?"

Zhang Lie knew quite a bit about the human warlords. This Chen Fan hadn't become a warlord in his past life, but he was still a famed hunter in his own right. Perhaps because of Zhang Lie's presence and the butterfly effect he caused, Chen Fan had become a warlord in this life.

Chen Fan smiled in gratitude. "It's an honor that you know my name, Zhang Lie. I'm hardly anyone famous, and I was only able to advance to my current station thanks to the limit potions you developed."

Zhang Lie's eyes shone. "Right, how about the other warlord? I've always been interested in meeting Chen Ruiming. He's done so much for the good of humanity in the third realm."

Chen Ruiming had been a warlord in Zhang Lie's past life, and he was one of the hunters whom Zhang Lie deeply respected. He had been a third-realm warlord for decades, and was particularly fond of cultivating gifted hunters in the third realm. He had helped out Zhang Lie quite a few times in his past life.

Although he hadn't made much of himself in the fourth realm, he was still someone Zhang Lie remembered and heeded.

Chen Fan's face fell.

"What's the matter?" Zhang Lie asked.

Chen Fan sighed. "Warlord Chen Ruiming perished in the recent invasion in order to protect the humans and the draconians. Behemoth killed him."

Chapter 756: Rivals in Love

"Killed!" Zhang Lie was taken aback. "Has Warlord Chen Ruiming really perished? What a shame..."

No, hold on! He might not be among the strongest warlords of the third realm, but even so, it shouldn't be so easy for Behemoth to kill him, surely!"

Chen Fan sighed. "We trusted the wrong ally. The Blackwind race has been on good terms with the draconians, so when the Mengtai attacked and the Blackwind came to help us, we were very glad. And then..."

Zhang Lie understood what had happened; he had defeated members of the Blackwind race on the battlefield. "And then the Blackwind betrayed you and assassinated Warlord Chen Ruiming, I take it?"

This wasn't something that had happened in Zhang Lie's past life. In some sense, Zhang Lie was partially responsible for the issue.

Chen Fan's face was stony. "None of us expected the Blackwind to betray us at the most crucial moment."

Zhang Lie replied coldly, "The Blackwind will pay with blood for killing a human warlord."

"Destroying a world isn't that easy," Chen Fan cautioned. "Now that we've destroyed the invading forces, they'll surely send even more against us."

Neither Chen Fan nor the rest of the humans took Zhang Lie's words seriously. Even though they had witnessed his strength, they were doubtful of what he could accomplish.

After all, destroying a world was far harder than it seemed, and there were eight worlds allied against them. If there had been just one, Chen Fan would easily have believed that Zhang Lie could take it on, but not eight together at once.

Zhang Lie was just one hunter. Sun Mengmeng was just one hunter. There might be two strong humans around, but there were eight worlds. Even if Zhang Lie could handle three, and Sun Mengmeng could handle one, there would be four remaining.

Chen Fan didn't dare imagine that there were hunters around as strong as Sun Mengmeng; he simply couldn't believe that the other members of Team Zenith were as impressive as Sun Mengmeng.

Chen Fan continued, "It must have been a struggle for all of you to get here so quickly, and you must be tired. Have a good night's rest, and we can talk about avenging Warlord Chen Ruiming later."

The injured draconian sage was slowly walking toward the humans, supported by a few other draconians. He had reverted to his human form and was sizing up Zhang Lie and Sun Mengmeng. "I had hardly expected to find such strength among the humans. You have my gratitude for saving the draconian world, for saving us all!"

The other draconians had likewise canceled their battle transformations. In their usual forms, they were much like the humans, except for the horns on their heads.

Zhang Lie shook his head. "It was only natural for us to help—this is also the human homeworld, after all."

As the spatial rift died away, the rest of Zhang Lie's group rushed over.

The draconian sage, other draconians, and the humans all became visibly nervous—after all, Zhang Lie's retinue was far larger than they had expected.

There were over a hundred aliens from the Milky Way, along with the massive hordes of lifeforms under Zhang Lie's control, forming a black mass in the horizon. The draconians and humans, who were unprepared and defenseless, could hardly help but be anxious.

Zhang Lie waved a hand. "There's no need to worry. The aliens are all my comrades, and the lifeforms under my direct control."

"What?!" Chen Fan and the draconian sage, along with both the human and draconian forces, were shocked by Zhang Lie's words. That veritable army of lifeforms, tens of thousands strong—the weakest among them was a superior-grade lifeform, and those lifeforms alone could easily take down a world by themselves!

No wonder Zhang Lie felt comfortable claiming that he would seek revenge by destroying the invaders' worlds! With such a staggering number of forces, he would be able to accomplish anything.

"Zhang Lie!" Li Qianlin waved at Zhang Lie from the very front of the party. She strode forward and checked his body for any wounds, relaxing when she didn't find any. "When I heard that you were going to brave a spatial rift, I was so frightened—but it seems like you really succeeded!"

Just then, Sun Mengmeng casually walked up to Zhang Lie and took hold of his wrist. "Zhang Lie, who's this?"

Sun Mengmeng had heard about Zhang Lie crashing Li Qianlin's wedding. After all, the news had taken the entire galaxy by storm.

However, given Sun Mengmeng's understanding of Zhang Lie, there was no way he would simply snatch a woman for no reason whatsoever. Furthermore, Li Qianlin showed no outstanding talent or aptitude for anything; she was just a pretty face.

Sun Mengmeng had the better body, and she felt that they were equally beautiful. In terms of style and poise, she couldn't hope to compare to Li Qianlin, who was a princess by birth, but she was far and away the victor in terms of strength.

Considering all these factors, it was apparent that she, Sun Mengmeng, was the superior candidate.

Li Qianlin glanced at Sun Mengmeng with no small amount of distaste herself. The two women made eye contact, their eyes sparking.

Sun Mengmeng extended a hand. "I'm Sun Mengmeng, Zhang Lie's companion and one of the members of Team Zenith."

Li Qianlin raised an eyebrow. "Zhang Lie's subordinate, then? And here I thought you were someone established in your own right."

Sun Mengmeng asked, "And who are you?"

Li Qianlin smiled sweetly and tugged on Zhang Lie's other wrist. "I'm his wife."

Sun Mengmeng sighed. "Another one of you, then."

Li Qianlin frowned. "What? What do you mean?"

Sun Mengmeng continued, "I've dealt with far too many shameless women like you in the past, calling yourself Zhang Lie's woman, Zhang Lie's wife, Zhang Lie's lover, Zhang Lie's long-lost daughter, Zhang Lie's long-lost sister—such women have only appeared in greater and greater numbers ever since he established the kingdom of Limit."

Li Qianlin pointed at her forehead. "I'm not like those types of people. Don't you see my forehead? This is a mark of marriage conferred by the will of the world itself."

Sun Mengmeng shrugged. "I don't care what the will of the world claims. Have you registered your marriage at the world federation's department of civil affairs?"

Li Qianlin gaped. "Department of civil affairs...?"

"Don't you know?" Sun Mengmeng sneered. "If not, then your marriage surely isn't formalized under galactic law. You're claiming to be married under false pretenses—it's a crime that could see you jailed! As long as your marriage isn't recognized by the department of civil affairs, it can hardly be considered a marriage in truth."

Li Qianlin retorted, "In our world, a formal marriage is recognized by the will of the world itself!"

The two rivals in love hated each other at first sight. They began to bicker and feud with each other, while Zhang Lie watched on at a loss for words...

Chapter 757: Fighting for Affection

In the end, however, Zhang Lie had to step forward and calm the two women down.

After cleaning up the battlefield, the humans and draconians retreated back to their world. Thanks to the humans' influence, the draconian world was reminiscent of Earth.

Sun Mengmeng and Li Qianlin's friends and comrades dragged the two of them apart, since they began to glare and hiss at each other on sight.

Dong Mingxing pulled Li Qianlin aside and told her, "Didn't I tell you? Zhang Lie's interested in you, so make sure you keep him tightly in the palm of your hand. There are countless women who would be willing to snatch away such powerful men in the blink of an eye."

Li Qianlin chewed on her fingers in vexation. "I didn't expect that I would have a rival so quickly. You know how he looks at other women as though they were men—who would have foreseen the competition?"

"No, hold on, I'm a princess of the realm of a large world! Why should I care about whom Zhang Lie likes, and who likes Zhang Lie?"

Dong Mingxing sighed. "If you don't start being honest with yourself, Zhang Lie will really be snatched away by someone else."

Li Qianlin twisted her head and snorted, "I don't care!"

Dong Mingxing smirked. "Is that so? In that case, I might have to consider getting close to Zhang Lie myself. He's a serious and powerful man with great ambitions, after all. I became a fan of him after witnessing his fight with the king of the west."

"You dare!" Li Qianlin shouted at her best friend.

Meanwhile, Zhang Lie instructed Ren Kunjing, "Go hunt down the proof of kingship located on the Mengtai world. If you can't find it, find someone who knows of it."

Ren Kunjing frowned. "This might be difficult. You killed the Mengtai chieftain, Zhang Lie, as well as the Mengtai champion, the chieftain's brother—and you also razed the largest gathering of the Mengtai to the ground.

We tried to search for the proof of kingship in the ruins of the gathering, but we didn't find anything."

Zhang Lie shrugged. "If it were easy, I wouldn't need you to do it."

Xing Ying suggested, "If you can't find the proof of kingship, there are more... forceful means."

Sun Mengmeng, who had recently advanced to the third realm and wasn't familiar with all the details regarding kings of the realm, asked, "What means?"

Xing Ying extended two fingers. "When a world is without a king, there are two methods of obtaining the proof of kingship."

Ren Kunjing jumped in. "The first method is to summon the will of the world directly by using a technique with enough strength to destroy the world. This is largely a theoretical method, because there are only a rare few people who can manage such a feat."

Xing Ying turned to Zhang Lie. "Fortunately, Zhang Lie is one such person."

Ren Kunjing then continued, "The second method is to become the strongest race in the world."

Xing Ying elaborated, "The proof of kingship is granted to the race most able to protect the world. Whether that race is the Mengtai or some other race entirely doesn't much matter to the will of the world."

Ren Kunjing sighed. "But if an indigenous race has become the king of the realm and you want the will of the world to recognize a new king, you'd have to be quite brutal."

Sun Mengmeng asked, "In what sense?"

"To hunt them to extinction...?" Zhang Lie murmured.

Ren Kunjing scratched his head. "Not entirely, but you need to decrease their numbers by roughly four-fifths."

The four hunters' conversation didn't escape the notice of those around them. The draconians and humans were well aware of just how many Mengtai there were—over ten million in all. In other words, Zhang Lie and the others would have to kill eight million Mengtai.

The largest problem at present was that Zhang Lie had razed the central Mengtai territory to the ground, so hunting down the proof of kingship was almost hopeless."

Zhang Lie considered the problem seriously, then announced, "We'll avoid hunting down the Mengtai if possible. I dislike the idea of hunting a race down to extinction."

"I understand!" Ren Kunjing immediately replied.

Zhang Lie might not like the idea of genocide, but he would slaughter the Mengtai if that was what it took to recover the proof of kingship. He continued, "Bring back anyone who might have an idea as to where the proof of kingship is located. If you're unable to obtain any useful information, we'll use our last resort."

"Yes, Zhang Lie!"

The draconians and human hunters who had participated in the battle trudged wearily to their barracks to rest, whereas Zhang Lie and Sun Mengmeng left to reunite with the rest of Team Zenith.

Li Qianlin walked over to Zhang Lie and helped tidy up his attire, just as a wife would. "Getting here so quickly was taxing enough. Don't overwork yourself, you hear?"

As Zhang Lie clasped Li Qianlin's pale white hand in his own, Li Qianlin began to blush.

Just then, Sun Mengmeng grabbed onto Zhang Lie's hand. "Qianlin, there's no need to worry. I won't let Zhang Lie tire himself out."

Li Qianlin frowned. She didn't know how to respond until Dong Mingxing nudged her back. "Very well, Sun Mengmeng. I hope you'll take good care of him—he's always working too hard, and he doesn't know how to take care of himself!"

Zhang Lie smirked as he watched the two women bicker over him. In his past life, he hadn't seen this side of Li Qianlin's personality.

Sun Mengmeng tugged on Zhang Lie's hand. "Zhang Lie, let's go!"

As she watched them leave, Dong Mingxing sighed and shook her head. "You lost that confrontation."

Li Qianlin gritted her teeth. "Who would have expected that demoness to be so forceful?!"

Dong Mingxing shook her head again. "You need to calm down and be more in control of yourself. Men prefer kind, virtuous women. You need to pretend to be magnanimous and caring, to not mind that Zhang Lie has other women by his side, in order to remain his favorite." [1]

"Don't you think I understand?" Li Qianlin sniffed. "Just you wait. I'll work on my forbearance and introduce you to a brand-new Li Qianlin!"

"Let's hope so..."

Everyone in Team Zenith was overjoyed at the long-awaited reunion.

"It's been a while, Captain!" Li Feng called out.

Fang Yi laughed. "Captain, we're here to ride on your coattails again—you don't mind, do you?"

Sun Xiaowu smirked. "Of course not—we're his right-hand men!"

"We missed you, Captain. Did you miss us too?" Zhou Ying asked.

"Of course I did! You're all elites I fostered from the very beginning. How could I forget about you all?"

The reunion was a festive occasion. Zhang Lie had the draconians arrange a manor for him, and they were more than happy to comply given what he had done to save them all.

Chapter 758: In Search of Proof

After a momentary pause, Li Feng asked, "Captain, what's the deal with those aliens from the Milky Way?"

Yang Ze's question was different. "Captain, I heard you snatched away a large world's princess at her wedding!"

Zhou Ying added onto that question. "Why did you do it, Captain?"

Sun Xiaowu piled on. "Captain, what were you thinking? My sister almost sobbed herself to death when you did it—you have to explain yourself!"

Zhang Lie raised his hands in surrender. "Enough, enough! I don't know where to start answering your questions. A lot of things happened to me in the third realm, so many that I wouldn't be able to tell you about them all in three days and three nights."

Sun Mengmeng leapt forward. "Captain, you'll at least tell us why you crashed the wedding, won't you?"

Zhang Lie raised his head and glanced up at the sky. "I was struck by love like a jolt of lightning: in a flash, I found myself with intense longing for the bride."

Sun Xiaowu's lips spasmed.

Zhang Lie sighed and turned to the members of Team Zenith. "Alright. Enough about me—all of you were training hard in the second realm, weren't you?"

The hunters all knew he wanted to change the topic. Since he was unwilling to tell them more about the wedding, none of them would push him.

Li Feng patted himself on the chest. "Captain, there's no need to worry about us. We're far stronger than we were in the second realm, so we'll surely be able to take on any responsibilities you give us!"

"I don't have anything planned for you at the moment. After all, you've all just advanced, so take the time to claim your new gene fragments. Once you've all maxed out your superior gene fragments, there'll be plenty of responsibilities waiting for you all. Come, let's drink!"

Zhang Lie retrieved a vat of alcohol from his soulshard storage. "This is remarkable alcohol," he introduced, handing cups out to everyone. As the hunters downed the alcohol, their eyes brightened.

Li Feng suddenly shouted, "Captain, just what is this alcohol? I just received some gene fragments!"

Zhang Lie laughed. "I told you, it's good alcohol."

Yang Ze sighed in relaxation. "The third realm is truly incomparable to the second. I can't believe alcohol like this exists!"

Zhang Lie poured himself a cup and took a gulp. "Haha, there are more amazing things in the third realm to discover. Once you're all done with the alcohol, I'll have the Jinghun bring over some lifeforms for you to kill. We'll work on your regular, mutated, and superior gene fragments for now. Stabilize your foundations after that, then come back to me for peak gene fragments."

Sun Xiaowu shouted, "Yes, Captain! With you around, we won't even have to go hunting ourselves!"

The hunters of Team Zenith drank together for the entire night.

Ren Kunjing was a particularly efficient aide, and he had returned by the next morning.

Zhang Lie had also been drinking for the entire night, but his remarkable constitution kept him clear-minded even when everyone fell down drunk. The alcohol he had shared was very potent; even the hunters of Team Zenith, who were all peak-grade lifeforms, were affected by it.

However, after drinking for the entire night, not even Zhang Lie was immune to the effects of a hangover. His head throbbed with pain, as though two hammers were continuously beating on his temples.

As he stumbled to the gates of the draconian enclave, he found a few Mengtai kneeling before them.

Zhang Lie turned to Ren Kunjing. "What's this? You like those tricks about making sinners kneel and show their repentance?"

Zhang Lie believed actions spoke louder than words. No matter how these sinners knelt or lived their lives now, the dead wouldn't revive. What was the point?

Ren Kunjing rolled his eyes. "Zhang Lie, you were the one who told me to bring any relevant Mengtai back here!"

Zhang Lie winced as he palmed his head. "I remember now. I was drinking the entire night, so I'm having a hard time thinking straight."

Ren Kunjing continued, "These Mengtai are the chieftains of each of the nomadic tribes. None of their tribes can compare to the one led by the king of the realm, but they're all relatively important people in their own right.

"We've asked about the proof of kingship before, but they've staunchly refused to reveal what they know. However, our informants are certain they know more than they're letting on."

Zhang Lie rubbed his temples. The effect of the alcohol had yet to subside; they had drunk all the vats of alcohol that Zhang Lie had had in his storage.

The alcohol packed a punch, but the side effects were equally overwhelming. No ordinary hunter would be able to bear it, so the fact that Zhang Lie was even standing was extraordinary. None of the members of Team Zenith had yet woken up—and Zhang Lie had drunk far more than they had.

Ren Kunjing explained, "That's why I've brought them all here so you can interrogate them all simultaneously, Zhang Lie."

The Mengtai chieftains begged for mercy as they knelt.

"Please, let us go! We really don't know anything!"

"We apologize! If we had known that the humans were under the protection of such strong hunters like you, we wouldn't have attacked.

We deeply regret our foolish actions, and we've repented. We shouldn't have struck at the humans and draconians."

Zhang Lie and Ren Kunjing watched on coldly, unperturbed by the chieftains' cries.

Since the humans had emerged as the complete victor of the confrontation, the chieftains naturally had to defer to them, but if Zhang Lie and the others hadn't made it to the human homeworld on time, or if the members of Team Zenith hadn't ascended quickly enough, the draconian world would now be the property of the Mengtai.

The humans, who would lose their homeworld and be teleported to a random location in the third realm upon ascending, would have much greater a mortality rate.

Zhang Lie and Ren Kunjing knew very well that, in the dimensional realm, strength was might. The humans and draconians had won; that was why the Mengtai chieftains were regretful. If the humans and draconians had lost instead, the Mengtai would have lorded over them and not spared them any mercy. Their cruelty was apparent on the battlefield.

Zhang Lie began, "As long as you tell me where the proof of kingship is located, all of you will have a chance to live."

The Mengtai cried out, "We don't know, we really don't! Something as important as the proof of kingship could only be under the care of our king, and none of us have any clue where he would hide it."

"Right, how would we know? None of us are close to the king of the realm!"

"If I'm not mistaken, something as important as the proof of kingship should be located by the king's side. Didn't you find it?"

Chapter 759: The Conundrum, Resolved

Ren Kunjing turned to Zhang Lie. "There's something suspicious about all these chieftains, isn't there?"

The chieftains all lowered their heads to the ground as one, their bodies trembling.

"But we really don't know a thing!"

"We're all just minor players in the Mengtai world. How would we know where the proof of kingship is located? It's far too important for the likes of us!"

If they had known that the humans had such a powerful backer, they wouldn't have dared to invade.

Zhang Lie's temples were still throbbing, and he was somewhat unwilling to use his mistmeld clam soulshard.

However, it was clearly the most effective way of obtaining information. Zhang Lie stepped forward and was just about to use his mistmeld clam soulshard when Ren Kunjing stopped him.

"Zhang Lie, give me a chance to show you my capabilities."

Zhang Lie's temples were hurting, so he was very happy to have Ren Kunjing take over.

Ren Kunjing smiled coldly. "As far as I know, the king of the realm is chosen among the chieftains of every generation—not on account of their strength, but rather their popularity, in the sense that each chieftain casts a vote for their candidate. In other words, you chieftains were the ones who nominated him to his position."

If the selection for the king of the realm were truly based on strength, Behemoth would surely have been the king.

Ren Kunjing smirked. "In that case, I'm sure you all understand why I suspect you have more information you're not telling us."

The chieftains all shook their heads. "No, no, we don't know where the proof of kingship is! We were only responsible for selecting among the candidates!

The high priest was the one responsible for conferring the kingship and overseeing the transfer of authority..."

Ren Kunjing asked, "In that case, where's the high priest?"

"He died when you attacked the largest Mengtai gathering," the Mengtai chieftains replied.

Zhang Lie: ...

Ren Kunjing snorted. "It looks like you guys still don't understand the importance of the matter. Do you think that you'll be able to go back to ruling the Mengtai if you can withstand this hurdle?"

There's no way you'll succeed. As you know, there are only two means of obtaining the proof of kingship when a world is without a king: either destroy the world, or destroy the ruling race."

Zhang Lie rubbed at his temples again.

Ren Kunjing smiled. "The first means is difficult to accomplish, especially if the will of the world is stubborn. I personally prefer the second means—genocide."

Zhang Lie retrieved a cup from his storage-type soulshard and poured himself a glass of water. He found a piece of ginger and gathered genetic energy by his fingertips before peeling the ginger, slicing it, dropping the slices into the cup, and then vibrating the molecules of water within with fine control, just like a microwave.

Very quickly, he prepared a hangover remedy.

He didn't much care whether or not the Mengtai chieftains revealed the truth behind the proof of kingship. His headache was the more pressing problem; once he resolved that, he would easily be able to activate his mistmeld clam soulshard and compel the Mengtai chieftains to reveal all that they knew.

Ren Kunjing glared at the chieftains.

"The proof of kingship is granted to the race most able to protect the world. Whether that race is the Mengtai or some other race entirely doesn't matter to the will of the world."

The chieftains trembled. "Just what are you planning?"

"Genocide," Ren Kunjing repeated.

The Mengtai chieftains' eyes widened.

"If you all refuse to tell us anything, we can only choose to give up on the proof of kingship and wipe your race off the face of the world."

The Mengtai chieftains all kowtowed violently. "Please, let our race go! Our king is dead, and there's no way we can pose a threat. Don't doom us to extinction!"

"We Mengtai haven't done anything to merit this level of punishment! If you're going to kill anyone, just kill us and be done with it!"

Ren Kunjing scowled. "As long as you tell me where the proof of kingship is located, all the Mengtai will be spared. But if you don't..."

The Mengtai chieftains continued kowtowing, until all their heads were bruised and bloody.

"We truly don't know!"

"Please, we know nothing!"

"As long as you let our race go, I'll be willing to do anything!"

Ren Kunjing gritted his teeth, not knowing how to proceed.

Zhang Lie continued sipping on the ginger tea as he watched Ren Kunjing. When his headache finally dissipated, he handed his glass to the Jinghun warlord. "My turn, I think."

As Ren Kunjing took the proffered glass, Zhang Lie called out, "Lift your heads."

The Mengtai chieftains continued kowtowing, as though they would smash their own skulls open and die as long as Zhang Lie and Ren Kunjing refused to spare the Mengtai.

Zhang Lie frowned. "I have a task for you. If you can accomplish it well, I'll let the Mengtai go, and I'll even ignore the fact that the Mengtai attacked the humans and draconians.

The Mengtai chieftains all lifted their heads, only to be caught by Zhang Lie's gaze through his mistmeld clam soulshard.

The Mengtai chieftains' expressions turned slack as they were caught by Zhang Lie's hypnosis.

Zhang Lie began, "The task is very simple: reveal the location of the proof of kingship."

The Mengtai chieftains responded as one, "The proof of kingship is located at the sacred lands of the Mengtai."

"Where is that?"

"When the various tribes select a chieftain to rule them all, that new chieftain will head toward the sacred lands and inherit the kingship with the help of the high priest."

The chieftains who had stubbornly remained silent now divulged all their secrets.

Ren Kunjing, who once again realized the power of Zhang Lie's disaster-grade mistmeld clam soulshard, shivered.

"Do you know where these sacred lands are?"

The Mengtai chieftains replied, "We haven't been there ourselves, but we know roughly where it is."

They told Zhang Lie what they knew, and he clapped his hands as he turned to Ren Kunjing. "Well, there's that."

#### Chapter 760: Plans for War

Ren Kunjing couldn't help but ask the chieftains, "Why did you hide this information? Do you really think we wouldn't dare slaughter the Mengtai?"

None of the Mengtai chieftains responded. They would listen only to Zhang Lie's orders, since he was the one in possession of the mistmeld clam soulshard.

Zhang Lie echoed Ren Kunjing's question. "Indeed, why didn't you tell the truth? Aren't you afraid of our threat?"

The Mengtai would hardly need that proof of kingship when all of them were dead.

The chieftains replied, "Purging our race will take quite some time. Because you've killed the invading forces of other alien races nearby, they surely won't let you go.

"We attacked the humans because we thought they were growing to be too strong a threat. Now that everyone was defeated and the invaders' reinforcements have likewise fallen, the humans are a clear threat, and the invading races are surely all planning for a concerted attack even now."

The draconians' neighbors were no amicable ally; that was evident enough from the battle the humans and draconians had just gone through. The reason the aliens had launched an invasion of the human and draconian world was because they wanted to defeat the draconians once and for all, then nip the humans' growth in the bud.

The fact that none of these aliens had returned meant that the humans had defeated them all.

Without having seen the members of Team Zenith fight for themselves or how Zhang Lie led his group of warlords through a spatial rift, they had no clue just how strong Zhang Lie was. All they knew was that their forces hadn't returned.

How could the aliens do nothing? From their perspective, even if their forces hadn't returned, the concerted assault would have gravely weakened the humans and draconians, and both sides had to have suffered.

This would be an excellent time to commit more resources to the invasion and to swoop up the spoils of war.

The Mengtai chieftains snickered at each other. "We're familiar with the invading alien races, and we know how they'll respond. They know how threatening the humans are, and they won't be able to remain still. They'll attack sooner or later, just you wait."

Ren Kunjing seemed to understand what the chieftains were saying. "So the lot of you were just waiting for the other aliens to attack, thinking that your crisis would be resolved then?"

Zhang Lie nodded. "Even if we were to purge the Mengtai, that isn't something we could do in just a few days. As long as you manage to stall until more invading forces arrive, you would be able to protect the proof of kingship and crown a new king. With the king's presence, you'd be able to protect your world once more."

The Mengtai chieftains might appear pitiful in front of Zhang Lie, but they had their own plans and schemes.

Ren Kunjing snorted. "If we can kill one king of the realm, don't you think we can kill a second?"

Zhang Lie explained the chieftains' reasoning. "They must believe that we won't be able to withstand the assault of the alien races."

Ren Kunjing laughed coldly. "They truly underestimate us, don't they?"

Neither Zhang Lie nor Ren Kunjing were particularly concerned about the Mengtai chieftains' thoughts. After all, Zhang Lie's forces were sufficient to handle even the invaders of a few dozen different worlds.

"Are we going to be attacked by even more aliens, then?" Zhang Lie murmured. "An excellent opportunity to hunt down more proofs of kingship."

Ren Kunjing suggested, "Shall I send someone to retrieve the Mengtai proof of kingship?"

Zhang Lie nodded and added, "Help me prepare lifeforms of all rarities."

"Are you intending to help the members of Team Zenith get their gene fragments?" That was the first thing Ren Kunjing thought of.

"Indeed!"

"I'll go prepare the lifeforms at once, Zhang Lie!"

By the time the members of Team Zenith woke up, they found an orderly line of genetic lifeforms waiting for them. Ren Kunjing introduced, "The first row of lifeforms is regular-grade, the second is mutated-grade, and the third is superior-grade."

The members of Team Zenith blinked.

Yang Ze sighed. "I feel like collecting gene fragments has become far more boring than before. There's none of the fun of collecting them one at a time anymore—ah, my youth..."

Zhang Lie replied, "If you're interested in slowly collecting gene fragments, I won't stop you. Ren Kunjing, let one portion of the lifeforms go. This fellow wants to do it all himself!"

"Ah, wait, Captain!" Yang Ze hurriedly changed his mind. "No, pretend I didn't say anything! I'm very glad I can skip the tedious process of collecting gene fragments normally—only losers without powerful backers have to do that!"

The members of Team Zenith were stunned by Yang Ze's shamelessness.

Zhang Lie waved a hand. "Alright, get your gene fragments now. We have a lot of work to do!"

The members of Team Zenith began killing the lifeforms, then roasting the carcasses or making a hotpot by the side. They had never expected to find it so... painful... to collect gene fragments and consume the lifeforms' meat.

They could clearly recall how happy they had been to even get a chance to consume superior- and peak-grade lifeform meat, but now, they were forced to eat so much in one go that they were growing tired of it.

"Growing stronger is truly an arduous process," Yang Ze remarked, picking up yet another slice of peak-grade lifeform meat.

Ren Kunjing's mouth spasmed. If this could be considered painful, he was sure that 99% of all hunters would be more than willing to undergo such pain.

The members of Team Zenith quickly replenished their gene fragments. Meanwhile, the draconian sage and Warlord Chen Fan, after a period of rest, recovered from their injuries.

The next morning, Zhang Lie convened a meeting between them all, and the aliens of the Milky Way also joined in. They wanted to latch onto Zhang Lie, so they naturally had to ally with the humans as well. Even though quite a fair number of them had clashed against the draconians and Chen Fan in the past, on account of Zhang Lie, they were willing to let bygones be bygones.

"The aliens of the neighboring worlds will attack sooner or later. I suggest we take the initiative and attack them first," Zhang Lie began.

Chen Fan frowned. "Zhang Lie, I know how strong you are, and how your team has enough firepower to wipe out a medium-sized world. You've even brought so many aliens from the Milky Way with you, and there must be over half the warlords on the third-realm leaderboard here at the moment. Even so, I'm afraid you might not have a good understanding of the current situation in the draconian world."

Zhang Lie shook his head. "No, you're mistaken. I understand the situation very well: our foes are just small fry. There's nothing to worry about, so relax!"