

A Warrior Undefeatable 5691-5700

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The attack could have crushed an ordinary Heavenly Immortal, yet Jared only lifted the Dragonslayer Sword-calm, unhurried, almost curious.

"An ant toppling an elephant," he mumbled, uninterested.

Five-element Nascence Power, newly restored, roared through his meridians and into the blade. A faint ripple of the Time Law shimmered around him, bending every second to his will.

"Slay!"

A plain, color-striped flash-Prismatic Sword Aura-shot forth. It sliced the phantom mask like cheap silk, leaving the once-formidable array in tatters that dissolved into smoke.

The aura did not slow. It skimmed across the screeching crone who had led the chant.

Her twisted sneer froze. A heartbeat later, she—and the magical item she clutched fell apart in two silent, clean halves.

"What-"

Terror glazed every elder's face. None of them had imagined Jared's power could rise to such impossible heights.

"Quick! Activate the sect defense formation!" Brendan screamed, the command cracking with panic.

He was already too late.

Jared blurred. Time Acceleration wrapped him in invisible wind, rendering him faster than divine sense could track.

Each silver flash of the sword ended a life; with every heartbeat, another elder collapsed, their bodies falling before they understood they had been struck.

"No—spare me, sir! It was Lilac who offended you, not us!" one elder shrieked, voice breaking.

He dropped to his knees, sobbing for mercy.

Jared's gaze remained icy, unmoved. The Dragonslayer Sword whispered through the air; the plea ended mid-syllable.

In the span of a breath, only Brendan remained, stranded amid the corpses of his order.

His limbs shook uncontrollably. Staring at Jared—who looked more reaper than man - Brendan tasted a bitterness made of regret and raw, animal fear.

Never, even in nightmares, had he imagined that a sect with a millennium of legacy would be snuffed out because one inner court disciple had spoken carelessly.

"Wh-Why?" he rasped, the question shredded by disbelief.

Jared eyed Brendan with an unmoved calm. "If a child grows wild, blame the father. If a student strays, blame the teacher. Your Mystic Fiend Sect rotted from roof beam to foundation. Today ruin is simply the bill come due."

As the last word left his lips, the Dragonslayer Sword sprang forward—one silver streak that pierced straight through Brendan's brow.

The man's eyes widened. His body toppled in slow motion, and the final image burned into those lifeless pupils was Jared sliding the blade home without a flicker of emotion.

Only in that dying heartbeat did he understand: the sect's destruction began with his own corruption, and with elders who had pampered disciples into the same decay.

Jared spared the corpses no glance. A sweep of his spiritual sense emptied every vault the Mystic Fiend Sect had filled across centuries.

Then he turned, became a streak of gold, and vanished into the unending sky. Behind him lay a blood-soaked sect—once proud, now forever silent.

Not even the sect's distant

forebears, peering down from

whatever afterlife they occupied,

could have imagined that their navel because one

legacy would

arrogant disciple mocked a stranger

who chose to intervene.

"Kid, where to next?" the Vermilion Demon Lord rumbled, crimson smoke curling from the seams of his armor.

"Back to Nethergate Sect," Jared replied, voice steady. "I'll refine these spoils first— then we plan the real war."

With that, he angled south, a comet streaking toward Nethergate's distant peaks.

Moments into the flight, a fierce tremor jolted his chest. Beneath his ribs, Cyanna's draconic essence pulsed and flared with frantic light.

Jared halted midair; excitement blazed across his eyes.

"The Demon Seal Tower-it's surfaced in level nine!"

He wheeled on the spot, arrowing toward the beacon blazing within the crystal.

Guided by the crystal's blistering heat, he dove into Nullrift Gorge a labyrinth of fractured space buried Within level nine until the tower he both coveted and feared loomed once more.

Its dark spine speared through cloud and storm, stitching earth to sky.

At its base, four stone lions etched with celestial lord runes now glimmered with fresh ferocity, their presence crueler than before.

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Phosphorescent eyes glowed within those statues, bending the very air around them until light itself seemed to shudder.

Jared's Golden Dragon Bloodline roared, resonating with the crystal. Through that link, he sensed Cyanna and Coall trapped inside, their emotions surging with urgency and hope.

Cautiously, he muted his aura and watched from afar.

The void around the tower rippled ceaselessly, a tapestry of overlapping spatial fractures far deadlier than before.

Like a boulder hurled into a still lake, the tower's ancient waves had already alerted every power across the Ninefold Heaven. Within half a day, the barren rim of Nullrift Gorge swarmed with hundreds of cultivators, turning the wasteland into a simmering powder keg.

Robed disciples, armored mercenaries, and lone wanderers ringed the Beast-Subduing Tower like flotsam around a maelstrom. Their breaths told the tale of realms conquered from the tentative glow of the Human Immortal Realm to the blinding brilliance of the Heavenly Immortal Realm—and every gaze burned toward the ancient tower, where muted bursts of light teased from beneath weather-scarred stone.

"There's no doubt that is the Demon Seal Tower recorded in the oldest chronicles!" A voice cracked with excitement. "Its inner space never ends. Somewhere inside lie the heirlooms and legacies of prehistoric beasts!"

"Legend says the tower drifts through a thousand realms at whim. Who would have dreamed it would show up on level nine? This is fortune on a cosmic scale!"

"Look at the four stone lions at the base. Those statues anchor the formation. Until that core shatters, the doorway is nothing more than a dream!"

Temptation soon outweighed caution. Someone lunged.

A wandering cultivator at the early Heavenly Immortal Realm unfurled into a streak of argent light, knifing straight for the entrance.

Buzz!

When he crossed the three-hundred-meter mark, the lions' hollow eyes lit with eldritch flame. An invisible wall of space congealed out of thin air. He slammed into it like a sparrow into granite. The rebound fired him back even faster, ribs shattering, blood fountaining from his lips. By the time his broken body hit the dust, life clung to him by a single, fraying thread.

The spectacle doused every impulsive heart as surely as winter rain.

"That formation is brutal. Brute force won't cut it."

"The formation weaves the laws of dimension itself—subtle beyond belief. Only combined strength will crack it!"

"Friends!" an elder of the Sunfire

Sect called, voice rolling like drums. "Such fortune belongs to all who stand here. Let us join hands, break the shield first, the race for

whatever waits within—each to his own skill!"

☪

Murmurs of agreement rippled through the circle; weapons lowered just a fraction.

Yet the newborn alliance was spun of cobwebs and wishful thinking.

As they probed the array-testing positions, measuring force-old grudges and fresh slights surfaced like daggers beneath silk.

"Scum of Blackwater Grotto! That gust of wind was aimed at me, was it not?" A barrel-chested giant with a rust-red beard roared across the rubble, eyes like molten iron.

"Breaking arrays causes splash damage. Dodge better next time—or blame your own incompetence," the Blackwater leader hissed, voice seeping from a shroud of black mist.

"Lies! Old scores and new injuries—let's settle everything right now!"

The bearded titan swung his mountain-cleaving axe. Silver light carved the air, streaking toward the mist-clad crowd.

That single blow struck the powder keg.

Factions already bristling with suspicion erupted. In a heartbeat, the makeshift siege line dissolved into a frenzy of blades, spells, and vendettas—each combatant using chaos as the excuse he had been craving.

From somewhere within the roiling melee, a rasping roar tore through the sulfur-laden air. "Curs of Sunfire Sect! You stole our treasure in the last secret realm raid— pay with your lives!"

Another furious cry answered, dripping with murderous contempt. "Aurum Gate cowards—time to die!"

A third shout, savage and reckless, shattered what little order remained. "Kill! Clear everyone first, then smash the array!"

Chaos spread like a plague, feeding on every heartbeat.

Blinding spell-fire flashed, artifacts clanged like iron thunder, and the gorge filled with overlapping howls and death-screams.

Attacks meant for the tower instead ripped into supposed allies, each misfire stoking deeper resentment.

Blood painted the fractured stone

crimson, severed limbs spiraled

through acrid smoke, and the

battlefield became an abattoir Beneath a hulking boulder on the gorge's edge, Jared slid into shadow; silent, unseen, he watched the carnage with frost-cold eyes.

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Jared let the aura of Human Immortal Realm Level Five seep from his pores—an insignificant ripple beside the Heavenly Immortal titans already trading blows.

A few blood-mad cultivators glanced his way, sensed only a low-level opponent, and sneered before charging after richer prey.

Good. The harder they fight, the better for me.

Jared sneered.

In that stolen calm, he circulated the Ninefold Pill's medicine, steadying his freshly mended core while studying the four stone lions and the formation they powered.

Sharp-eyed cultivators finally spotted him crouched there and could not resist a barb.

"Hey, kid hiding in the corner-Human Immortal Realm Level Five, and you dare wade into this mess? Courting death, aren't you?"

"Run home, little whelp! This place isn't for the likes of you!"

"Useless trash-your face alone offends me!"

Jared did not so much as lift an eyelid; the insults flew past like bees that had lost their stingers.

Most of his focus drifted inward, tracing the faint thread that bound the draconic essence on his chest to the distant tower.

In his sea of consciousness, the Vermilion Demon Lord gave a rasping laugh. "Idiots, all of them. Death is a breath away, yet they remain blind. You, boy-you are calm."

Jared answered the ancient voice without moving his lips. "Arguing with fools wastes air. Let the sandpiper and the clam bleed each other dry-then the fisherman profits. Either they cripple themselves, or... I learn how to enter."

Heat surged behind his sternum; the draconic essence burned hotter, as though an unseen corridor now linked it to the tower's heart.

The four stone lions responded, the spatial pressure they exuded softening around him—less a barrier now, almost inviting.

So the slaughter raged on for nearly an hour, a storm that bought Jared every precious second he needed.

The gorge reeked of spent power. Corpses, shattered blades, and discarded talismans littered the broken earth, while the few still breathing—regardless of banner or creed—clutched bleeding wounds and swayed on their feet.

Even those lofty cultivators of the Heavenly Immortal Realm, once considered untouchable pillars, now gasped for air, faces chalk-white after trading strike for strike until their reserves ran dry.

Above them, the protective array around the tower continued to hold, yet every fresh impact sent violent rings of light skating across its surface like ripples across a storm-tossed lake.

Exhaustion chained every

combatant in place. Swords

hovered, spells flickered half-formed, and war-scarred eyes measured one another, each mind racing to solve the same question: how, at last, to break that stubborn array?

That was the moment Jared moved.

He sprang forward like a leopard loosed from its blind, his outline thinning to a faint blur that almost melted into the air itself. Rather than charging straight for the gate he traced an elegant, unknowable curve, circling the four stone lions in a single breath.

As he skimmed past, the lions' eyes gleamed with ghostly light. The invisible barrier, so merciless a

in

moment ago parted for him with the soft hush of water splitting for a diving swan.

"Huh? What's that kid doing?"

"How did he get that close to the array?"

"No—he's going in!"

A hoarse voice finally understood the danger and tore at the air with a roar of mingled fury and alarm.

It was too late.

Jared's figure flickered once at the tower's gate, then vanished—like a raindrop sinking into the sea-leaving nothing but silence where he had stood.

The barrier snapped shut an instant later, catching a flurry of hastily cast spells and pinning them harmlessly outside, sparks sliding down its flawless face.

The battlefield froze.

Every gaze locked on the sealed doors of the tower and the four stone lions that still radiated silent, chilling authority.

That nobody-dismissed as mere filler, a cultivator only at Human Immortal Realm Level Five-had walked inside as though the tower itself had invited him.

"How in the realms did he pull that off?"

"Did he find a flaw in the formation?"

"D*mn it! We spill blood for hours, and a gnat reaps the prize!"

"When he comes out, we'll tear him limb from limb!"

Anger, regret, and raw jealousy echoed through Nullrift Gorge, but rage was all they had left; the tower offered them no other answer.

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Within, Jared stepped into a realm of warped corridors and overlapping horizons, the Demon Seal Tower's inner world shimmering with impossible colors and folding skies.

He felt the life-threads of Cyanna and Coall growing clearer with every heartbeat. Jaw set, eyes bright with resolve, he turned toward the tower's unfathomable depths and strode forward.

"Cyanna, Coall—hold on! I'm coming for you!"

"Kid, something's wrong," the Vermilion Demon Lord murmured inside his mind. "The tower's aura is savage, its spatial fluctuation deranged either enraged or bracing for an intruder."

Jared nodded, every nerve thrumming in grim agreement.

The Demon Seal Tower no longer looked like silent stone. It felt like some primordial monster jarred awake, baring fangs at the night.

"Whatever waits inside, I'm going in!"

Resolve blazed behind his eyes, hot enough to make the air tremble.

He had sworn to drag his friends out alive, and he never broke an oath.

He inhaled slowly and deeply, summoning every drop of power until his aura burned white-gold. Then he shot toward the gate like a comet. Within the last three hundred meters, the world convulsed.

An ancient, stadium-shaking bellow blasted from the stone.

The four stone lions sprang awake. Granite muscles flexed as thunder rolled from their throats.

The runes ignited along their hides, hurling four pillars of white light skyward.

The beams braided together, forming a blinding net that draped the tower in a cage of law.

Runes pulsed across that lattice, exhaling equal parts imprisonment and extinction. Ahead of Jared, space cracked like glass—razored fragments and raging spatial currents screamed toward him.

This was no simple barrier. It was a dimension-rending kill array.

"Perfect!"

He had prepared for this. His Nethersky Eye flared open, revealing every shifting joint and secret node of the array in crystalline clarity.

"Slash!"

The Dragonslayer Sword rang free, its cry a dragon's lament.

Jared drove his newborn sword intent into the blade, unleashing a Prismatic Sword Aura honed to sever space itself.

Zip!

The aura collided with the glowing net, screeching hard enough to carve marrow. Light and rune tore apart, leaving a jagged breach where even Heavenly Immortals would have been shredded.

But the maelstrom of spatial debris was already upon him. He flickered

like a ghost, slipping between lethal

fissures while the Dragonslayer Sword whirled shattering every shard that dared approach.

Every time sword and net collided, dazzling sparks flared, and the very air rippled as if struck by invisible thunder.

Jared's forearms went numb, hot blood churning in his veins, warning him he could not endure such force for long.

This formation was far more brutal than he had guessed, a cage of shifting dimensions that meant to grind him into dust.

"Stop meeting it head-on. Find the heart of the array," the Vermilion Demon Lord

barked, his voice echoing like distant war drums.

Summoning the Nethersky Eye,

Jared swept the battlefield in a heartbeat and locked onto the glowing runes pulsing between the brows of the four store lions.

"Shatter!"

The Five-Element nascence power surged from every meridian, funneling into the sword's tip until the blade screamed with restless light.

Man and weapon fused, spinning into a living drill that bored through chaotic void currents, stabbing four precise thrusts toward each lion's forehead.

Cling!

Cling!

Cling!

Cling!

The quartet of chimes rang together-crisp, crystalline, like bells struck inside a cathedral of stone.

The statues froze mid-lunge; the runes in their brows guttered and died, snuffing out the flow of power.

Without that feed, the massive light-web sagged and wavered, its lethal pressure collapsing like a punctured lung.

Jared darted through the newly weakened mesh, then whipped his sword backward, cleaving the yellow charm that had reformed across the Demon Seal Tower's gate.

Boom!

The charm exploded, the gate yawned wide, and Jared stepped into the familiar, rotten gloom of the tower's first level without a moment's doubt.

The stench hit him first, and his expression tightened.

What greeted him now looked nothing like the chamber he had left.

The scattered corpses and bleached bones were mostly gone, as though swept clean by some grisly custodian.

In their place, a vast, intricate formation seethed at the room's center, its lines etched in murky ink and breathing dense black vapors.

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At the array's core lay a mound of freshly slain bodies, already liquefying-flesh melting into pure ebony ghoulish energy that the formation drank like wine.

The corpse-reek on this floor had thickened into a tangible fog, clinging to the lungs with suffocating weight.

Jared's voice cracked the tomb-like silence. "What happened? Where did the corpses go?"

A siren screamed inside Jared's mind, cold and metallic. Not good-something's terribly wrong.

"Kid, your last intrusion woke something inside the tower," the Vermilion Demon Lord warned, his tone knifing through the gloom. "It has sped up its feast on ghoulish energy. It either wants its strength back-or it's preparing a ritual."

As he spoke, the black light at the array's heart swelled like an eclipse. From that glare rose a monstrosity three stories tall, sculpted entirely from boiling ghoulish energy.

It had no face—only two crimson points burning where eyes should be, exhaling violence and death in heavy waves.

"Intruder...die!" the Corpse King hissed, the words arriving as a rasp inside the skull rather than through the ears.

An arm fashioned from rancid ghoulish energy swept toward Jared, its claw larger than a chariot. Every inch of air it touched blistered and peeled away, as though the atmosphere itself were rotting.

"A mere corpse-fiend dares block my path?"

Although startled, Jared kept his head clear. The Dragonslayer Sword left its sheath in a burst of blinding gold. The Golden Dragon Aura rolled out with the blade-light made tangible and furious.

"Golden Dragon Banishment!" he roared.

A dragon-shaped wave of sword energy thundered forward and rammed straight through the Corpse King's chest.

The fetid mist sizzled like frost under sunlight, dissolving around the gaping hole. "Unless we shatter that array, it cannot be killed," the Vermilion Demon Lord barked. Jared's brow tightened. He hammered the formation, but the lattice was welded to the tower itself—unyielding stone, iron, and ancient spellwork.

I can't continue fighting him!

He made the decision in a heartbeat, sliding past the Corpse King's swipe and sprinting for the staircase that spiraled toward level two.

The Corpse King rushed after him, but an unseen force at the stairwell throat slammed it back, leaving it howling in impotent fury.

Jared crossed onto the second floor, and the world changed once more.

Hundreds of human and beast

still stood in rigid ranks, but

very dead eye stone

light.

glowing with seductive alien

Pink mist, thick as syrup, pooled across the entire level, carrying a sweet scent that made pulses race and thoughts stumble.

The "corpses" began to sway, posing with shameless allure, their throats releasing a chorus of moans that slithered under the skin.

The pink vapor seeped through every

seam, angling for the

seven vital channels in Jared's head,

eager to grow at his con

"Another filthy trick—really?" Jared growled, contempt slicing through the haze.

He answered the mist with a low, derisive scoff, locking his mind inside a silent, crystalline core.

The twin pillars of his vast spirit and ironclad will held firm, leaving those honeyed currents with nowhere to cling.

Yet the illusions refused to melt; instead, they sharpened, wearing the polish of reality.

Catalina, Catina, Lizbeth, and even Cyanna herself glided toward him, every step dripping with wordless invitation.

"Cheap mirages you dare test my resolve?"

A shard of ruthless clarity flashed across his eyes. He shed the last restraint.

Drawing a breath that felt like drawing steel, he let the ocean of sword intent inside him erupt.

A thunderous hum rolled outward as an unseen field blossomed from his soles.

Within that circle, blades of will crisscrossed, severing every lie.

The writhing corpses, the pink fog,

the syrup-sweet apparitions bet

that sun-bright purity, they burst

like

soap bubbles in neon light noon light

A heartbeat later, the second floor lay bare and honest. Only true corpses remained, standing silent, their tricks finished.

So my sword intent can shatter illusion as well. Another layer understood and just in time.

He wasted no breath, taking the stairs two at a time toward the third floor.

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The third level remained bright, perfumed by Cyanna's faint, cool scent.

One glance told Jared she was in ruinous shape.

Pale as winter milk, breath ragged, she knelt in meditation while ribbons of black energy crawled over her once-emerald gown, chewing at her dragon essence and mind. She looked up. Joy flared in her eyes, then drowned in frantic worry.

"Jared, go!" Cyanna gasped, voice a trembling thread. "The heart of the tower's seal woke up it's lashing out at every Draconian!"

"What happened? And where's Coall?" Jared demanded.

He lunged forward, pressing a palm blazing with pure Golden Dragon Aura against Cyanna's back, letting it chase the black energy from her veins.

"Coall is trapped on the fourth floor. Whatever you witnessed down here, it's even worse up there."

Cyanna's breath came ragged, yet she pressed on, desperate to make Jared understand. "Moments after you left, an ancient will-furious, resentful-echoed through the Beast-Subduing Tower. It accused us of luring outsiders inside, of disturbing its slumber. The seals on every level swelled with power and began hunting the very prisoners they were meant to pacify. This black energy is that power made flesh. It devours our strength, Jared-minute by minute."

Jared's jaw clenched. "An ancient will?"

Could it be the tower's own spirit... or something far more terrifying watching from the upper floors?

Space rippled at the stairwell to the fourth level, and a voice as thin as a razor scraped along the walls. "Heh-heh... The little Azure Dragon speaks true. Golden Dragon whelp, you should never have returned. Since you have, leave that luscious bloodline behind."

A jet of pitch-black dragon breath—dense enough to seem solid—erupted from the stairs. It carried the rot of corrosion and the chill of soul-freezing frost, hurtling straight toward Jared's unprotected back.

The strike was viciously timed, launched while Jared's focus lay on healing Cyanna -when his heart and mind were split in two.

Cyanna's cry ripped free before she could think. "Jared-behind you!"

Jared reacted on instinct. He shoved Cyanna toward the only patch of clear floor, spun, and brought the Dragonslayer Sword across his chest. The Five-Element Shield blazed to life a heartbeat later.

Boom!

Black dragon breath crashed into the shimmering shield, detonating in a flare of shadow and sparks. The impact hammered Jared backward a dozen feet. Pain lanced through his ribs: metallic warmth climbed his throat, and he very nearly coughed blood.

Even through the barrier, the breath's poisonous darkness slithered inward, probing his meridians, seeking to corrupt them from within.

He steadied himself, eyes like ice. "Who's there?"

His gaze locked on the stairwell.

There, swirling night fused into the silhouette of a dragon no larger than a river serpent. Midnight-black scales gleamed with oily metal, and blood-red eyes burned with unbridled savagery.

It was no living beast-only pure demonic aura wrapped around a tattered dragon soul.

Jared's pupils contracted. "A Demon Dragon?"

Demon Dragons are a depraved offshoot of true dragonkind—fallen, blood-thirsty monsters that delight in consuming the bloodlines of their noble kin.

The dragon's tongue flicked across its fangs. "Tsk-tsk... Golden Dragon Bloodline indeed—what a feast you will make."

"I've been chained in this

sun-forsaken tower for more

lifetimes than you could count," it growled, every word rattling the iron walls today at last, I get real meä Once I swallow you, the seal will shatter, and the sky itself will kneel."

The creature was no living dragon at all, but the rancid will it left

behind a Demon Dragon Soul hammered beneath the tower's runic chains Drawn to Jared's Golden

Dragon Aura, it had burned through

its

sown soul essence, torn a gap in

the wards, and slid down the

darkness to strike.

"Eat me?" Jared wiped the blood from his lip with the back of his hand. "You'd better grow a new set of teeth first."

Jared forced the turbulent blood in his chest to settle, then leveled the Dragonslayer Sword at the shadow, its edge pouring sun-bright gold across the fractured floor. Warrior heat surged through his veins, clear and violent.

He had come here to rescue his friends, yet the path was proving far more treacherous than he had dared imagine. Inside the Demon Seal Tower lurked not only prisoners but malevolence given shape.

With a roar that split stone, the Demon Dragon Soul shot forward—a streak of midnight lightning-its claws screaming through the air.

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The Dragonslayer Sword met the phantom head-on, gold light slamming into choking black mist.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

Sparks cascaded like hissing meteors. Dragon cries and sword howls tangled through the third level, turning shattered columns into spinning shrapnel of light and shadow.

Cyanna watched from the side, heart pounding, able only to force the creeping black energy from her meridians.

The spirit's might matched at least a Level Three Heavenly Immortal.

Its every strike was that of a seasoned butcher, aimed at Jared's vitals and his soul.

Jared fused sword intent, Five-Element force, and Time Deceleration into a single desperate dance. Yet steel barely harmed a body of pure spirit, while each gust of its breath stabbed at his consciousness.

"Boy, you cannot keep this up," the Vermilion Demon Lord rumbled inside Jared's mind. "Its core is the Demon Dragon Core—dead center of its brow. Split it!"

Jared had seen the weakness himself. He dropped his guard, inviting the spirit in; the creature took the bait and drove a hooked claw toward his exposed chest.

"Now!" Jared's eyes erupted with golden light.

Light bent as Time Law unfurled, and the claw slowed by a heartbeat's fraction. Deep within his sea of consciousness, the Golden Tome shuddered and released a flood of blistering pure positive brilliance.

"Divine soul strike—cut!" Jared roared, voice splitting the air.

Pure brilliance braided itself into an invisible golden blade. Riding the monster's talon, it drilled straight into the shimmering core that pulsed between the spirit's eyes.

"Ah!"

The cavern rang with a scream so jagged it felt carved from steel. The Demon Dragon Soul writhed beneath Jared's positive aura, holy fire chewing through the creature's smoky body like sunrise devouring shadow. Black energy ripped away from the gem embedded in its brow. The crystal flickered madly, and the once-solid specter thinned to a brittle pane of glass.

Jared growled, "While you're down, I finish you."

He thrust the Dragonslayer Sword forward, unleashing its fiercest intent.

The move Golden Dragon Sunder the Void-flared in blinding gold and cleaved toward the phantom's neck.

Rip!

Sword light tore straight through soul-flesh. With one final, furious wail, the Demon Dragon Soul burst apart glittering motes. The Demon Sear Tower swallowed most of that energy, while the draconic essence on Jared's chest quietly siphoned the rest.

The battle was over. Chest heaving, Jared staggered, every muscle trembling from the effort.

He turned toward the stairway leading to the fourth floor. The

barrier of light, once blazing the net

how sputtered and faded, weakened by the phantom's demise.

"Jared, are you all right?" Cyanna asked, worry sharpening her voice.

"I'm fine," he answered, dismissing her concern with a curt breath.

After a brief pause to steady himself, Jared strode to the base of the stairs. "We're heading up-Coall needs us."

The moment they set foot on the fourth floor, Jared's breath stalled.

The chamber sprawled wider than all the levels below, yet it looked like a battlefield ripped from a nightmare.

Coall stood at its heart. There was something terribly wrong with him.

Crimson light burned in his eyes, while coils of the same black demonic vapor that had cloaked the Demon Dragon Soul wrapped his battered scales.

Fissures ran along his hide, spilling black blood, and his aura surged in wild, ragged waves.

The treasures that had once floated here were gone. From the torn void jutted chain after chain, each link ablaze with black flame.

Like venomous serpents, the chains lashed and coiled around Coall; every strike deepened the corruption in his aura and ripped a roar of agony from him.

"Coall! Wake up!" Cyanna cried, panic cracking her voice. She lurched forward a step, desperation shining in her eyes.

Coall heard nothing. His blood-red gaze snapped toward Jared and Cyanna, locking on them with predator's intent.

"Argh! I'll kill you-devour you both!" Coall thundered, his voice crashing through the tower like falling stone.

Coall bellowed a sound half-man,

half-beast as he hurled himself forward. The roar rolled across the chamber like a thunderclap, and black Vapors swirled around him in a crashing tide He had always been formidable. Now intoxicated by that demonic haze, his strength exploded, brushing the threshold of the Heavenly Immortal Realm.

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In a flash, Jared understood. The chains and the demonic aura have poisoned his mind.

This entire fourth level was nothing but a snare-one that magnified every dark impulse and baited intruders with mirages of treasure.

Coall's heart was uncomplicated, leaving an easy doorway for madness to slip inside.

Jared could not land a killing blow on Coall. He was forced into a dogged, stumbling defense.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Coall's fists crashed down like meteors; every strike shook the stone floor as though mountains cracked in two.

Jared weaved through the onslaught, sword in hand. Steel screamed against flesh, sparks and ringing metal filling the air.

The collision rattled his bones. Warm blood seeped from the split web of his palm. Stopping him without hurting him is easy to promise, hell to perform.

Jared retreated, step after pressured step.

"Mr. Chance, at this rate, we'll be crushed. We have to wake him," Cyanna shouted, voice almost lost beneath the clangor.

She strummed the Azure Dragon's Chant-ethereal notes meant to soothe-but the melody struck Coall's shrouding fumes and ricocheted away like pebbles off iron.

"I know," Jared gritted out.

Parrying another hammer-blow, he let his eyes track every coil of burning chain that bound the giant man.

Those chains-wreathed in black fire-were the heart of it all. They did not merely restrain; they pumped fresh darkness straight into Coall's veins.

"Cut the chains first, or nothing ends," he decided.

Jared's gaze sharpened. He summoned every flicker of sword intent until his own silhouette became a drawn blade-cold, bright, uncompromising.

"Slash!"

A thread-thin arc of light, keen enough to divide night from day, lanced toward the burning fetters rather than the man they bound.

Snap!

Links screeched, snapped, and unraveled into curling smoke, their death-cry fading with the vanishing black mist.

The iron chains exploded with a shrill crack. Coall's hulking body jolted, the hellish crimson that had drowned his pupils flickering like a candle in sudden wind.

"Now!"

Jared darted in. His palm slapped against the dragon's scaled brow, and a tide of Golden Dragon nascence energy—pure, regal, irresistible-flooded straight into Coall's consciousness field.

"Coall, wake up! You are a noble black dragon—no stray demon thought gets to steer your soul!" Jared's voice thundered, more command than plea.

The radiant energy blazed through the darkness inside, melting clots of demonic miasma the way a noon sun erases night frost Coall howled, every muscle quivering under invisible fire, yet the red in his gaze drained away by the heartbeat.

One last convulsion ripped through him. With a guttural groan, he bent forward, spewing a torrent of foul black blood across the stones. When he straightened, the madness

was gone lucid amber eyes

searched the shaking tower once more.

"M-Mr. Chance... I nearly... I'm so sorry." Coall panted, staring at his own blood-spattered talons. Shame and lingering fear tangled across his reptilian features.

"It's over." Jared's answer was soft yet certain, the kind of promise that props a friend back onto his feet.

He withdrew his hand. The color drained from his face-too many battles, too much essence spent-but his eyes still held an unbroken blaze of purpose.

No time to rest. He pivoted toward the staircase that spiraled up to the fifth level.

A translucent barrier-thick as glacier ice-sealed the steps. Runes slithered across it like living tadpoles, each glyph leaking a pulse of spatial repulsion that made skin crawl.

"The Veil Dragon Branch skulks on the fifth floor," Jared growled. "Cunning snakes last time they ambushed us."

"Then we attack together!" Coall rumbled, battle hunger rekindling in his throat. Cyanna planted herself at Jared's left, Coall at his right, the trio forming a perfect wedge.

Jared summoned the Five-Element

nascence power and his sword

intent; prismatic force spiraled around him. Cyanna's Azure Dragon power sang through the air, while Coat clenched his fists Black Dragon brawn coiling like thunder behind steel.

"Strike!"

A rainbow sword arc, a roaring emerald breath, and a pitch-black shockwave slammed into the barrier in the same heartbeat.

Booming detonations rocked the tower. The light-screen spasmed, runes blinking on and off, spiderweb cracks racing across its surface—but stubbornly it refused to fall.

"Not enough!" Jared barked, teeth clenched.

He could feel it: the shield fed directly on the tower's heart, drinking power in an endless river. To shatter it, they would have to cut the river itself.

A Warrior Undefeatable

"Kid, spill your blood!" the Vermilion Demon Lord barked, his voice like molten iron striking a gong. "That Golden Dragon Bloodline of yours sits atop every draconic lineage. A tower built to shackle dragons will kneel to it. Draw the blood, spark the resonance-now!"

Without a heartbeat of hesitation, Jared slashed his own palm with the Dragonslayer Sword. Liquid sunlight—pure dragon essence, thick and gold—splattered across the shimmering ward.

Sizzle!

The blood boiled on contact, the way icy rain sizzles on a forge. Runes woven into the barrier guttered, their glow dying, and the once-solid screen quivered like disturbed water.

"This is it! Break it together!"

Jared roared. He, Cyanna, and Coall unleashed every shred of power they had, converging their strikes on the blood-soaked spot.

Crack!

A shattering noise rolled through the tower. A jagged mouth tore open in the fifth-floor shield, wide enough for a man to leap through.

"Move!"

Jared dove through first, a streak of crimson and steel. Cyanna and Coall followed him.

The fifth floor was no simple chamber. It was a living maze—corridors folding, walls sliding, space itself grinding like gears out of sync.

Mirror-slick surfaces rose, vanished, re-formed, throwing back endless copies of the trio until direction lost all meaning.

Warped light bent across the air, and every breath vibrated with chaotic spatial ripples.

"Back again, are we? And you brought two new toys to play with?" A childlike voice giggled, ringing from every reflection at once.

Coall's voice thundered, "Quit hiding and show yourself!"

He slammed a fist the size of a battering ram into the nearest wall.

Boom!

The surface shattered—then instantly regenerated, new panels sliding into place as though the tower had infinite stone to spare.

"Save your strength, Coall," Jared warned, breath steady though his eyes sharpened. "Brute force won't help here."

Activating his Nethersky Eye, Jared swept the maze for a pattern, but the laws woven into this dimension ran deeper than any puzzle he had faced. For the moment, even that mystical sight found no seam to pick.

"This floor is my playground," the unseen child sang, delight dripping from every syllable. "So please keep playing. Play until you drop dead."

All at once, every

mirrored wall

around them spat twisted lances of light. Each burning ray carried raw chaotic energy, a power meant to tear matter apart. The beams Knifed in from impossible angles

converging like a thousand spiteful spears.

Jared, Cyanna, and Coall slammed their backs together, weapons and will flaring to meet the storm.

Sword intent screamed from Jared's blade, carving dark seams through the white glare. Azure Dragon breath curled from Cyanna, weaving a rippling shield. Coall trusted only his hide—stone-tough skin drank the impact head-on.

Yet the deluge refused to end. With every shift of the maze, the assault thickened, each reflection birthing a fresh killing angle.

"We can't just stand here and take it!"

In the split second that followed, Jared's mind raced. Space—that is its heart. The Demon Seal Tower was forged from a Beast Overlord's core; every brick hums with dimension law.

Realization flashed across his eyes.

"I've got it!" he cried, voice as sharp as the sword in his hand. "The maze isn't invincible. It has a core node. Find it, and we break free!"

He stopped wasting strength on the walls. Closing his eyes, he fused his spiritual sense with the Nethersky Eye, feeling for the hidden currents binding the labyrinth. Sight vanished; only the pulse of space remained a dirt blue lattice he perceived rather than saw.

A heartbeat later, he snapped his gaze open and leveled the Dragonslayer Sword at a seemingly ordinary corner sliding across the floor like a hunting shark.

"There! Break that point!"

Cyanna and Coall did not pause to question him. Trust moved their feet before thought, every reserve of strength pouring into the single point his sword illuminated.

Boom!

Their combined strike, bright as sunrise, drilled straight into the hidden node. The entire labyrinth convulsed. Moving walls froze, then shattered like glass, falling away into nothing.

Reality settled into a modest stone chamber, no wider than a city jail cell.

At its center crouched a boy of

seven-perhaps eight-dressed in a gaudy, flowered coat, hair tied in a braid His eyes, however, were ancient and cunning. Blood

his lips, skin chalk-white-the backlash of a collapsed maze.

A Warrior Undefeatable

"H-How did you find my spatial node?"

The Veil Dragon cultivator—once so certain of victory—stared at Jared as if beholding a ghost.

"Your grasp of space is still a child's game," Jared said, the Dragonslayer Sword hovering a breath from the boy's brow. "So, shall we talk-or will you follow that Demon Dragon Soul into oblivion?"

Sword intent and the pure golden dragon aura rolling off Jared quenched the boy's arrogance in a single breath, leaving only tremors of fear across his pallid face.

He could sense that Jared had returned remade, each breath thrumming with a weight that pulled the timbers of the cell toward him like iron filings. That pressure, half raw power and half ancestral dragon blood, shattered every scrap of bravado in the Veil Dragon cultivator who called himself Thousand Faces. Shivering, Thousand Faces lowered his head and began to speak.

He said the Demon Seal Tower held nine tiers. The lowest three were no more than prison blocks for common Draconians and lesser hybrid breeds whose crimes were petty compared with what lay above.

The middle three levels were harsher. There, the tower caged rare bloodlines, older wyrms of formidable talent, and changelings like himself who could mimic any scale or skin.

The upper three levels were legend wrapped in iron. Even Thousand Faces knew little beyond rumor. Those floors were reserved for ancients who had insulted primordial sages, for Draconians drenched in millennia of karmic debt, even for those who committed the greatest sins.

According to him, the sudden violence of the tower's restraints came from above. Something old had stirred on those forbidden tiers and was now siphoning strength from every captive below. Its goal was simple and terrifying—to batter the final seal and break into the world beyond the tower walls.

"Break the seal?" Jared whispered, tasting the words like ash.

He tightened his brow. "If it succeeds what happens?"

"I do not know," Thousand Faces admitted, voice thin as reeds.

Fear flickered behind his eyes. "But disaster is certain. Nothing harmless lives on those top floors, and the way it drains us now is destructive in itself."

A chill crawled along Jared's spine. The crisis was larger than one rescue.

He still had to free Cyanna and Coall. Yet he must also stop the waking monster upstairs, or, if it broke free, the consequences would be unthinkable.

"Can you open the wards that bar the sixth floor and beyond?" Jared asked.

Thousand Faces grimaced. "I

cannot. The strongest seal lies between the central and upper sectors, bound directly to the tower heart unless someone reaches on commands—that heart, no gate will yield."

"Then where is the tower heart?" Jared pressed.

"No one knows," Thousand Faces said. "Legends claim it drifts inside the tower, sometimes a full floor, sometimes a hidden seam between floors."

Jared fell silent, then closed his eyes

and inhaled Golden Dragon Aura rolled off him in shimmering concentric ripples, each pulse

carrying amicable intent rather than conquest as it seeped through mortar and bar.

"Demon Seal Tower," he called, voice lined with draconic power, "I am Jared Chance, descendant of the Golden Dragon. I sense disorder

within these walls and have come to restore it Show yourself to me!

The declaration rang along every beam and chain.

For a breath, nothing answered then the entire tower lurched, stone groaning like a ship in a sudden gale.

An intelligence colder than glacier water flooded the fifth floor, vast and emotionless. Its presence pressed against bone and thought alike.

"Golden... Dragon... Bloodline... intruder... disrupting... order... must be destroyed!" The words landed in shards, jagged with rage.

Power heavier than any foe Jared had yet faced coiled behind that fragmented decree, wild, chaotic, and immeasurably strong.

The entire floor trembled as an ear-splitting boom tore through the gloom.

At the center of the fifth level, the very air twisted like molten glass. From that fracture rose a colossal silhouette, half-transparent and woven from countless runes and swirling spatial energy.

It had no fixed form. One heartbeat, it coiled like an ancient dragon, the next it stacked into the shape of a tower-each shift radiating an authority that threatened to crush all beneath it.

This was the Tower Spirit of the Demon Seal Tower, or to be precise, the spirit that was controlled by the ancient will on the upper three levels.

No greeting came. The corrupted spirit lashed out the instant it appeared.