

A Warrior Undefeatable 5711-5725

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The war drums of Bonewither Cliff pounded like a terrified heart, echoing back from the cliff walls yet already drowned beneath the oncoming roar of dragons.

Every disciple of the Skyfiend Sect felt the echo boom inside his chest, sowing raw panic.

Pillars of murky violet light, each tainted with a sinister aura, speared up from the deepest bone palaces buried in Bonewither Cliff. In the same heartbeat, the sect defense formation flared to its fiercest state.

A deep, metallic thrum rolled across the mountains, shaking loose dust from the skull-lined walls.

A colossal dome of gray-black light surged upward like an overturned bowl, sealing the entire Skyfiend Sect Headquarters within its ghostly embrace. Faces—twisted, screaming, half-formed—swam beneath the barrier's surface. Disgusting blood-rot stung the nose while a chill burrowed straight into the soul, proof of the barrier's corrosive, brutal defense.

"Who dares trespass upon the sacred ground of the Skyfiend Sect? Show yourself and be damned!"

The words scraped the air like bone on bone—an owl's midnight screech laced with fury and a shred of startled doubt. They drifted down from the sky above the main shrine.

Then, out of nothing, an elder materialized—draped in dark-purple robes embroidered with labyrinthine skulls, a Bone Sceptre forged from an entire spine clenched in his claw-thin hand.

His skin clung to the skeleton beneath; eye sockets yawned cavernous and empty save for twin fox-green flames that betrayed a formidable well of life.

This was Elder Bonewick-Mortimer Bonewick—supreme master of the Skyfiend Sect, perched at the razor's edge of the Heavenly Immortal Realm Level Three and nearly unchallenged.

His arrival poured steel into the spines of every panicked disciple.

One after another, shrieks of wind announced more power. A dozen senior elders—wrapped in chains, beating human-skin drums, brandishing ghost-banners—fanned out behind Bonewick.

None stood beneath the Heavenly Immortal Realm; three matched their supreme elder's rank. Across level nine, such a roster was why the Skyfiend Sect dared proclaim itself the apex of demonic path.

Yet when their gazes pierced the barrier and truly drank in the heavens, that confidence withered to ash, replaced by gaping, speechless horror. Draconians. Not one. Not ten. A rolling storm of hundreds—a living night sky of scales and talons.

Their titanic bodies blotted out the sun, casting Bonewither Cliff beneath a death-black shadow. Solid, murderous dragon's power mixed with fresh battlefield bloodlust, pressing down like a personal domain.

Especially the dragons leading the army. One—an obsidian drake the size of a mountain, its scales glinting like cold metal and its eyes twin blood-red moons radiated a menace that even Elder Bonewick felt gnaw at his heart. Beside it hovered dragons of every hue—each ancient, each terrible.

Worst of all, a lone figure stood atop the black dragon's skull, silhouette razor-sharp against the muted sky—an unknown presence that froze even seasoned fiends to the marrow.

Jared stood in a sweep of green robes. His posture was as straight as a spear, his features carved in chill granite, and his eyes held the unmoving silence of an ancient winter pool—yet they were deep enough to devour every stray glimmer of light.

He needed no flourish. By merely standing at the van of the Draconian army, he became its pulse and center, the calm core around which waves of scaled warriors waited, blades humming beneath a sky steeped in killing intent.

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A gray-haired elder who had once glimpsed Jared in passing suddenly lost control of his composure. His bony shoulders shook, and his words cracked on the verge of so "J-Jared... Jared Chance! It's him. How can he be alive here of aff

places? Lord Sour Devourer swore for swore he was already on death's door. Does that... does that look like a dying man to you?"

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Elder Bonewick's eyelids twitched so violently they seemed ready to tear loose. His skeletal fingers clenched the Bone Sceptre until the knuckles blanched.

Inside, his heart hammered against his chest. The Soul Devourer's confident assurances still rang in his ears.

Yet here loomed a Draconian army bristling with war lust. And above it hovered Jared, his aura as bottomless as the sea, not a hint of injury marring him. The sight slapped Elder Bonewick across the face—and smashed the fate of the Skyfiend Sect along with it.

"Panic will get us nowhere!" Elder Bonewick forced down his terror-and the urge to curse whoever had lied to him-then bellowed, his voice bolstered by Netherlord force so it boomed across the mountains.

"They are nothing but an overgrown clutch of serpents led by a reckless youth. With our Ten-Thousand-Soul Grand Array, even a sovereign would break his teeth against our walls. Form up the array-prepare to meet the enemy!"

Before his last word finished echoing, Jared moved. He ignored the barrier that shimmered around the headquarters, ignored Elder Bonewick's shrill command. Instead, his measuring gaze drifted over the sect's twisted architecture, as if searching for something.

"Who commands the Skyfiend Sect? Kneel and accept your death." Jared's voice was not loud, yet it pierced every layer of spellwork and space, sliding into the ear of every disciple poised for battle. Each word carried a frost-edged weight. "And you, Soul Devourer, skulking in the dark-come out. Sending ants to die while you cower like a turtle in its shell-is that how you do things?"

Contempt curled through every syllable he uttered.

It had been a long time since Jared felt this good. He used to be the one being hunted down.

He'd get beaten to the brink of death until someone took pity on him and hauled him from the brink.

Today, he needed no savior. Behind him marched a Draconian army unbeaten across level nine.

Be it the Skyfiend Sect or the Soul Devourer, in Jared's eyes, they were trash.

He meant to ride his Draconian army straight to the peak.

Hearing his own name spat with such naked disdain, Elder Bonewick felt every vein in his skull ignite. Never especially not within his own sect and before so many

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disciples-had anyone humiliated him so thoroughly. Rage poured from him like smoke from a cracked furnace, and even the bone banners overhead quivered in the heat of it.

"Jared Chance, you impudent stripling, enough of your swagger." Elder Bonewick drove the Bone

Sceptre down against empty air net

Rings of ash-gray ripples rippled outward, soft as smoke yet heavy with menace. "You barge into the sacred heart of my Skyfiend Sect and fling bluster like gravel. Do you tak for mud statues that

dissolve the moment it rains? Crawl

back the way you came, and

perhaps I shall pretend this trespass never existed. Defy me, and

you-along with that brood of scaled vermin behind you-will enter but never leave. Your souls will be

ground to powder and fed to

Bonewither Cliff for fresh fertilizer."

"Enter but never leave?" A faint curve tugged at Jared's mouth, colder than iron in mid-winter. "Who gave you the courage to say that? This cracked shell protecting you? Or these trash? Truly hilarious."

He wasted no more breath. Jared lifted his right hand, palm razor-still, and sliced downward like a judge ending all debate.

"Coall, break the barrier."

"Sure! Leave that toy shield to me—I've hated the sight of it since we arrived!"

Coall roared, a mountain-shaking dragon cry bursting from his chest. The sound struck the Wailing Soul Barrier, making the ghost-lit membrane quiver like water beneath a hailstorm.

He hunched his bulk-an obsidian

mountain brought to snarling

life-while bolts of black light

sparked across scale and sine Hundreds of streams of dragon's power converged on him, tightening around his frame like armor forged of pure ruin.

Then, he lunged, arrow and avalanche in one. Carrying the weight of a falling primeval peak, he hurled himself at the thickest wall of that gray-black dome.

"Ten-Thousand-Soul Guard, Spirit-Devouring Rebound!" Elder Bonewick's voice cracked with panic as he lashed the sceptre forward, forcing every thread of the grand array into one desperate knot.

Behind him, a dozen Heavenly Immortal elders thrust their palms out in unison, pumping their force into the array. The rushing power funneled through the Bone Sceptre, swarming toward the impact site in a last-second bulwark.

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A chorus of warped human faces stirred inside the barrier, wailing in grief so sharp it stabbed the marrow. Dense resentment oozed across the shield like black oil, birthing a soul-corroding tide and a brutal countershock aimed straight at Coall's oncoming skull.

Every disciple of Skyfiend Sect felt their hearts crawl into their throats, breath snagging as fate hung on that single collision.

Boom!

Day and night flipped; sun and moon vanished in a pulse of white. Coall's head met the Wailing Soul Barrier—now swollen with the full might of Skyfiend Sect—in one deafening, absolute smash.

The blast ripped outward in expanding rings, rattling every mountain around Bonewither Cliff. Pebbles, ribs of ancient bones, whole slabs of rock sheared from the cliff face and rained into the abyss.

At ground zero, a searing flash bright enough to blind a god flared, followed by an ocean-sized surge of energy that howled across both sides of the shield, clawing at space itself.

Crack!

The sound was sharp enough to set teeth on edge—a brittle shatter like stained glass exploding—echoing in every ear among the Skyfiend Sect disciples who stared, unblinking, at the point of impact.

In the hopeless gaze of Elder Bonewick and his gathered elders and acolytes, the Ten-Thousand-Soul Grand Array—pride of their sect and said to withstand a full strike from a fifth-grade Heavenly Immortal—began to fail.

Centered on Coall's battering head, spiderweb fissures raced across the barrier, spreading so fast they swallowed every inch the eye could see.

The once-radiant shield dulled. Faces of wailing spirits, painted in sick green fire, melted like frost under noon sun and bled away into nothing.

One blow. That was all it took to push the barrier to the brink of ruin.

"No-this can't be!" Elder Bonewick's voice cracked, horror flooding eyes that had witnessed too much and still understood too little. His knuckles whitened around the Bone Sceptre as he watched salvation unravel before him.

Just how monstrous is that black dragon's brute strength?

"All hands-tear away this last scrap of dignity." Jared's words landed cold and final, the tone of a judge passing sentence.

The chill in his voice rolled across the battlefield like winter wind, promising that no appeal would be heard.

At his command, the hundreds of Draconians at his back could hold themselves no longer. Their collective roar split the sky.

The mingled dragon cries fused into a single primeval battle hymn, echoing as though it had risen out of pre-dawn history itself.

A heartbeat later, their innate powers

erupted. Multicolored torrents-the

raw, ruinous essence of the

Draconian race-poured downward like an overturned galaxy like judgment day itself. '

Columns of dragonfire roared, white-hot and wide enough to scorch the sky.

Bolts of storm-born lightning lashed, each stroke thicker than city walls. Invisible wind blades screamed, cleaving open seams in the very air. Glacial cataracts crashed-cold enough to freeze breath and soul alike. Tides of virulent poison hissed, dissolving stone before it touched the ground.

And avalanches of earth and iron thundered, weighty as mountains, rolling in relentless waves.

Elemental dragon magic braided together, weaving a death net that slammed without mercy into the already-fractured Wailing Soul Barrier.

This was no longer an assault. It was a verdict.

Boom!

A single, earth shaking concussion rolled across Skyfiend Sect, and the sect defense formation-strained to its last filament by several hundred true dragons-burst like an overfilled bubble. Shards of runic light and rancorous soul-energy scattered, only to be scoured away by righteous dragon breath and

crackling thunder.

With a sickening squelch, Elder Bonewick and the dozen elders feeding demonic force into the array spat clots of blood and torn viscera. Their auras collapsed, leaving them gasping, gray, and half-broken before the battle had even begun.

The formation was shattered, and the gate was open.

"Kill!" The three commands thundered in swift succession, a war drum hammered by countless dragon throats.

At the very instant the barrier gave way, Jared vanished from Coall's broad scaled back.

A blink later, he materialized inside the sect grounds, standing nose-to-nose with the nearest Heavenly-Immortal elder, still dazed by backlash.

The Dragonslayer Sword slid into Jared's palm, its steel exhaling a chill that smelled of moonlit iron.

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"Five-Element Sword Domain-open." Jared's voice was calm, almost courteous.

Buzz!

Color flared in a three-hundred-meter wide circle.

Sword energy wove a private killing field where time thickened like resin and space bent inward, edges sharpening to invisible blades.

The Heavenly-Immortal elder felt his limbs turn to granite. He watched, horror filling the seconds that stretched far too long, as a needle-bright sword tip drifted toward the center of his brow with a speed he could neither understand nor escape.

"N-"

The half-formed protest died with him. The Dragonslayer Sword brushed through his demon armor, cracked his skull, and snuffed his soul in one leisurely thrust. Terror still frozen on his face, the corpse toppled, falling like a dropped statue through the stagnant air.

Jared did not spare a glance. He flickered again, reappearing beside another elder who had only begun to rally defenders.

"Space Prison." The words landed softly, yet the air around his target hardened to diamond-locking limbs, breath, even eyelids in immutable stasis.

"Perish." Jared's voice cut through the clamoring battlefield, quiet yet colder than steel, a verdict rather than a threat.

The Dragonslayer Sword flashed in a perfect, almost calligraphic arc. A startled face, still frozen in disbelief, spun skyward while a fountain of crimson followed, painting the gray air with violent color.

Jared moved like a reaper slipping between folds of time. His blade outpaced sight, struck with fated precision, and left no room—not a heartbeat, not a breath-for reprieve.

Time Deceleration, twisted space, and the Five-Element Sword Force wove together around him. Against these ordinary Heavenly Immortal elders, the synthesis became sheer, irreversible domination.

Where he passed, there were no clashing spells, no flamboyant duels—only the stark, brutal elegance of consummate slaughter, pared to its merciless core.

One swing, one corpse. Lives fell like sheaves beneath an autumn scythe.

"Stop him—now, stop him!" Elder Bonewick shrieked, terror flaying his composure as he forced damaged flesh to obey and brandished the Bone Sceptre once more.

He reeled in pain yet lifted the pale sceptre high, veins of black fury crawling across his fingertips.

"Ten-Thousand Evils Immortal-Slaying Array-rise!"

He and a dozen wounded elders pressed together, ignoring the inevitable backlash, channeling fresh torrents of corrupted Netherlord force.

Thicker, fouler gray-black demonic energy gushed from their cores and from the depths of Bonewither Cliff, twisting upward into a furious storm.

An earth-shaking roar—half anguish, half triumph—tore out of the forming vortex.

A huge titan materialized: three heads, six arms, tusked and snarling, its body wrapped in chains forged from wailing souls.

Unlike its earlier, hazy projection, this effigy was solid, oppressive-its aura throbbed at mid-stage celestial lord strength.

Each colossal hand brandished a

nightmare: a sword of grievances, a bone cleaver, a venom whip, a lantern brimming with ghostfire, skeleton beads, and a tattered soul-summoning banner.

With ruinous intent, the abomination swung all six weapons toward Jared and the Draconian army now flooding the sect.

"You're fighting me, not my buddies!" Coall bellowed, exhilaration rumbling from deep within his scaled chest as he thundered forward.

The obsidian dragon's vast frame matched the fiend's height. Claws armored in slate-gray plates ripped open the air and seized for the grievance sword.

Talons met cursed steel.

A clang like colliding planets exploded outward, the shockwave shredding several dozen Skyfiend Sect disciples into crimson mist.

Broken bodies rained before the echo faded.

"Buddie, tear this ghoul apart!" a magma-red fire dragon roared, voice bubbling like molten stone.

Its jaws unleashed a breath of flame so pure it burned almost white, streaking toward the arm that wielded the bone cleaver.

Scales crackled, air shrieked, and the battlefield blazed anew.

"Thunder, heed my call!" another Draconia warrior cried, summoning violet bolts that spider-webbed across the dark sky, ready to strike.

A thunder-dragon with wings so vast they eclipsed the bruised heavens arced overhead. Blue serpents of lightning coiled along its scales, and its roan summoned torrents of chaotic bolts, each as thick as a water barrel. Those blinding lashes-like the wrathful whip of a storm-god-crashed into the Evil God's towering avatar, splintering another of its skeletal arms.

Around the thunder-dragon, several ancient Draconians, each at the Heavenly Immortal Realm, unleashed their signature moves swarming the colossal effigy and locking it in place.

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The ferocity and inborn sorcery of the Draconians blossomed without restraint. Scales gleamed, claws flashed, and every breath carried a primordial law.

Though the apparition drew power from a higher plane, the coordinated assault of these apex dragons shackled it completely, denying it any chance to strike elsewhere.

Meanwhile, additional Draconians dived into the ranks of the Skyfiend Sect, whose protective array had already collapsed. The once-orderly formation dissolved into chaos the instant living thunder and living steel crashed among them.

In the blink of an eye, the battle tipped into its most savage, blood-soaked phase.

Black dragons, coiling dragons, and other thick-scaled breeds formed the spearhead. They shredded flesh with talons, swept crowds aside with iron tails, and weathered stray spells as though their hides were moving fortresses, trampling the sect's lines into broken mounds.

Elemental dragons followed just behind, venting their fury with reckless abandon.

A sweep of dragonfire left scorched wasteland. Lightning fell like divine verdicts, reducing bodies to ash. Glacial breath birthed forests of ice-statues, while hurricanes erased every trace of bone or banner.

Dragon roars, detonations, screams, the crack of bone, the collapse of stone— together they composed a deafening symphony of annihilation.

The Skyfiend Sect's disciples were vicious, yet in raw strength, will, and racial talent, they were hopelessly outclassed by the vengeance-driven Draconian army under Jared's unified command.

Worse still, their grand elders fell one after another beneath Jared's blade— Dragonslayer—and the sect's greatest reliance, the hell deity apparition, remained hopelessly entangled.

The rout became an avalanche.

Panic spread through the Skyfiend ranks like plague.

Those who tried to fight were drowned in dragonfire within a heartbeat. Those who fled found every exit sealed by swift Wind and Cloud Dragons. The rest were crushed to pulp beneath uncaring claws.

Blood painted Bonewither Cliff crimson, streaming down the chalk-white escarpment in thin rivers that dyed the poison mists below a ghostly pink.

The copper stench of fresh slaughter even smothered the millennia-old reek of death and malice clinging to this place.

Amid the carnage, Jared flashed from shadow to shadow, his purpose razor-clear-eliminate every Heavenly Immortal elder to decapitate the Sect's command.

Nothing survived a single exchange against his Dragonslayer Sword.

Jared's grasp of the Heavenly Law deepened with every heartbeat. At times, he bent Time Acceleration around himself, moving in a blur mortals could not track. At times, he folded space, crossing stadium-long distances in a single ghostly step. His Five Element Sword Forge split into thousands of blades, striking multiple foes in perfect unison.

Elder Bonewick watched his cherished elite die by the hundreds, and felt as though his heart were bleeding away. These people had been the wealth he hoarded through centuries of cruelty-and they were being butchered like cattle.

Elder Bonewick drove the apparition in a frenzy, flinging rivers of black starlight across the shattered air. Yet Coall, shoulder to shoulder with three ancient Draconians, wove an iron-tight dance of fang and gale that never broke rhythm.

Strike by strike, they seized the momentum. The apparition's dark brilliance dulled, its colossal outline flickering like a candle caught in the wind.

"Master Soul Devourer-Lord Soul Devourer-how much longer will you watch? If you refuse to appear, we will all be buried here, and your grand design will rot with us!"

His scream shredded the dusk with a mix of desperation and venom, the sound of a traitor who suddenly suspected he had been used and abandoned.

Bonewick knew-felt it in the marrow of every cursed bone he carried that the Soul Devourer lurked close by, or at least had left a sliver of will hovering over the battlefield.

Nothing else explained how those earlier, razor-accurate reports about Jared's injuries had reached the sect so swiftly.

As if the cliff itself answered the plea, a breath of ice-cold malignance burst from the deepest gouge of Bonewither Cliff, carrying the taste of acid on every mote of wind.

It seeped from beneath a grotesque altar piled high with skulls, the densest knot of corruption in the entire abyss.

Though small and wavering, that mist bore immense pressure; even Jared and the apex Draconians felt their hearts jerk like hunted birds.

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"Bonewick, you have sorely disappointed me. You cannot even manage this trivial skirmish after the meager faith I placed in your Skyfiend Sect."

A figure surfaced above the skull-altar-no more than smoke stitched with hatred— its shape trembling, its edges fraying. This was a mere remnant of the Soul Devourer's soul, a hundred times weaker than his prime, yet the malice in those spectral eyes had lost none of its razor.

"Soul Devourer, at last you crawl into the light!" Jared growled.

He lopped the head from a Skyfiend elder who dared strike at his back, then leveled

a gaze of lightning-cold intent at the phantom, but held his ground; the thing felt more like a relay than true flesh.

"Boy, you're incredibly lucky. The Skyfiend rabble are as worthless as I feared, but do not fool yourself the game has only begun, and I write the rules."

"A coward who never leaves his hole dares call this a game?"

With a single thought, Jared summoned the hazy outline of the Demon Seal Tower above his palm; its soul-crushing resonance made the sovereign's wisp ripple like

water struck by stone.

"Demon Seal Tower!"

A ragged shadow-no more than the lingering will of the Soul Devourer-let out a guttural, uneasy growl. Yet, almost at once, that fear twisted into a sly grin. "Hmph! Your trinket may look impressive, boy, but I fear it not. Besides, my true body lies far beyond your reach. Find it if you can."

The phantom clearly wanted no part in a direct clash with Jared. It hovered here only to jeer, to lure him into wasting both rage and time.

"Finding you is only a matter of time," Jared replied, voice calm but edged with iron. "Today I sever your claws, break your crutches, and grind every minion to dust. On some future dawn, I will hunt down your true form-body and soul alike will be erased."

"Arrogant whelp!" the shadow snorted. "I have ruled level nine for ten millennia—my foundation is deeper than your childish mind can fathom. Bonewick, the field is yours. Endure until nightfall, and when I recover, Skyfiend Sect shall reign over all nine heavens. Should you fail-heh-that is but the whim of fate!"

With that, the shade warped violently, melting into a single wisp of black smoke that tried to dive beneath the altar—a hidden portal or concealment array clearly waited below.

"Leaving so soon?"

Jared's eyes hardened; he would not allow such an easy escape.

He needed to know where the Soul Devourer's body was hiding. He intended to rip the answer out of the soul remnant.

"Time, freeze. Space, lock."

Twin laws thundered outward. In a heartbeat, the altar and the air around it became a sealed capsule of stalled seconds and unbreakable walls.

The escaping remnant slowed to a crawl, as though it had sunk into invisible tar. The newly forged barriers barred every path home.

"Soul search!"

Two fingers became a needle of blinding light. Powered by Jared's vast spiritual soul, it shot toward the trapped wisp faster than lightning across a night sky.

He meant to ram his consciousness straight into the remnant's memories and drag out the hiding place of the body.

"Fool-dream on!"

The shadow screeched-prepared for this very moment.

The wisp burst apart, shredding into countless near-invisible soul threads that fled, in every direction. A suicidal wave of psychic force erupted hoping to disturb Jared's soul search.

"Perish!"

Jared moved instantly. The Demon Seal Tower swelled overhead, spilling silver radiance that nailed space in place. Simultaneously, his

Five Element sword in wept.

out, erasing whole swaths of fleeing soul threads.

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Still, the Soul Devourer had once been a giant on level nine. After ten millennia as a disembodied mind, his command of soul arts was peerless, and this remnant had been crafted as his last, most vicious safeguard.

Even with Jared's reflexes—sharp as drawn steel—several stray soul threads still slipped through his mental net. They were the light ones, wisps that held nothing but noise and harmless memories, scattering like ash across the air.

The principal shard of the Soul Devourer's consciousness detonated on itself, vanishing in a grit of psychic dust and taking most vital memories with it.

Jared flooded the ruin with his own spiritual sense, stooping, in a sense, to sift the debris. Each broken image he caught was held, studied, then filed away before it could fade.

What he saw was a clutter of information—minor cruelties inside Skyfiend Sect, schemes the dead lord had dangled before Elder Bonewick like poisoned bait. Anything truly important—especially the memory of where Soul Devourer's true body hid had been locked behind a curse that shattered the moment the remnant died.

Yet a single glimmer survived the self-destruction. One half-spoken landmark repeated itself: "Nether... Blood Sea... edge... Soul-Graves..."

Nether Blood Sea—Jared knew the name. It lay along the lowest rim of level nine, a forbidden stretch of crimson water said to be an ancient battlefield of gods and fiends. Endless blood. Endless wailing spirits. Chaos etched into the very law of heaven. Even Heavenly Immortals kept their distance. Hiding a true body there suited the Soul Devourer's venomous craftiness.

"Nether Blood Sea... Soul-Graves..."

Jared mouthed the words, eyes narrowing to a hunter's edge. "Looks like I have to pay that place a visit."

Down on the fractured plain, the battle's thunder dwindled to its final growls.

Elder Bonewick watched the last fleck of the Soul Devourer's soul remnant flee, and hope left him like blood from a cut vein. His apparition lost cohesion; Coall's claw sheared an arm from it, fire-dragon breath and lightning-dragon wrath following hard until the phantom screamed and burst apart.

With the apparition gone, Bonewick and the surviving elders buckled. Blood gushed from their mouths; their auras guttered to dying coals.

"We surrender-please, we surrender!" one elder shrieked, flinging aside his treasure and dropping to his knees.

That single collapse broke the rest. The remaining Skyfiend disciples folded like wet paper, kneeling, shivering, unable even to meet their conqueror's gaze.

Jared drifted down through smoke and shattered bone. The

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field-littered with bodies, cracked banners, and cooling dragon fire-fell silent under his shadow His stare locked on Elder Bonewlok, now pinned beneath three draconic titans, face grey as old ash.

"Where, exactly, in the Nether Blood Sea is Soul Devourer hiding? And what comes after 'Soul Graves'?" His voice was winter-clean, cold, implacable.

Elder Bonewick let out a ragged laugh, blood zig-zagging from the corner of his mouth. "Heh... Jared, you've won. yet you think your ean outwit the master, Dream on. Hist foresight spans ages-you'll never trace it. I know nothing. And if I did, I would die before telling you!"

Madness flickered behind his eyes; the last of his resolve, but hard as iron.

Jared was not surprised. Giants of the demonic path-especially Bonewick-feared disgrace more than death. And surrender, to them, was only a slower form of execution.

"You will talk." Jared's voice came out quiet and level, the kind of steady menace that made the skull-strewn wind over Bonewither Cliff seem to hush in agreement.

A moment later, the miniature Demon Seal Tower shimmered into existence above his palm. Cold silver light spilled from every tier, and the very air curved inward as a tide of soul-suction wrapped itself around Elder Bonewick.

The tower could refine, interrogate, and devour a spirit all at once. Voluntary confessions took mere heartbeats, but a captive who resisted—especially one steeped in wicked arts—had his agony measured out grain by grain. "No-never!" Elder Bonewick shrieked, terror splitting his cracked voice.

Feeling his own soul tearing away, he tried the last refuge of a cornered fiend: he ignited his soul, hoping to explode into oblivion before Jared could take another morsel.

"Suppress." Jared's single word landed like a divine verdict.

The tower's glow surged, drowning the cliff in argent brilliance. Bonewick's rebellion folded in on itself; his spirit was pinned, peeled apart, and drawn upward in wisps no thicker than spider silk,

Memories battle plans, forbidden rites, secret allegiances-floated out as fractured embers and vanished into the tower's hungry tiers.

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"Coall, take the Draconian army. Strip this battlefield to the bone-every corpse, every vault, every glimmer of treasure. Search Bonewither Cliff from rim to roots. Leave no survivor, seize every storage ring, and scour the altar for anything tied to the Soul Devourer-scrolls, communication devices, message arrays. Miss even a cobweb and I will know."

Mercy had no place here. Surrendered or not, Skyfiend disciples died the same, and their rings fed the war chest Jared needed to keep tens of thousands of scaled soldiers marching.

If resources ran short, he would lead the army across level nine and harvest what the weak failed to defend. Survival, after all, favored the ruthless-unless one bowed as sincerely as Neville had.

"Understood, Mr. Chance!" Coall's cavernous voice rattled loose dust from nearby skulls.

Roaring with draconic delight, Coall launched the plundering sweep. To a

Draconian, hoarding glittering relics and sniffing out buried secrets was less a duty than a blood-etched instinct.

Jared settled cross-legged beside the grotesque skull altar. Part of his mind steered the tower, distilling Elder Bonewick's soul into usable fragments. The rest slipped like liquid light through every rune carved in the altar, hunting for the faintest trace— coordinates, a shadow, a breath-left by the Soul Devourer's wandering remnant.

Toppling Skyfiend Sect was only the opening move. The true game lay in dragging the ancient, conniving Soul Devourer from whatever abyss he used as a burrow and ending him forever.

So long as that monster breathed, he would return—perhaps the moment Jared stepped beyond level nine, perhaps when the realms least expected-and an awakened Soul Devourer would be unstoppable.

Worse, Jared knew the fiend's first act after full recovery would be to hound him across higher worlds, turning every sunrise into a fresh hunt.

He understood all too well that a monster like Soul Devourer could drift through level ten-level eleven-without meeting a hint of resistance, as effortlessly as a hawk gliding on summer thermals.

Therefore, Jared had to end the creature here on level nine. If he allowed that monster to rise any higher, it would hang over him forever like a sword poised above his throat.

The trail he needed lay hidden in this wasteland-inside the plundered memories of Elder Bonewick and deep within the altar's secret hollows.

Far across the debris field, the Draconian army worked methodically, their colossal, armored bodies weaving between toppled columns while they swept the battlefield clean.

At the very eye of that slow-moving storm sat Jared, motionless as obsidian. He pulled at every strand of information, patient and unrelenting, searching for a road that led to the final hunt.

He breathed the words like a promise. "My next stop is the Nether Blood Sea... The Soul Grave. Soul Devourer, your death is drawing near."

Sparks of wild anticipation flared in his eyes, bright as flint struck against steel.

Urgency thudded through his pulse. He longed to confront the Soul Devourer, to feel the creature break beneath his own hands and watch the threat bleed out for good.

Raw, frightening power churned inside him, restless as a caged tempest. He needed someone or something-upon which to unleash it.

Coall barreled over, excitement

glowing in his dark eyes like

lanterns Mr Chance we struck

gold! The Skyfiend Sect's vaults are overflowing. Looks as though they

plundered level nine for years."

"Good. Tell the others to heal up fast—we still have to pay that Nether Blood Sea a visit." Jared's voice was calm, yet the order cracked like a whip, reminding every warrior that the war had only paused, never ended.

Coall nodded, then produced a marble-sized bead the color of fresh

blood, cradling it in both palms.

"Found this under the main statue in

their grand hall. Not a trace of

energy on it—feels like a common stone. Take a look."

Jared took the bead and swept it with his spiritual sense. Nothing. The orb lay perfectly still, as mute as a river pebble.

By every outward sign, it was a useless bauble—no pulse, no glow, no hidden pattern.

Yet Skyfiend Sect—the greatest force in level nine—would never entomb worthless junk beneath its most revered idol. That alone made the thing dangerous.

"Go on. See that everyone mends their wounds." With a small wave, he dismissed Coall.

Coall dipped his head once and hurried off between heaps of shattered stone.

Left alone, Jared rotated the red bead between thumb and forefinger, uncertain where to begin unraveling its mystery.

A Warrior Undefeatable

Jared studied the bead again—gleaming, blood-red, utterly silent—while a faint crease deepened between his brows.

With the power and spiritual sense he now commanded, even relics cast for gods rarely escaped his notice.

Yet this tiny sphere remained mute, as though it belonged to the mortal realm, not the heavens he walked.

"Skyfiend Sect hid you so carefully," he murmured, turning the bead under the thin light. "What secret are you guarding?"

Jared whispered to himself, steadying his breath as he bled a thin strand of chaotic immortal energy into the blood-red pearl cupped in his palm.

The energy vanished as if poured into bottomless water. The orb lay cold and mute, giving nothing back.

He pricked a finger. A drop of fresh crimson spattered onto the surface, disappeared at once, yet the pearl remained stubbornly inert.

Jared weighed a harsher option-drawing the Dragonslayer Sword and cracking the thing open-when the world tilted without warning.

Deep inside his consciousness field, the Golden Tome-usually a silent, mist-wreathed scripture-buckled beneath an unseen pull. Brilliance surged.

Buzz!

A geyser of pure gold light shot out of Jared's brow, solid as a pillar, draping the scarlet orb in its blazing mantle.

That radiance felt like the marrow of the cosmos itself-vast, sovereign, cleansing everything it touched.

Smothered by the canon's glory, the pearl could no longer pretend to sleep.

"Argh!"

The cry that erupted was ancient, venom-soaked, and soul-rending. It tore at spirit, not air.

Coall and the other Draconians, busy tallying loot nearby, jerked around-faces blanched-feeling that scream claw straight at their cores.

The pearl's surface churned like a boiling sea of blood beneath the relentless gold.

A dense, towering shadow-far older and stronger than the fragment of the Soul Devourer Jared had just faced-was wrenched out into open dusk.

Dark crimson and half-formed, its features blurred yet unmistakably twisted, the specter radiated vicious energy and primordial savagery that darkened the air.

"Who dares shatter my slumber? What fool soils my sacred soul with such power?" the apparition roared, voice ringing with rage and disbelief.

It thrashed against the golden light bindings, every convulsion rippling with celestial lord-level might tempered by countless ages.

The sheer weight of its soul energy pressed outward, oppressive and thunderous.

Skyfiend Sect's founding patriarch? Jared's eyes narrowed to flint.

The guess settled in an instant, cold and sharp.

So the sect kept a monster like this hidden all along.

This pearl was never treasure-only a cradle for that ancient remnant.

The patriarch's shadow writhed, scarlet gaze locking onto Jared with ravenous delight.

"Such flawless flesh... such boundless blood... such fresh, young soul! Hahaha! Heaven has favored me at last. Boy, your body now belongs to me!"

Obsessed with rebirth, it ignored the very light that made it tremble-whether from eons of dormancy or sheer hunger to live again.

A streak of blood-red lightning tore from the revenant and shrieked across the void, a burning serpent aimed straight for Jared's brow, in a single breath it meant to steal his mind and steal the throne of his flesh.

"You want to die that badly?"

Jared answered with a chill, contemptuous snort. Instead of raising walls around his consciousness, he flung every gate wide, as though inviting a guest to step deeper into a trap.

He was curious. Inside his domain, what storm could this ancient ghost possibly muster?

The shadow slipped through every threshold without resistance, plunging into Jared's inner sea.

It expected a brittle soul it could crush at leisure and was already savoring the coming feast.

Instead, at the field's center hovered a colossal golden tome, older than memory, flooding the dark waters with a radiance that seemed to prop up worlds. The tome revolved regal

silence Chains of living. sunfight-lines of pure law spiraled outward, filling the boundless ocean with holy fire.

A Warrior Undefeatable

Beneath that light, the patriarch of Skyfiend Sect felt smaller than a mite staring up at a sky-piercing pillar.

No-smaller than dust. The gulf between their essences was absolute.

His soul-body, forged by ten millennia of forbidden rites, sizzled beneath the brilliance, melting like frost at noon.

Primal, wordless terror drowned every trace of greed and madness he had ever known.

"No-no! What is this? What unfathomable artifact is that? Mercy, Lord, have mercy!"

His new scream made the earlier howl sound like a sigh, high enough to shatter crystal.

Seizing a body, rising again—such dreams vanished. Only the raw fear of oblivion remained.

He curled into a tiny knot, shrinking from the light, his voice fluttering like a dying flame in the wind.

"S-Sir, I was blind! Spare me. I will serve you forever-hound, slave, anything—only let this wretched spark live!"

Jared's will condensed above the inner sea, a tall figure carved from starlight, his gaze winter-cold as it rested on the trembling blot below.

"Begging now, are you? Too late."

"No-there is still time, sir! I possess secrets of the ancient heavens, hidden hoards across level nine-treasures beyond imagination. Hear me out!"

Panic clawed at every word; the specter flung promises like coins, praying one might purchase its life.

"You will speak only when prompted. Now tell me, this blood pearl. What exactly is it?"

Sensing Jared's killing intent ease by the faintest breath, the shredded soul clutched that sliver of hope the way ing an cli to drifting wood in black, endless sea.

"Sir, forgive my haste! The gem is called the Myriad-Blood Soul Orb. It is an artifact from ages so old that the constellations have shifted since s for@ng. Its greatest miracle? It nurtures fragmented souls—yes, even the thinnest shred of consciousness—and, when the time is ripe, forges a fresh, perfectly attuned body around that soul."

"A new body?" Jared asked, his voice low, disbelief flickering across his eyes like lightning behind a cloud.

A single heartbeat later, the thought struck Jared so hard it rang in his skull. If that is true, the boundaries of death itself might be bent.

"Yes. Think of it: if a broken spirit is not yet erased—if even one spark of its essence remains—it can enter the orb, drink deep of nascence, and slumber. As the elixir gathers strength, the liquid becomes the clay, the orb the kiln, and out of that furnace arises a new vessel of flesh and blood. Limitless potential. An immaculate rebirth!"

"Nascence soul liquid—you mentioned that term. What is it exactly, and where can one find it?"

The patriarch dared not hide

anything from Jared. "The elixir is no

gift of nature," he said, voice

trembling like dry reeds. "It must be

refined, drawn from treasures

steeped in primal soul power: the heartwood of a ten-thousand-year Spirit-Nurturing Tree, the stamens of a Rebirth Herb, the seeds of a Nether-Lotus, and—yes—even the faith-laden soul force crystallized inside the ancestral monuments and statues long venerated by the great sects. These relics hold the purest, most thunderous reservoirs of soul energy one of those But ever materials is a sect's crown jewel, the marrow of its legacy. Especially those ancestral monuments—they

bear an entire lineage's karmic

fortune. To seize them, you would

have to storm the gates and wrest

them away by force."

The confession made Jared's eyes flare with a cold, calculating light, as though a

silent map of conquest unfolded behind his gaze.

In that instant, he grasped the true worth of the Myriad-Blood Soul Orb—and finally understood how this tattered ghost of a sect founder had managed to linger on the edge of oblivion for so long.

A plan—bold, ruthless, dazzling—took shape inside him the way a blade forms inside the smith's mind before the first hammer falls.

Then, in his consciousness field, a voice erupted—shaking, ecstatic, almost weeping.

"Boy! Did you hear? Nascence soul liquid! The Myriad-Blood Soul Orb! At last—at last I might walk the world in flesh again!"

The speaker was the Vermilion Demon Lord.

To him, the promise of a reborn body—of breathing air, tasting wine, and staining his fingers with real blood—was a dream so fierce it bordered on madness.

A Warrior Undefeatable

Jared glanced at the Vermilion Demon Lord's quivering ember, gave the faintest nod, and then swung an arctic stare back to the elder's flickering soul remnant.

The elder, feeling that stare pierce straight through his soul, pleaded, "Sir, I have told you everything I know—every secret, every thread. I beg you—"

His words dissolved into a ragged whimper as the chill in Jared's eyes pressed on him like the lid of a stone coffin.

"Your usefulness," Jared said, his tone as chill and smooth as polished steel, "has finally run its course."

Without a flicker of emotion, he allowed the thought to bloom behind his eyes, and everything inside him fell silent-ready.

Deep within his consciousness field, the Golden Tome flared like a newborn sun. A torrent of pure golden flame—woven entirely from the Heavenly Law itself—whipped outward and swallowed the elder's tattered soul remnant in a single heartbeat.

"No—" The elder's cry shattered into a raw, impossible note of terror that tore through the mindscape before vanishing in sparks.

Thus ended the long, covetous life of the Skyfiend Sect's elder.

His soul remnant was scoured clean, ground to luminous dust, and drawn apart— some sinking into the Golden Tome, the rest diffusing like warm rain to nourish Jared's boundless consciousness field.

The danger gone, Jared let his consciousness field drift back to the waking world.

He opened his hand. The Bloodsoul Orb rested there, no longer an enigma but a seed of limitless hope, pulsing softly against his palm.

"Mr. Vermilion, try stepping out for a moment," he whispered, almost tender.

A faint yet jubilant flame-black shot through with crimson-slipped from Jared's brow and hovered before the orb. It was the soul fire of the Vermilion Demon Lord, trembling like a heart that had just remembered how to beat.

"Kid, I—" Vermilion Demon Lord's voice hitched, heavy with gratitude too ancient to name.

"Go on inside," Jared urged, moving the orb closer. "I'll find enough nascence soul liquid to rebuild your physical body-this I promise."

"Thank you... truly." The flame quivered, then flowed into the orb like ink drawn into water.

The sphere brightened, its surface glazing with gentle light. Deep within, the black- red soul fire settled, no longer savage but quietly expectant. Jared felt the new bond knit itself to his core he could sense Vermilion Demon Lord's every heartbeat if he wished.

Carefully, he stowed the orb away, then lifted his gaze to the far horizon, eyes sharpened into blades of intent.

He mouthed the list like a vow. "Nascence soul liquid, Spirit-Nurturing Tree, Rebirth Herb, Nether Flower..."

A storm of resolve rose off him-imperious, unarguable.

"Coall!" The single bark cracked through the air. He didn't have to shout again; iron-winged footsteps were already slicing toward him.

"Here, Mr. Chance!" Coall sprang in, barely breathing, yet sensing the vast new gravity that clung to Jared like a second sky.

"Hear my command, now!"

Jared's voice rang across the cliff like steel striking an anvil, each syllable ricocheting through the canyons and rolling over the assembled Draconians.

"Every claw and scale of our race will rest, replenish what they have spent, and stand ready. In half a day, we march-side by side with me to war."

"War?" Coall rumbled, flexing one massive talon as sparks of black lightning crawled over his onyx scales. "Mr. Chance, are we heading straight for that mangy Soul Devourer in the Nether Blood Sea?"

With the thrill of battle already stirring his blood, the great black dragon scraped stone beneath him and looked almost disappointed for a heartbeat's breadth when no answer came at once.

"No."

Jared shook his head, the corner of his mouth curving into an icicle-sharp smile. "Before we hunt down Soul Devourer, we have something far larger to settle."

He let his gaze sweep across the mountains of loot the Draconians had just stripped from the fallen Skyfiend Sect-stacked so high they eclipsed the cliff's ragged edge. The words that followed were soft, yet each carried the weight of a

guillotine.

"Send word to every so-called power in Ninefold Heaven. Tell them to

prepare millennia-aged

Spirit Nurturing Tree Rebirth Herb, Nether Flower, and to lay bare their sout steles and statues of their founders."

Coall blinked, bewildered, his horned head tilting. "Mr. Chance, what does this mean..."

The question frayed away, half-formed, as if he already sensed the storm that was coming.

Jared clasped his hands behind his back. His robe shifted without wind, and his words seemed to skip across the void and slide into every ear from cliff top to the furthest cloud of Ninefold Heaven.

"I require nascence soul liquid to save a life. Those who offer the materials willingly will have the peace of their sect guaranteed and perhaps a stroke of luck from my own hand. Those who hide, who dissemble, who dare raise a palm against us..."

Cold light exploded in Jared's eyes. The Dragonslayer Sword's sword intent tore skyward, shredding clouds like parchment and sending a shudder through the realm itself.

A Warrior Undefeatable

"They shall receive no mercy. Their lines will be wiped out, their halls ground to dust, their treasures seized. Ninefold Heaven has limped along without order long enough. Obey and flourish. Bend or perish."

Roar!

Hundreds of dragons answered, their chorus a gale that cracked distant peaks. Dragon's power rolled out in waves, thick with killing intent, declaring to every horizon that a new sovereign had risen.

Coall trembled, every scale on his body quivering in elation. In that instant, he grasped the breadth of Jared's design.

This was more than vengeance, more than a hunt for rare herbs. It was a tide meant to sweep across Ninefold Heaven. The entire Ninefold Heaven would soon bow beneath Jared's will.

"Yes, Mr. Chance! Let me lead the vanguard—I will crush every obstacle in your path!"

Coall's voice boomed like a war drum, and flames of fervor blazed inside his golden eyes.

Jared dipped his chin once, the gesture colder-and firmer-than forged iron.

He had never lusted for a throne. Yet the hour had come, and circumstance itself shoved a crown of storm clouds onto his brow.

Hidden somewhere in the dark was Soul Devourer, forever scheming.

The Draconian army under Jared's banner devoured resources at a terrifying rate, the Vermilion Demon Lord still needed a new body of physical body, and Sylvia's shattered Heaven Gate Sect cried out to be rebuilt.

Every promise, every debt, every lingering threat pointed to a single answer-overwhelming power held in a single, unbreakable fist.

So Jared stopped pretending to be polite. He would seize the entire Ninefold Heaven and make it his personal war chest. Only then, when he finally left this lower world for realms even higher, would the empire in his wake be sealed tight like an iron fortress.

Half a day later, the Draconian army had finished licking its wounds. Fresh bloodlust crackled around the ranks as they lifted off, hauling the mountains of loot pillaged from Skyfiend Sect.

This time, their target was not a single enemy. Their orders were simple. Every sect in the Ninefold Heaven that possessed even a drop of nascence soul liquid materials would submit-or burn.

Jared stood on the foremost dragon's massive head, a slip in hand, listing every ingredient they needed. Eyes narrowed, he surveyed the rivers and ridges sliding beneath like a chessboard already lost.

The first stop lay just ahead-Netherfrost Sect, famed for the thousand-year Nether Flower that bloomed in its glacial tarns.

The sect occupied an enormous, mist-shrouded lake whose ink-black waters exhaled hoarfrost. Every disciple practiced arts steeped in venomous cold.

When the Draconian legion rolled across the sky like a living storm front, the entire Netherfrost Sect froze in collective terror beneath the tangible weight of dragons' power.

Their sect defense formation sprang up in panic, swirling with ghostly vapors and plates of blue-white ice.

A stunning woman-Heavenly Immortal Realm Level Two-forced a brittle smile and rose to meet Jared, bowing in mid-air. "Esteemed guest, to what do we owe the honor?"

Without wasting a single heartbeat, Jared tossed her the slip. "Delive ten stalks of Nether Flower at least ten thousand years old, with every

ast Seed intact.pathar and you

sect survives." Cöntent

One glance at the list drained all color from her face.

Those Nether Flowers were the Netherfrost Sect's very foundation. Ten of the oldest would gut almost hadhar the entire heritage they had hoarded across millennia-and the seeds were rarer still.

"S-Sir, surely that demand is..." She tried to haggle, voice trembling.

Jared's eyes cooled a fraction. He never spoke. Beside him, Coall released a single rumble of irritation, a dragon's growl that felt like a mountain tipping over.

Crack!

The protective shield below was webbed with fractures in an instant.

Hundreds of dragons bared a sliver of killing intent that braided together and hung overhead like a glacial guillotine poised above every disciple's neck.

The sect leader's composure shattered. Words died in her throat; even her beauty seemed to wilt under that crushing dread.

She harbored no doubt—the next "no" would doom Netherfrost Sect to the same smoking ruin that had once called itself Skyfiend Sect.

"Take them—take everything!"

Weeping openly, she spun and screamed for her disciples to empty the treasury at once.

Before absolute power, even the fiercest struggle was no more than a child's fists thrown at a cliff.

A moment later, ten emerald

caskets—chilled from the inside by an ancient frost—were carried to Jared with trembling reverence. Each box cradled a flawless Nether Flower. Its ebony petals curved like polished onyx its heart glimmering With a dusky light Hundreds of fat, midnight-green seeds lay beside the blooms, cold as river stones.

Jared inspected the harvest with a single sweep of his gaze, shut the lead casket, and turned away without a vestige of sentiment.

A Warrior Undefeatable

"Next stop, Greenwood Sect. I want every shard of their ten-millennium Spirit- Nurturing Tree," Jared said, his voice quiet yet sharp enough to draw blood.

The Draconian army arrived like a summer squall and departed just as quickly, leaving the Netherfrost Sect in smoking silence. Their radiant, crimson-robed sect master stood amid broken pillars, her expression a tangle of humiliation, lingering dread, and—though she would never admit it—relief.

At the very least, the sect still stood, and her people still breathed.

Across the Ninefold Heavens, those uneasy breaths soon morphed into open panic. Jared's legion marched as an iron flood, unstoppable and unhurried, drowning one skybound realm after another in its wake.

They descended upon sects, ancient citadels, and hidden sanctuaries alike— cracking gates, toppling wards, and leaving the taste of dragon fire in every breeze.

Greenwood Sect chose courtesy. Though their master bled at the mouth, handing over three segments of the Spirit-Nurturing Tree, recent memories of the Skyfiend and Netherfrost disasters kept him humble.

True to his word, Jared spared them. He even traced a fingertip through their sect defense formation, pointing out hairline flaws the elders had never seen. Relief washed through the mountain like summer rain; grateful disciples knelt until their robes soaked through.

By contrast, the Hundred Herb Pavilion tried to stall, pressing forward mere five-thousand-year Rebirth Herb as if it might fool a dragon.

Coall slammed one taloned paw through their gate plaque; dragon breath scorched half their medicinal mountain. The pavilion master scrambled through ash and ember, thrusting his entire trove of ten-millennium Rebirth Herb stamens into Jared's waiting hand.

Then there were the obstinate-Blaze Soul Sect-whose creed rang, "While the Soul Stele stands, the sect endures." They refused to surrender the monument that anchored their lineage.

Jared did not hesitate. His order cut through the wind like a falling blade.

"Kill!"

The Draconian army surged forward. Within the time it took a single incense stick to burn, a millennia-old mountain gate lay in shards, its disciples scattered as corpses and cinders. The Soul Stele was torn from its altar, and the proud Blaze Soul Sect became nothing more than smoldering rubble.

Word raced outward, faster than sound on dragon wings. Every faction beneath the Ninefold Heaven shuddered.

Jared's will-branded in dragon flame-seared itself into the mind of every patriarch and matriarch from cloud-tipped peak to sunken marsh.

Serve me and prosper. Defy me and vanish.

It was no slogan anymore. It was marrow-deep reality, dripping crimson.

Vault doors groaned open across the skies. Centuries-hoarded treasures were hauled into daylight by shaking hands, offered up in hopes the calamity might pass them by.

Yet in shadowed chambers, anxious whispers intertwined. Alliances formed, schemes unfurled-only to crumble the moment their planners measured themselves against that remorseless, sky darkening power the face of such absolute might, every coalition felt as fragile as paper on a funeral pyre.

Int

Jared barely spared a thought for the whirlpools of intrigue swirling behind him. To him, every stratagem, every whispered conspiracy, melted like frost beneath the noonday sun whenever true, unquestionable might stepped onto the field.

He advanced without pause, sweeping aside resistance the way a tidal wave shears through driftwood, gathering trophies, resources, and territory with the practiced ease of a reaper harvesting ripened grain.

Deep within the hovering Bloodsoul Orb, the soul fire of the Vermilion Demon Lord flared brighter than ever. Each fresh offering of nascence soul liquid caused the flame to thicken, solidify, and—most unsettling of all—pulse with a faint, unmistakable throb of life.

Yet even amid conquest, he honored his word. Jared had promised Sylvia, and Jared's promises were iron.

He chose Skyreach Cliff—an ancient sanctuary said to have once pinned the mortal realm to the celestial realm—as her foundation. The cliff face bristled with raw energy, its ledges knife-edged, its summit lost in swirling cloud.

First, he expelled the demon brood that had squatted there, then ordered every newly-subdued sect to send workers, stonemasons and spirit-Smiths. Hammers rang, unes glittered, and a new Gate of Heaven began to rise—unshakeable, resplendent, worthy of Sylvia's future throne.

Across the Ninefold Heaven, mountains, palaces, and entire dynasties quaked beneath Jared's will. Some knelt, some crumbled, but all felt the pressure.

Rivers of treasure-ore, pills, arcane tomes—flowed toward his banners like a hundred tributaries feeding a single sea. Fed by this abundance and tempered by constant battle the Draconian army grew deadlier by the hour, its collective aura now a stormfront of scaled fury?

Nor did he forget his comrades in the distant Nethergate Sect. Couriers streaked eastward with crates of spirit crystals and healing elixirs, ensuring Zevon and the others could leverage their Pentacarna Tower's time-dilation without ever running dry.

With those matters settled, Jared mounted a dragon and led the Draconians to the final holdout among the great sects the Myriad Arts Sect, last bastion whose ancestor statue still stood and whose elders had yet to bow.

Revered as the cradle of magecraft, the Myriad Arts Sect enshrined a milky-white effigy said to contain a sliver of its founder's soul. Their prestige ranked just below the notorious Skyfiend Sect and comfortably above Nethergate Sect.

A Warrior Undefeatable

When Jared's legions darkened the skies above their valley, the sect defense formation ignited from peak to peak. Countless disciples stood upon the walls, faces taut, spell-sigils swirling like constellations around their clenched fists.

At their head strode the white-haired sect master—a man whose cultivation teetered

at the pinnacle of Heavenly Immortal Level Three. Behind him, the elder council fanned out like a living phalanx.

"Jared Chance!"

The old master clasped his hands, voice steady yet edged with iron. "Your deeds have reached even our quiet halls. That statue embodies our lineage and the very luck of our gates. We cannot surrender it. Should you press the matter, every soul beneath this roof will fight until neither jade nor bone remains intact."

A roar answered him—thousands of disciples in flawless unison. Magecraft speared upward, weaving their defiance into a single, unbroken banner of will. Ancient they were, proud, and here they would make their stand.

Jared regarded the tableau—ranks set, shields humming, hearts ablaze—with an expression as calm as moonlit glass. He lifted one palm. From it drifted the Bloodsoul Orb, now swirling with crimson so dense it looked molten.

Within, the Vermilion Demon Lord's soulfire had swollen to a knife-edge threshold. All it lacked was one final draught—the pure, founder-forged soul energy sealed inside that alabaster statue—to trigger the rebirth of an ancient body waiting to claw its way back into the world.

In order to rebuild the physical body for the Vermilion Demon Lord, Jared saw no path but this every turn of fate had already herded him toward the iron gates of the Myriad Arts Sect, and there was no doorway left behind him for retreat.

Cold purpose settled over him like nightfall, blotting out any lingering doubt.

"I have said it once," Jared's voice rang out, clear enough to rattle the cliffs. "Those who ride my current will flourish. Those who stand against me—perish. Myriad Arts Sect, will you flourish, or will you perish?"

At the final echo of his challenge, hundreds of Draconians advanced in perfect unison. The dragon's power they carried rolled forward in a colossal tide—an ocean turned to living pressure—that slammed into the sect defense formation shielding the mountain like a midnight wave battering a lighthouse.

Overhead, thunder stitched the sky while black clouds knotted together, as though the end of days had chosen this very valley for its doorway.

In front of the sect gate, the air itself turned to glass; every breath felt like inhaling shards of ice.

Jared's decree—flourish or die—cracked through every disciple's chest like celestial thunder, leaving behind the chill of a blade pressed to the spine.

Wave after wave of draconic might pounded the shimmering barrier. Runes flared, colors bled, and the dome quivered with a tortured hum, as though the array were a drum skin stretched too tight and about to tear.

The sect master stood at the fore. White hair lashed about his shoulders, and his robe snapped in the collision of opposing auras.

In his gaze flickered a final, steely resolve. He understood the fork in the road more keenly than

anyone surrender the statue of the founding ancestor and sever the lineage, turning a millennium of heritage into dandelion fluff, or

refuse and face this storm-crowned slayer who had already leveled more than one sacred mountain.

"Jared!" he shouted, the single name erupting from his throat like a battle horn. "For ten centuries the Myriad

Arts Sect has stood through

tempests and droughts, and our way has never broken. Today, even when

rivers of blood run down these

steps, the ancestor's likeness shall

not be mocked. Disciples, hear me!"

"Yes, Master!" thousands answered together, a rolling roar that sent loose stones skittering.

Their reply soared upward, fierce and unafraid—proof that resolve could be forged as sharp as any sword.

"Return all arts to the source—shield our tradition!" the master cried, flinging his hand into a new sigil.

At once, every elder and disciple poured their power into the grand formation. Light blazed white-hot.

Ancient nes surfacet

weaving

themselves into chains of Heavenly Law that wrapped the barrier in fresh, unbreakable links.

Deep within the mountain, the ancestor's statue awakened, casting a soft radiance that dove into the shield and drove its strength even higher.

"Stubborn to the last," Jared murmured, voice flat as frost.

No flicker of sympathy crossed his eyes. He required only the statue's concentrated soul energy. Whether the Myriad Arts Sect thrived or fell meant no more to him than smoke on the wind.

Slowly, he lifted his right hand, fingers closing around empty air. He did not bother to draw the Dragonslayer Sword. The gesture alone made the very sky creak, as though reality itself suspected it was next to break.

"Heavenly Law—disjunction." Jared's voice cracked through the frozen silence like iron striking flint.

A force without color or sound, yet towering above any mortal energy, burst from him as quicksilver spilled across the sky. In an instant, it poured over the entire sect defense formation of the Myriad Arts Sect.

It was Jared's deeper mastery of the Heavenly Law embedded within the Golden Tome—a subtler command over creation's own source that few living beings even sensed, let alone wielded.

Before every horrified pair of eyes inside the sect, the shining dome, the flowing runes, the chains of law they had trusted for millennia began to unravel. An unseen titan's hand simply erased them from the rim inward.

A Warrior Undefeatable

This was no blunt shattering. Their defenses were being denied the right to exist, their foundations peeled away molecule by molecule until nothing remained to remember them.

"W-What power is this?" the sect master gasped.

He felt the bond between his spirit and the array torn apart, strand after strand. The gulf in power was so absolute that tremors of dread clawed straight into his soul.

In barely three heartbeats, the sect defense formation, strong enough to withstand a Heavenly Immortal Level Five assault, popped like a soap bubble in sunlight—silent, total, leaving not even dust to mark its passing.

The backlash hit every disciple linked to the formation at once. Blood fountained from hundreds of mouths, and the collective breath of the sect turned ragged and weak.

Now naked of protection, they stood helpless beneath the undisguised, murderous dragon's power radiating from hundreds of true Draconians circling overhead.

A thunderous roar—ancient, primal—rolled across the mountains.

Coall seized the opening, his bellow shaking loose snow from the peaks. The midnight-scaled colossus folded his wings and dove, the air itself screaming around his descending bulk.

His mountain-sized body crashed into the ornate gate tower that had proclaimed the sect's glory for ten thousand years.

Stone exploded. Dust boiled upward. What had been a monument to Myriad Arts Sect now sifted through Coall's talons as powder.

"Kill." The single icy syllable fell from Jared's lips like a verdict already signed in blood.

The Draconian army moved at once. They poured through the shattered gateway like a tidal flood, each scaled warrior a cog in a vast, merciless war engine that swallowed the courtyard whole.

Fire Dragons exhaled sheets of living flame that turned pavilions into roaring pyres. Lightning Dragons called spears of skyfire that shredded meditation chambers.

Wind Dragons spun vortices so sharp they sliced apart every desperate formation thrown in their path. Ice Dragons breathed winter itself, flash-freezing entire plazas into glittering graveyards where breath crystallized before it could leave a mouth.

The disciples fought, charms glowing, treasures arcing like comets, yet against draconic strength, hide, and innate sorcery, their arts looked like children's paper in a hurricane.

The gulf in individual might, compounded by the dragons' overwhelming intent to slaughter, meant the contest was never a battle at all—only the unfolding of an inevitable culling.

Jared did not descend into the chaos. His gaze speared through smoke and stone, fixing on the solemn hall deep within the sect where a statue of their founder presided.

He stepped forward once. Space folded like silk. All walls, all attacks, all distances ceased to matter, and in the next blink, he stood inside that quiet, vaulted sanctuary.

Inside the main sanctum, dozens of white-haired elders stood shoulder to shoulder. Their robes fluttered in the hush, their breath heavy with power as they locked themselves into an intricate defensive array before the altar.

At the heart of that formation rose a three-story sculpture of warm white quartz. Its features were blurred, yet every curve radiated a teaching aura, bathing the hall in rolling tides of pure, majestic faith-forged soul energy.

"Blasphemous fiend. Do not dare defile our founder!"

One elder in royal-violet silk lunged ahead. Fury tore at his eyes as he hurled a gleaming eight trigrams mirror into the air; its blazing light speared toward Jared like a heavenly verdict.

Jared never even looked. He merely brushed his sleeve.

A sound like worlds colliding—then mirror and master alike shattered beneath an unseen hammer, bursting into points of light that vanished before they touched the floor.

Before the remaining elders could breathe, Jared stretched his hand toward the quartz effigy, fingers closing on empty air.

"Seize."

An invisible vortex howled out of that single word, swallowing the distance between man and

monument. The statue trembled

violently; its holy sheen flickered in panicked waves. The fragment of the Myriad Arts Sect's

founder together with ten thousand years of accumulated

worship-strained to hold its ground,

suddenly alive and afraid.

"A stray echo, and you think you can bar my path?"

Power stirred in Jared's consciousness field. The Golden Tome fluttered open within him, releasing a breath of law so sovereign that the hall seemed to kneel.

Like vassals before a king, the

before

statue's will broke in an instant. A needle-thin column of milk-white soul energy ripped from the idol's brow streamed across the void, and Sank into the Bloodsoul orb now floating above Jared's palm.

"No!"

The surviving elders could only wail as the sect's symbol, the very fountainhead of their lineage, dimmed to lifeless stone before their eyes.