

A Warrior Undefeatable 5761-5770

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"Easy now, son," another elder, Bartram Barrington, rumbled, stroking his rounded chin. "It's not that we don't believe you, but this is just too absurd. Young man, can you present evidence to prove such marvels?"

Like Garrick, who had died, the council could not reconcile such power with a mere Human Immortal.

Gavin and Yvette felt sweat bead along their brows. They tried to speak, but Arden's knife-edge glance sliced the words before birth.

Paxton kept his silence, golden eyes fixed on Jared as though he would read the stranger's soul by sheer will.

Jared, for his part, remained as calm as still water, returning Paxton's stare without a single flicker of emotion.

To the elders, that silence resembled not confidence but the hollow hush of hidden guilt.

Arden gave a chilly snort. "Master, the matter stinks of subterfuge. A drifter of low cultivation boasting impossible might—clearly a demon sect plant using the oldest ruse of all. Detain him, and we shall have the truth by nightfall."

The temperature in the hall seemed to drop as tension drew every muscle tight.

Several elders dipped their chins in silent agreement.

Gavin and Yvette went sheet-white. The choking aura held their throats closed; not a syllable escaped.

Then, the small fire unicorn perched on Jared's shoulder sensed the hostility. It growled a crack of volcanic earth and ribbons of crimson-gold flame roared upward, licking the rafters in defiant warning.

A wave of regal, undiluted beastly majesty unfurled from the small fire unicorn. The solemn oppression that had weighed on the grand hall—emanating from every elder present—was suddenly thinned, as if mist scattered by sunrise. The air itself seemed to bow.

"What in the wait, is that a fire unicorn?" Bartram's eyes blazed like twin lanterns. "And its bloodline... impossibly pure-purer than any record in our scrolls!"

Paxton's lion-gold gaze flicked toward the creature. A rare, unreadable glimmer crossed his eyes-half caution, half awe-before his expression returned to its granite calm.

"My business here is simple," Jared said, his voice a clear river cutting through the tense hall. "First, to settle an old score with the infinites Soul Demon Sect. Second, to rest here and gather information of your sect objects, I will leave." .net

He spoke without heat, without plea-like someone reciting an errand list rather than staking his life amid predators. That effortless detachment left several elders blinking, their planned objections momentarily stranded on their tongues.

Arden let out a cold snort. "Smooth words, boy! For all we know you—"

"Enough." Paxton's single word rolled through the chamber like muted thunder. He rose, towering, every syllable edged with command that allowed no echo of dissent. For a heartbeat, he locked eyes with Jared, as though finalizing an internal verdict.

"Gavin Stone and Yvette

Shadowstep confirm you rescued

them," he said at last. "We, the

Myriad Beast Sect, acknowledged

that debt. As for the strength you

claim, words are wind. We only revere the power we have witnessed Three days from now our core-disciple advancement trial begins. Among the trials lies the Beast-Soul Array challenge. Break, alone, the Threefold Beast-Soul Array conjured by three fourth-rank Heavenly Immortal disciples, and your truth will stand. Do that, and you shall be our honored guest. Ask any question-so long as it is not a core secret, we will answer. But if you fail..."

Paxton let the silence finish his sentence far more sharply than words could.

Arden's lips curved into an icy smile.

That array, formed by three perfectly synchronized Level Four Heavenly Immortal disciples, could imprison, even kill, an average fifth-rank.

He refused to believe a Level Seven Human Immortal brat could so much as dent it.

Bartram narrowed his ursine eyes, the wheels of quiet calculation turning behind them.

"Agreed." Jared met Paxton's stare without a blink.

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Paxton had not expected such instant acceptance. For a moment, the mighty sect master looked almost startled.

"Consider carefully," he rumbled. "Our Beast-Soul Array is lethal. This is no child's sparring match."

"No need," Jared replied, shaking his head once.

Arden laughed, a razor-thin sound. "You still underestimate the Myriad Beast Sect, whelp. When you understand the might of the array, you wouldn't even have time to cry before you die."

Jared's smile was almost gentle. "So the legendary Myriad Beast Sect is that formidable, hm?"

Arden's brow knotted. "Are you mocking us?"

"If you are so formidable," Jared asked softly, "why did the Infinite Soul Demon Sect beat you down until you forgot how to fight back?"

"You"

Arden's throat seized the instant the word left his beak-sharp lips. Rage flooded his eyes, yet for all that fury no further sound emerged, as though indignation itself had strangled whatever accusation he had prepared.

Paxton's massive frame leaned forward, shadow engulfing half the hall. In a voice as cold and final as an executioner's blade, he said, "Enough. Trade insults all you like, but real skill speaks on the battlefield. Three days from now, the truth will decide who's mocking whom."

Jared lifted an eyebrow, unhurried, as though the entire court were nothing more than a tavern porch at dusk. "Fine. I'll unravel your so-called Beast-Soul Array and let everyone witness what I can do—but I'll need something from you in return." Paxton's mane of bronze hair barely shifted when he asked, "Name it."

"When I break that array," Jared said, tone mild but unyielding, "you will place one million celestial gems in my hand. I refuse to save your disciples only to be called a fraud afterward. That would be... most embarrassing."

His expression remained calm, almost detached, as though he were bargaining over wheat instead of miracles.

"A million? Why not rob the treasury while you're at it!" Arden shrieked, plumage bristling like spears of obsidian.

Jared's answering laugh was soft, cutting. "What's wrong? I thought you were certain I'd fail. Why are you afraid to wager with me?"

Silenced, Arden shot a glance toward Paxton.

After a long, granite-hard silence, Paxton nodded once. "Very well. Break the Beast- Soul Array, and you'll receive one million gems. I will even offer you a seat among our elders—an exception made for no one else."

"I don't need that," Jared replied, turning away. "See you in three days."

Cloak swirling like midnight water, he strode out of the hall without another word.

No sooner had he left than Gavin and Yvette hurried after him, the marble terrace echoing under their uneven breaths.

"Sir—please, wait!" Their voices fused in desperate harmony across the courtyard.

Gavin caught up first, bowing so low his tusked pauldron almost scraped the tiles. "Jared, forgive us. We never imagined the sect master and elders would... doubt you so openly. You shouldn't have been treated that way."

Yvette's head dipped, raven hair hiding flushed cheeks. "You saved our lives. To see you slandered beneath that roof-our hearts ache with shame."

Jared stopped. Moonlight poured over the young beasts as he turned, the earlier chill in his gaze softening by a single degree. A small smile

curved his lips-as if the milen

uproar

moments ago had been no more than a gust brushing past a mountain.

"It's nothing," he said, voice steady, almost gentle. "Most people trust only what their eyes confirm. Their doubt is natural. As for that Beast-Soul Array..."

He paused, the corner of his mouth lifting in the faintest, knowing arc. "The result will speak for itself."

The ease with which he dismissed ridicule left Gavin and Yvette awestruck.

This is what true mastery looks like.

Against the petty swagger of Garrick or the shrieking arrogance of Arden, Jared's composure was a sky they could only look up to.

Yet anxiety still needled them. They

knew the Threefold Beast-Soul Array

had humbled plenty of Level Five Heavenly Immortals. "Sir, that array truly is formidable—when the beast souls merge, then strike can level ridge-lines—"

He trailed off, unsure whether warning or pleading would change anything.

Jared raised a hand, cutting him off. "I know my limits. Find me a secluded place to cultivate, and make sure no one disturbs me for the next three days."

When Jared made it plain his mind was set, Gavin and Yvette exchanged a resigned glance. Any further persuasion would only waste breath, so they swallowed their words and bowed in silent assent.

They hurried off, securing for him the finest standalone courtyard in the entire Myriad Beast Sect guest compound, where the air shimmered with unusually rich spiritual energy.

Jared carried the small fire unicorn

across the threshold, closed the door, and did not appear again.

Outside that gate, speculation ignited like a gossip boiling through the sect corridors until every corner echoed with his name.

"Hey, did you hear? Some Human Immortal Level-Seven whelp is swaggering around claiming he can shatter our sacred Threefold Beast-Soul Array."

"Ha! Funniest thing I've heard all week. The kid doesn't even know how to spell the word danger."

"They say he rescued Gavin Stone, sure—but Elder Garrick died in that skirmish. A level-seven Human Immortal saving the day? Please. He must've cheated or just stumbled into dumb luck."

"Elder Aileron is right. Bet the runt's a Demon Sect spy."

"Just wait—three days till the trial. I doubt he'll even step near the array before wetting himself."

The slander spread like mold in darkness, clinging to every staircase and training yard. Almost no one trusted the outlander boy; most simply waited for his inevitable humiliation in public.

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Even disciples who had half believed Gavin and Yvette soon switched sides the moment they learned Jared's cultivation stopped at Human Immortal Realm, Level Seven.

Arden even privately warned the disciples preparing the examination array, "Tune the Threefold Beast-Soul Array to its fiercest setting. Let that human brat taste real pain and expose whatever trickery he's hiding."

Time slid past in a blink, and the appointed three days melted away.

The core disciple promotion trials erupted across the sect's grand arena—the Myriad Beast Altar, a stone coliseum reserved for moments of legend.

Every block of the altar had been carved from a single slab of bluish-gray skystone, and a circle of one hundred totem pillars, each etched with a savage beast, stood sentinel around the ring.

Crystalline beast cores set atop those pillars pulsed with lambent light, weaving a fortress-class barrier that would trap every stray burst of force inside.

Beneath the platform, a sea of audience swelled—disciples, stewards, traveling elders, all jostling for a glimpse.

Even those who were not joining the trials squeezed in; hardly a soul stationed at headquarters failed to attend the spectacle.

Paxton lounged upon the highest throne, mane-like hair fanning his shoulders. Arden occupied one flank, Bartram the other, their expressions sharp with expectation.

Name after name was called. Duels flashed, techniques painted the sky, and the crowd roared itself hoarse at each brilliant clash.

Yet many eyes drifted toward the main gates between bouts, hunting for, or perhaps hunting down, the one figure still absent.

The moment arrived—the Threefold Beast-Soul Array challenge, crown jewel of the trials—and Jared had yet to appear.

Arden studied the empty entrance, a colder smile carving across his beak-sharp features.

He projected his voice across the arena. "Looks like our arrogant visitor has lost his courage. The might of our Beast-Soul Array has him too terrified to show his face."

"Hahaha!" An explosion of jeering laughter rolled up from the stands.

"Knew it! All bark, no bite."

"A Level Seven Human Immortal expecting to break our array?"

"Gavin Stone really misjudged him!"

Faces flushed with shame, Gavin and Yvette stood amid the throng. Gavin's fists trembled; Yvette bit her lip, yet neither could summon a retort.

Did he run into trouble after all? Or did he judge the odds impossible and choose to retreat?

Paxton sat erect upon the viewing platform, his broad face carved from stone. Not a flicker betrayed what d behind those gold-flecked

eyes. Beside him, Bartam toyed with the end of his grizzled beard,

small eyes half-shut, weighing every rune that shimmered around the arena.

The signal fire flared the Beast-Soul Array began.

Three core disciples of Heavenly

Immorta Level Four strode into the center of the Myriad Beast Altar. One

embodied raw strength one

lightning speed, one impenetrable defense.

At their call, phantom colossi burst upward: a bellowing Titanforce Ape, a streaking Windlash Leopard, an Obsidian-Armoured Rhino plated like night-black iron.

Their auras braided into a spinning triangle. Beastly roars shook the dome, and the protective barrier quivered as if struck by ocean swells.

Any challenger caught inside would battle three perfectly synchronized foes while being crushed by the clashing natures of strength, speed, and fortitude. It was insanely difficult.

Two previous contenders both Level Four Heavenly Immortals—had lasted less than half an hour. They were hurled out bleeding and broken, ribs clicking, spirits dimmed.

The display left the crowd wide-eyed and confirmed, to many, that Jared, who had fled, was nothing but a braggart.

"Looks like it's time for this farce to end," Arden murmured, voice sharp as a talon.

He leaned forward, ready to declare the trial closed while the final challenger inside staggered like a candle in the wind.

Then, a voice sliced through the uproar.

"Hold on."

The word was not loud, yet it threaded cleanly through clash, roar, and mutter, lodging in every ear.

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Heads pivoted toward the entrance of the Myriad Beast Altar.

An azure-robed figure walked in at an unhurried pace, shadow pooling at his heels.

His gait was the picture of leisure, as though reputation and danger were idle gossip carried on a breeze.

Jared had finally appeared.

At his flank padded the fire unicorn, golden pupils aglow with childlike wonder as flames danced along the array's boundary.

"He came? He actually dared to come?"

"Now? The trial's nearly over!"

"Hah! He's probably afraid he'd fail, so he came at the last minute, waiting for the array to tire itself out."

The jeers rose again, yet uncertainty now thinned their venom.

After all, he was here.

Gavin and Yvette exchanged startled grins, the weight on their hearts lifting halfway.

As expected, he does not shy away from battle.

Jared ignored every whisper, stopping before the altar. His eyes skimmed the crackling array, brow arching—almost disappointed.

He looked up at Paxton and the elders. "So this is the famed Threefold Beast-Soul Array you boasted about?"

Arden's feathers bristled. "You're late. Are you frightened, boy? Kneel, admit your bluster, and perhaps save a shred of dignity!"

Jared lifted his chin and gave the faintest shake of the head, as though brushing lint from a jacket. Instead of answering Arden's barbed remark, he murmured to the empty air, voice soft, almost bored. "This array feels... child-simple. Facing something so elementary hardly qualifies as entertainment."

He paused, letting the hush deepen until every heartbeat on the terrace could be counted. "Myriad Beast Sect—surely you own an array with a bit more bite. Would you bring that out and let me play with it?"

Blank stares answered him—a collective ellipsis of disbelief.

For one breath, the entire Myriad Beast Altar lay under a funeral hush.

Eyes widened as they looked at Jared as if looking at a crazy person.

Too simple? Boring? Play with it?

He must be mad surely he did not grasp what he was saying.

The Threefold Beast-Soul Array had broken Level Four Heavenly Immortals with ease; its reputation was inked in blood.

Yet this Level Seven Human Immortal outsider dismissed it as a toy and asked for something fiercer.

Silence shattered like glass.

"Arrogant! Unbelievably arrogant!"

"I've never seen anyone court death with such enthusiasm!"

"Is he insane or here merely to mock our sect?"

Arden trembled with rage, the tip of his finger stabbing the air toward Jared. Whelp, how dare you slander the Myriad Beast Sect. The Beast Soul Array is sacred lore. If you're so capable, break it first

before bragging!"

On the platform, Paxton's brows knitted; even he found the youth's words indefensibly wild.

Beside him, Bartram's eyes narrowed, recalculating the strength of the young man below.

Jared exhaled through his nose, like a patient teacher humoring unruly children. "Very well, if you insist..."

Under a spray of hostile, curious, and mocking gazes, he drifted forward—one unhurried step—and slipped into the notorious array like mist through keyholes.

"It's active—he's inside!"

"How many seconds before he crumples?"

"He asked for humiliation; let him have it."

The trio at the array's core, stung by his arrogance, answered with everything they owned.

The Titanforce Ape bellowed, its phantom fist descending with mountain-splitting weight.

The Windlash Leopard flashed into a silver streak, claws aimed at Jared's throat, while the obsidian Armoured Rhin the exits behind im with a wall of living stone.

Strength, speed, and defense converged—heaven and earth rattled. Below the altar, even seasoned disciples felt their hearts quake.

Jared stood utterly still at the center

of the Myriad Beast Altar. Around

him, three disciples fed their aet

with enough power to terrify a seasoned Lev Five Heavenly Immortal, sending torrents of savage force screaming toward his unguarded chest.

Just as that storm of violet claws, ear-splitting roars, and crushing pressure was

about to swallow him, Jared moved.

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He merely lifted his right hand. Two fingers pressed together like a blade, he drew a line through the pulsing core where the three beast-souls converged.

No thunder pealed. No blinding aurora split the sky.

Only a filament of five-colored light, so slender it could have been a trick of the eye, flickered from his fingertip and vanished.

An instant later, a deep, metallic hum shook the air.

The Threefold Beast-Soul Array shuddered as though struck by an invisible warhammer. The spectral Titanforce Ape, Windlash Leopard, and Obsidian-Armored Rhino shrieked in despair, then burst like soap bubbles and were gone.

The three disciples who served as living keystones recoiled as if lightning had passed through their spines. Blood sprayed from their lips. Faces drained of color, they staggered back and collapsed, staring at Jared with the hollow horror of children who have seen the world end.

The array was ruined.

From the moment Jared stepped into the formation to the moment it crumbled, fewer than three heartbeats had passed.

Fast. So fast that no one in the arena had time to react. So fast that every sneer, every doubt, every half-formed insult froze on a hundred faces only to shatter under the weight of what they had just witnessed.

The Myriad Beast Altar sank into an even deeper silence than before-an oppressive, suffocating hush in which a falling needle would have sounded like a bell.

Eyes bulged, mouths hung open. To every onlooker, the scene felt less like reality and more like some impossible fable come alive in broad daylight.

He... He really broke it? With a single, lazy swipe? A Level Seven Human Immortal cultivator? Shattering the Threefold Beast-Soul Array in a blink? How could that be?

Gavin and Yvette trembled so hard their fists rattled at their sides. Every fiber of their bodies wanted to roar. Do you see now? This is the strength of the man who saved us!

High on the platform, Paxton lurched to his feet. The composed dignity he wore moments earlier fell away, replaced by raw, blazing shock.

Bartram's thick fingers yanked at his own beard until several hairs came free-he did not even notice, his round face frozen in terror-struck awe.

Arden's sneer froze. Hand shaking, he tried to point at Jared, jaw working soundlessly, yet not a single word would leave his throat.

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"No, this can't be!" His cry split the hush that had blanketed the Myriad Beast Altar. He spun in place, clutching at the only excuse he could find. "The array was battered-drained after so many challenges! Its power plummeted, and that wanderer just happened to stroll in at the perfect moment. Yes... Yes, that must be it!"

Although the explanation sounded brittle even as it left his lips, the disciples who could not stomach the truth clung to it the way drowning men grab driftwood.

"That's right! Elder Aileron has to be right! The formation weakened!"

"That outsider's luck was obscene he walked in while the array lay on its last breath!"

"If he's truly capable, let him face a formation running at full strength!"

Jared stood amid the rising clamor, face set in stone, as though the uproar were no more than distant wind.

At last, he turned his calm gaze on the rattled elder and spoke in a voice as mild as spring rain "Oh? Then tell me that sort of formation would convince you I didn't simply profit from a bargain sale?"

Stung, Arden bellowed without thinking, "If you're that confident, you should try the Beast-Slaughtering God Array of our sect!"

The words hit like thunder. Ripples of stunned silence washed across the crowd, even Paxton's eyes narrowing a fraction.

Paxton's voice rumbled at once. "Arden, watch your tongue. The Beast-Slaughtering God Array is distilled from our sect-guarding grand array—hardly a toy to brandish at will."

Across the mental link, Gavin's baritone and Yvette's breathless soprano overlapped in urgent whispers. "Sir, don't! That array still demands nine core disciples, at Level Four Heavenly Immortal or higher. It once trapped and killed a Level Six Heavenly Immortal foe. Entering it is courting death!"

Its very name—Beast-Slaughtering God Array—spoke of power vast enough to bring divinity low.

Even in simplified form, it dwarfed the earlier Threefold Beast-Soul Array beyond comparison.

To every onlooker, the elder's challenge looked like a razor-edged gamble—either force Jared to quit in disgrace or let the array maim, perhaps erase, him outright.

No one truly believed the newcomer would accept the challenge.

This was no longer about proving skill. It was wagering one's life.

Realizing his own rashness, Arden inhaled sharply, but there was no taking back what he had said.

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Still, pride forced him to sneer. "What's wrong-scared? Admit your earlier victory was blind luck while you still can, and I may let you walk away."

Paxton turned to Jared, features grave. "Jared, Elder Aileron spoke in anger. You have already dismantled the Threefold Beast-Soul Array-your strength is verified. One million celestial gems will be delivered at once, and a seat among our elders remains open for you. The Beast-Slaughtering God Array is lethally unpredictable. There is no need to force the matter."

Everyone seemed certain Jared would seize the easy path.

After all, he had earned respect and reward aplenty-why invite more danger?

Yet once again, Jared's response veered far from expectation.

He ignored Paxton's caution, ignored Gavin and Yvette's frantic pleas, and did not so much as glance at Arden's taunting stare.

Instead, his eyes drifted past the altar into the shadowed depths beyond, as though some greater power there tugged invisibly at his spirit.

A faint smile-half amusement, half curiosity-ghosted across his lips.

"Beast-Slaughtering God Array?" he echoed softly, nodding once, confidence thrumming beneath the calm. "Sounds... interesting."

He shrugged, as if selecting a dish from a tavern menu. "Very well-bring it on."

Gasps rippled across the viewing stands—an inhalation so sharp it seemed the air itself froze.

Insanity. Absolute, unvarnished insanity.

That was the only thought echoing in the minds of every disciple of the Myriad Beast Sect. Jared has lost his mind.

He had done the unthinkable. He had accepted the challenge—had volunteered, in fact, to try the fabled Beast-Slaughtering God Array.

For a heartbeat, Arden's hawk-bright eyes blinked in disbelief. Then savage delight curled his thin mouth.

"Mr. Riftclaw," he announced, palms clasped as though in earnest petition, "this arrogant cub dares belittle our sect's crown formation. Grant permission to activate the Beast-Slaughtering God Array and teach him how high the heavens truly stand!"

Paxton studied Jared in brooding silence. There was no madness in the youth's gaze, no tremor of fear. Only a depthless calm that made the floor seem suddenly fragile beneath their feet.

Paxton's broad shoulders rose and fell once. He dipped his head in solemn assent. "Approved," he said, voice low as rolling granite.

At that single word, the entire place erupted like a struck hive.

Nine core disciples—each at least level four of the Heavenly Immortal Realm—strode onto the Myriad Beast Altar. Their placement was precise, marking unseen vertices of a grand design. Muscles tensed, jaws

set; they understood the weight they carried.

All at once, they poured their techniques into the pattern beneath their boots. Nine colossal

their vast echoes of a

spirit-beasts

bygone era—tore skyward in

translucent fury: dragon, tiger, lion, phoenix, python, eagle, bear, wolf, tortoise.

Their roars plowed the clouds apart. Energy sluiced toward the altar in spiraling torrents. A luminous dome the size of a small city snapped into existence, sealing the arena in a storm of killing intent.

Inside that shell, the howls of beasts overlapped. The pressure pressed even distant onlookers to their knees, lungs constricted as though a mountain had settled on their chests.

Only now did the spectators glimpse the true, hidden power of the Myriad Beast Sect.

This formation could slay gods one realm above its wielders.

"Friend," the disciple standing at the nexus warned, voice strained beneath the crushing aura, "this array shows no mercy. Withdraw now, while you still control your fate."

Arden sneered. He could already see Jared being torn to shreds.

Jared tilted his head back, studying the nine snarling beast spirits as gale-force power battered against his robes. Even a Level Six Heavenly Immortal would tremble here yet his heartbeat never quickened.

"Now we're talking," he murmured.

The instant the words fell, he moved swift, decisive, a single brushstroke of intent.

The Dragonslayer Sword sang a clear, crystalline cry—as the blade leapt of its own accord into his waiting palm.

The ordinary-looking man now radiated a force that split the sky—a raw sword will that dared every spirit beast to charge.

He became a drawn weapon himself, edge bared to the cold air, brilliance flashing across the entire altar.

Light flared along his silhouette—too bright to stare at—until it seemed the whole world shuddered beneath that singular sword intent.

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"Five-Element Sword Domain—open!"

A low, resonant hum rolled through the air—deep, metallic, endless.

In that single vibration, Jared's Five-Element Sword Domain unfolded again—larger, denser, perfected beyond what he had shown at Rockhold Gorge.

Its borders swelled until they pressed stubbornly against the luminous shell of the Beast-Slaughtering God Array.

Inside, sword energy no longer drifted like silver rain; it condensed into countless prismatic blades, each one razor-real.

Threads of Time Law wound through veins of spatial power, turning the domain into a kaleidoscopic pocket-world.

"Assembly of the Swords!" Jared shouted, his voice cutting across the chaos.

He raised the Dragonslayer Sword toward the sky, its edge glinting like dawn. Every prismatic sword inside the domain answered the call with a bright, eager cry. They streamed together, rivers of light rushing home to the sea, merging into a single, roaring torrent of Prismatic Sword Aura saturated with cycles of the five elements and the turning of time.

That torrent felt alive-possessed of will and hunger.

Where it swept, space peeled open in thin black seams and time unraveled like loose thread.

The nine ancient beast spirits, so fierce a breath ago, wailed in terror before that cosmic current.

Their power withered under the domain's laws; their strikes were shredded to mist.

Roars, screeches, howls-every beastly protest drowned beneath the surge.

Like a tidal wave of blades, the torrent smashed through the beasts' united guard and slammed hard into the array's barrier.

Cracks spider-webbed-then the world detonated with a sound of glass and stars shattering together.

That so-called powerful array lasted less than a heartbeat before it burst into drifting sparks.

Nine core disciples who powered the array spat blood in unison, their bodies flung like cut kites to the ground, unconscious.

The array was once again broken, this time by raw, overwhelming force.

Silence followed.

Moments ago, shattering the Threefold Beast-Soul Array had seemed impossible.

Now, witnessing the brutal demise of the Beast-Slaughtering God Array, every onlooker felt their souls quake with dread.

What kind of monster is he? Human Immortal Realm Level Seven? That's Level Seven? Even a Heavenly Immortal Level Seven might be no stronger than him.

Gavin and Yvette stood frozen, their throats too tight for words. Wide-eyed, they stared at the green-robed swordsman in the arena, worship blazing in their pupils. Bartram's jaw hung so low a hen's egg could have rolled inside.

Paxton leaned forward in his throne. The initial shock in his gaze deepened into raw terror—and, disturbingly, a flicker of feverish awe.

Across from him, Arden's

composure shattered. Color drained until his face matched parchment. He staggered back, missed the edge of his Chair and fell into

it,

whispering again and again,

"Impossible... This cannot be..."

With unhurried grace, Jared slid his sword back into its sheath. The storm of sword intent that had just shaken the altar folded into silence, leaving behind a youth who looked almost ordinary. He lifted his eyes. Wherever that calm gaze drifted, anyone who met his eyes lowered their heads at once.

At last, those eyes settled on Paxton.

Paxton rose, voice trembling despite himself. "Jared... No, Mr. Chance! Your skills leave us in awe. The pledged one million celestial gems shall be delivered at once. I beg you to accept a seat as honored elder of the Myriad Beast Sect from this moment, our sect will regard you as supreme."

Jared shook his head once more.

"I'll take the gems," he said lightly. "But keep the elder's position. I have no interest."

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Paxton's shoulders sagged at the refusal, disappointment flickering across his face, yet he dared not press the matter.

Arden sat hollow-eyed, realizing he had angered a nightmare made flesh.

Jared seemed to recall something. He turned toward Paxton—and toward the sea of beast-folk whose faces mixed reverence and fear—and released a soft sigh.

"You place great importance on bloodline and innate dominance, don't you?" Before anyone could answer, he closed his eyes.

A breath later, an aura wholly unlike his earlier sword intent seeped from him— ancient, boundless, regal, the very definition of command, as though a sovereign from forgotten epochs were stirring inside his chest.

It began as a thread, then erupted like a volcano, like the sea breaking every dam.

A roar ripped through the altar-primeval, draconic, echoing across time itself.

Out of Jared's back soared a colossal golden dragon, a phantom so solid its scales threw shards of light, its claws carving invisible currents as it coiled above the Myriad Beast Altar.

Its imperial gaze swept the crowd like a monarch surveying kneeling vassals; the pure, exalted dragon's power cascaded from the heavens, blanketing every inch of the arena. Under that pressure-primal, written into the marrow of life-knees buckled. A single, collective thud followed, echoing like drums of surrender.

Then another resounding thud. Knees struck stone in quick succession.

Like breakers rolling toward shore, disciples on the outermost ring—whether level one or five Heavenly Immortals—found their legs betraying them. One instant, they stood braced for battle, the next, they collapsed, foreheads scraping the cold flagstones.

Even Bartram on the platform, and the devastated Arden beside him, dropped as if their spines had been cut. Robust bodies shook uncontrollably; the tremor came not from fear alone but from a command written deep in blood and soul.

Paxton, the master of the Myriad Beast Sect, held out a single heartbeat longer. Then the star-sea vastness of that dragon's power battered his spirit. Veins seized. heart pounded, and the will to resist melted. With awe and devastation warring on his face, he knelt on one knee and lowered his proud head.

Upon the Myriad Beast Altar, every creature present bowed in unified submission.

Only Jared, dressed in plain robes, remained upright, hands clasped behind his back, serenity unbroken.

Above him, a golden dragon shadow coiled and roared—an imperial apparition that crowned the lone figure like a deity stepped down to earth.

His calm gaze swept the kneeling multitude. In their eyes burned terror, wonder, and primal reverence.

At last, the dragon's power receded, and the brilliant phantom dispersed into fading motes of light.

The crushing weight vanished, yet silence endured—each breast still hammered by the echo of that cosmic authority.

None dared rise. Their eyes clung to Jared with a fever usually reserved for gods newly revealed.

A dragon—he is of the Draconians. And not merely any, but a Golden Dragon, bloodline supreme. No wonder his strength defies measure. No surprise he scorned the seat of elder we offered. Before such royalty, we, the beast race, are but humble vassals.

"S-Sir," Paxton asked, voice reverent, faintly trembling, "may we know your true lineage?"

"My name is Jared Chance. Between

me and the infinite Soul Demon Sect

lies a vendetta. If from this day forward, the Myriad Beast Sect aids me in erasing that sect, I shall guarantee you a rightful place here on level ten."

His words, delivered as casually as drifting snow, detonated in every heart like summer thunder.

No one mocked now; no one questioned.

Only absolute submission remained—along with a blazing hunger to follow this titan toward unimaginable glory.

A Warrior Undefeatable

Long after, the altar still resembled a storm-stilled sea of bowed backs.

The indelible stamp of golden-dragon dominance had branded itself onto every beast-soul present.

Doubt, disdain, and resentment were ash now—replaced by awe born of blood, and by the sweet certainty of serving an unquestioned sovereign.

At a mere flicker of Jared's will, the pressure of the dragon's power folded itself neatly back into his flesh. Behind him, the towering golden apparition shivered once, then unraveled into motes of light that bled into the twilight air.

He still wore that plain robe, his expression placid, yet to every soul present, he now stood on the far shore of divinity.

"All of you-stand." The words left Jared's lips in an unhurried baritone, gentle yet edged with an authority that brooked no argument.

Relieved, the gathered elders and disciples rose with utmost care, backs still bent, eyes lowered, unwilling to meet Jared's gaze head-on.

Paxton, Bartram, and even Arden now stood like chastened students before a lectern, hands clasped, breaths held.

"Sir, the Golden Dragon bloodline flows in your veins—peerless, unmatched. Earlier, we were ignorant. I beg your forgiveness. Whatever command you give, the whole Myriad Beast Sect will charge through fire and death without a second thought."

Jared's gaze drifted across the still-scorched expanse of the Myriad Beast Altar and the beast clan cultivators standing there, faces caught between grief and fragile hope.

"Tell me," he said slowly, "your sect guards the vast Myriad Beast Mountains and possesses deep foundations. Why, then, are you forever on the back foot against the Infinite Soul Demon Sect—why did Rockhold Gorge burn, why did Elder Flint fall?"

Paxton exhaled, bitterness tugging at his mouth. "Sir, it is not cowardice that chains us—it is necessity. The Infinite Soul Demon Sect squats upon the Blood-scar Plains with forces far larger than ours. Heavenly Immortal experts swarm their ranks. Their lord, Sheldon Soulsby, is rumored to have one foot already in the eighth tier. Our roots sprawl across the Myriad Beast Mountains for thousands of miles. Spirit-veins, herb gardens, mines, and countless tribal outposts depend on us. Soulsby's people strike like flesh-boring maggots—raiding, burning, stealing—always at our weakest points. Gather our power, and they slip behind to ravage the rear. Divide our warriors, and they mass elite squads, crushing each pocket in turn. For years, we have raced from crisis to crisis, our resources bled away, our disciples buried. That... that is how we were cornered into constant retreat."

Paxton's voice trembled with strangled frustration, the admission scraping raw against his pride.

Around him, the other elders and disciples lowered their heads, anger and helplessness knotted on every brow.

Jared listened without change of expression, then offered a single, thoughtful nod—

as though the tale merely confirmed what he had foreseen.

"Your foe is stronger, your territory vast, your defenses full of gaps. If the shield

keeps cracking, why not change the style of battle?"

"Change... our style?" Paxton and the elders blinked, momentarily lost.

"Exactly."

Jared's gaze darkened as he said, "When they advance, we withdraw. When they camp, we harass. When they tire, we strike. When they flee, we pursue."

The maxim landed like a temple bell at dawn, reverberating through Paxton's chest. Though they had never heard strategy distilled so cleanly, the elders weighed each clause against their plight and felt an abyss of wisdom open beneath the surface.

Withdraw before a charging enemy-avoid the spear's tip! Harass a settled enemy -deny them rest! Strike a weary enemy-catch them unguarded! Pursue a retreating enemy-turn a victory into a conquest!

It was, in a single blinding stroke, the perfect key for a door they had never known how to open-a counter-strategy forged as though the heavens themselves had shaped

to fit their crisis

"Sir... this... this maxim is nothing short of miraculous," Paxton whispered, amazement flooding his usually thunderous tones. The sect master clutched the map so hard his knuckles blanched, shoulders trembling with excitement. It strikes at the enemy's very heart? I cannot believe our dull wits never saw it before!"

A Warrior Undefeatable

Bartram slammed a palm on the table. "Brilliant! We shift from prey to predator and drag the Infinite Soul Demon Sect into our rhythm instead of theirs!"

Even Arden bowed his head, all earlier misgivings drowned beneath reverence. In his gaze toward Jared now lay only awed submission.

Jared watched the revelation blossom across their faces, then spoke in a calm that cut like a steel edge. "Strategy alone is never enough. We must know ourselves and know our foe. The Infinite Soul Demon Sect's advantage is simple-compact numbers and punishing strength. Yet power needs fuel. They bleed resources to keep their war engine roaring: weapons to arm disciples, elixirs to raise cultivation, spirit mines to line their coffers. They love to plunder. Very well-let us repay them in kind."

A cold smile tugged at the corner of his mouth, promising retribution the way winter promises frost.

Out of that smile, an audacious plan crystallized in Jared's mind.

For the next few days, the Myriad Beast Sect moved like a newly oiled machine, every cog clicking in perfect time.

On Jared's instruction, Paxton dissolved his disciples into dozens of lean strike teams, each no larger than a hunting pack.

Their single mission-harassment.

No longer tethered to fixed outposts, they slipped through the border where the Myriad Beast Mountains kiss the Blood-scar Plains, ghosts married to the land.

Day one, a squad draped themselves in shaggy pelts. When an Infinite Soul Demon Sect patrol rounded a bend, the squad struck an attack, tore through ranks, seized storage rings, and vanished before the echoes died.

Day two, another team crept to one of the Infinite Soul Demon Sect's makeshift camps under the cover of a moonless night.

They did not storm the walls; they pounded drums, shattered silence with shrill spells, and bombarded wards from afar until the enemy paced circles in sleepless dread.

Day three, scouts found a supply caravan. Rather than strike head-on, they collapsed the road, rigged traps, and from a distance peppered the confusion with arrows and whirring darts-felling draft beasts first, novices second-before melting back into shadow with half the provisions. They never lingered long enough for the enemies to retaliate.

Chaos spread across the fringe of the plains. The Infinite Soul Demon Sect members darted like

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farmhands chasing foxes, only to grasp empty air. Whenever they gave chase, the raiders were already overridge and ravine. Whenever they set an ambush, the strikes fell elsewhere, taunting and

unpredictable.

The demon sect members began grumbling.

"D*mn those animals-show yourselves and fight us properly!"

"I haven't slept in three nights!"

"They stole my storage ring! My freshly issued pills were inside!"

When word reached Demon Sect headquarters, Sheldon Soulsby exploded in fury, yet his clenched fists met only the softness of thin air.

The Myriad Beast Sect's sudden

shift had turned his hammer blows

into strikes against cotton. He barked new orders—double patrols, triple entries, flood the border with manpower until not a single fly could cross.

Exactly as Jared had hoped.

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While the Infinite Soul Demon Sect's attention was fixed on the riot along its rim and

its warriors marched outward, the fortress within lay exposed—and that was the moment Jared chose to move.

Jared's first destination lay deep inside the Blood-scar Plains—a place the Myriad Beast Sect's scouts called Blackflame Gorge.

According to years of carefully stolen intelligence, the gorge hid an armory run by the Myriad Souls Demon Sect, a hellish workshop that forged cursed weapons and sinister treasures for its inner disciples.

On this particular night, the sky offered no moon, only a restless wind that wailed across the barren flats.

Beyond the gorge's mouth rose a forest of violet-black fumes, and the number of patrolling disciples had tripled since the recent raids, their uneasy torches flickering like wounded fireflies. Deeper within, furnace-light leapt skyward while hammers rang in frantic rhythm, and the stench of slaughter energy tangled with blistering fire-essence until the very air felt razor sharp.

High on a crag overlooking that devil's caldron, Jared's silhouette melted into the

night like a ribbon of smoke—silent, formless, almost unreal.