

A Warrior Undefeatable 5781-5790

A Warrior Undefeatable

He suppressed every trace of his presence; even the small fire unicorn he usually kept at his side now slept inside his storage ring.

With predator-sharp eyes, he surveyed the valley below.

A demonic array sealed the entrance, and a warping forcefield bent any probing sense away from the gorge. Charging straight through would be marching to his doom.

"A clever array," he murmured, the faintest grin tugging at one corner of his mouth. Rather than force a breach, he waited. He timed the guard rotations, memorized the rhythm of their lanterns, and studied the momentary flickers in the array's current.

At the same time, he slipped a thread of spiritual sense into the valley—so light, so fluid, it slid past every detection node like quicksilver. Bit by bit, the hidden layout unfolded in his mind.

At the center stood a colossal obsidian hall where subterranean flames roared beneath the floor.

Dozens of blacksmiths toiled there, and farther inside loomed several frightening auras—the strongest a Level Six Heavenly Immortal, seated like a dragon on its hoard.

Spread around the forge, he sensed three warehouses crammed with ore and half-finished blades, and, buried under the main yard, a vault whose brilliant aura screamed of completed treasures.

A Level Six Heavenly Immortal... troublesome, but not impossible to deal with.

Jared's goal was loot, not slaughter. If he moved fast enough, he could strip the vault and vanish before any Level Seven Heavenly Immortal even stirred.

So he waited an hour, maybe more until the time before dawn when it was the darkest, and guards grow dull with fatigue.

His chance was here.

A patrol team finished their shift, and the replacement squad had yet to arrive, leaving a heartbeat of empty ground.

At that same instant, the valley array rippled—an almost invisible distortion born of the subterranean fire's pulse.

Now!

He moved. Space folded around him as he triggered a flight art woven with spatial law; to any watching

eye, he simply vanished from then et

cliff and reappeared inside a

shadowed corner of the gorge, as if night itself had carried him there. No sound, no quake, not even the faintest shimmer betrayed the trespass.

Jared slid into the gorge. Dense demonic energy and furnace-hot wind rushed at him, blistering the air like a desert storm breathed straight from the pit.

Drawing one steady breath, he folded his presence inward. Chaotic energy thinned and reshaped, mimicking the fiery miasma until his outline dissolved into the shadows of every ruined wall.

He avoided the the main corridors, choosing crooked service paths instead. His spiritual sense fanned outward like invisible radar, catching each patrol stride and every hidden sentry's heartbeat long before they emerged.

When an array barred the way, he lifted one finger. A hair-thin filament of chaotic energy sliced the array's core node with surgical precision, killing the current just long enough for him to pass.

Each motion flowed into the next, timing and force in perfect harmony, and he moved through the den with the leisure of a man strolling a quiet garden.

Soon, a squat warehouse of rough stone loomed ahead—the first ore depot.

Two Level Two Heavenly Immortals slouched beside the doors, eyelids drooping in the stifling heat.

Jared's eyes cooled to glacier steel. He flicked his fingers twice. Twin threads of prismatic sword aura whispered through the night and bored into the men's brows, shredding their souls before fear could rise.

The bodies collapsed, silent, as though sleep had simply deepened into death.

He pushed the doors wide. Stacks of ghost-lit iron, dark soul stone, and other cursed alloys glittered in wavering green.

With one sweeping gesture, his chaotic energy swirled into a vortex, swallowing the mountain of supplies like a whale gulping an ocean mouthful, and funneled it all into his storage ring. Barely five heartbeats passed.

He repeated the raid on two adjoining depots, harvesting half-forged blades, spear shafts, and other wicked components until each shelf stood empty.

At last, he halted before the underground vault that housed completed weapons, the most heavily guarded site in the valley.

Chapter 5772

The entrance lay beneath the earth. Four Level Three Heavenly Immortal sentries flanked a black gate whose mere hum promised lethal force.

A frontal assault would surely alert the Level Six Heavenly Immortal guardian.

Jared paused, a spark flashing behind his calm eyes.

He slipped back into deeper shadow and drew a Blastfire Charm from his ring, its surface crawling with molten runes.

A gentle flick sent the talisman streaking toward the distant ground-fire furnace already roaring like a volcano.

The valley detonated with a thunderous boom that split the night.

Flames and jagged stone spewed skyward, and the entire gorge quaked under the

sudden eruption.

"Enemy attack!"

"Guard the forge!"

Alarms clanged at once, throwing the valley into howling chaos.

Every sentry spun toward the blazing furnace.

Even the Level Six Heavenly Immortal guarding the distant palace snapped his eyes open, consciousness sweeping outward like a storm front.

Now.

Riding the momentary disorder, Jared flashed toward the vault entrance, faster than torchlight could track.

The four stupefied guards saw only a blur of azure before fingers tapped their chests, ending the beat of their hearts.

Four sharp thuds split the night.

The gate guards jerked, armor clanging, then dropped face-first onto the stone.

Jared did not flinch before the shimmering black barrier. The Dragonslayer Sword flashed into his palm. He hissed, "Break!"

A razor-thin lance of prismatic sword aura, forged from pure chaotic will, slammed into the light-gate.

The membrane parted like wet silk, revealing a slab of black-iron doors. Jared lunged fist ablaze with

bur energy, and the iron doo

burst inward.

Inside the treasury, colorful light cascaded across every surface.

Racks stretched wall to wall, each cradling blades, whips, hammers, banners-finished demon weapons whose cold shine dripped malice.

Even the weakest piece ranked divine-grade, and several pulsed with true spirit-relic power.

Jared's eyes gleamed. With one sweeping gesture, he emptied the room into his ring as though a gale had blown through.

"Thief! How dare you!" The roar thundered from the palace. A storm of Level Six Heavenly Immortal pressure crashed outward like a tidal wave.

The elder's fury hardened into a vast black claw that shredded the air and hurtled toward the treasury.

Jared had anticipated this. As the

final weapon vanished, he hurled

himself backward, smashing

velm

through the rear wall while slashing, in the same breath. fo

"Five-Element Cycle, Spatial Fold!"

Space behind him wrinkled, collapsing into itself; the demon claw plunged in and slowed like a hand thrust into tar. Seizing the heartbeat of respite Jared blued into a beam of light and streaked for the valley's edge.

He pushed speed to its limit, weaving it with spatial escape arts, and after three flickers burst beyond Blackflame Valley into the moonless night.

The elder gave chase, but soon saw only a vanishing streak. Fearing he might fall into a trap, he dared not pursue further and stomped in futile rage.

Several days later, Jared slipped back into the headquarters of the Myriad Beast Sect.

Inside the council meeting room, he upended his storage ring; mountains of demon weapons and raw materials thundered onto the floor.

Every elder present froze, jaws hanging slack. Paxton's eyes glittered like twin suns, and even the elders forgot to breathe.

"Are—are these all from Blackflame Gorge?" Bartram's voice shook so hard the last syllable cracked.

"Sir, your power is unrivaled!" Gavin and Yvette were exhilarated.

A Warrior Undefeatable

Arden flushed crimson and bowed low. "You're amazing! I'm utterly convinced!"

Jared smiled lightly. "That was only a warm-up. Next, let's pay their herb garden a visit."

The triumph at Blackflame Gorge had done more than wound the enemy. It had ignited a fierce confidence that blazed through the Myriad Beast Sect, turning every patrol into a spear and every scout into wildfire.

After a brief pause to regroup and sift through fresh intelligence, Jared chose his next target: the Wraith Herb Garden, a critical supply hub buried deep in the Blood-scar Plains and guarded by three Heavenly-Immortal elders.

Unlike ordinary greenhouses, this shadowed nursery cultivated sinister flora- demonic herbs that sprouted only when nourished by swirling miasmas of resentment and the chill of unquiet souls.

Those herbs were the lifeblood of the Myriad Souls Demon Sect, distilled into pills that amplified soul-force and refined dark arts—a resource even more vital than the items Jared had stolen at Blackflame Gorge.

Determined to sever that artery, Jared drafted a plan with the precision of a surgeon. First, he ordered the Myriad Beast Sect to intensify raids on the plains opposite the garden, faking preparations for a massive assault. The ruse worked; nervous commanders of the Infinite Soul Demon Sect pulled eyes and strength eastward, leaving the garden's western flank thinner than it had been in decades.

Next, Jared chose the night of a full moon. Moonlight, at its zenith, poured silver pressure that muted the corrosive aura clinging to the garden's plants—and its silvery glare would cloak his own movements.

Deep within a gorge forever drowned in ashen fog, cold winds wailed like orphaned choirs. Spectral silhouettes drifted between warped trees, their translucent fingers brushing cages of iron where rarer seedlings pulsed with malignant light.

A grand array blanketed the valley, runes shimmering like chains beneath the haze. Patrol squads each stronger than any Jared had met at Blackflame Gorge— threaded the mist while hidden sentries watched from jagged cliffs. Worst of all, the three resident elders

stretched their spiritual senses across the garden like a spider's web, touching every leaf and pebble, poised to twitch at the faintest disturbance.

Hidden among black-barked pines outside the gorge, Jared lay motionless, observing. He knew that simply smashing through or sowing random chaos— would be unwise.

The formation is sturdier, the watch tighter, their senses overlapping-no blind spots at all...

A slight frown creased his brow, but then he brushed a hand over the tiny fire- unicorn perched on his shoulder, and mischief lit his eyes. "Little one, tonight's stage belongs to you."

The unicorn chirred, nuzzling Jared's cheek, its coat flickering with molten gold. A low, eager growl rumbled from its throat; beads of sacred flame rolled across its scales like playful sparks begging to be unleashed. Jared's strategy was audaciously simple. Distraction.

He began by carving a small spiritual energy collection array and an explosive array into a remote cliff face far from the garden gate, anchoring each rune with pure immortal stones and a single droplet of unicorn heart-flame. When the trap was set, he and the unicorn ghosted south, circling to the garden's lightly guarded western ridge without stirring even a pebble.

At the appointed breath-precisely when the moon crowned the valley-Jared sent

a pulse through his jade talisman. Runes flared on the distant cliff, and the night split open.

Boom!

Pure positive energy collided with Unicorn Sacred Flame, birthing a gale of white- gold fire that blazed against the gloom like dawn made weapon. Its shockwave rippled across the valley, impossible to ignore.

"Enemy attack! East cliff!"

"What a strong surge of positive energy! There's also Unicorn Flame from the Myriad Beast Sect!"

"Hurry! Reinforce the east flank!"

Within moments, the gorge dissolved into chaos. Patrol squads stampeded eastward, and even the three elders snapped their attention toward the blazing beacon.

The instant that web of awareness shifted, Jared moved swift as a thought, silent as a falling petal.

He and the unicorn became twin comets, streaking through shadow toward the garden's weakened western ward, blades of moonlight skimming over their shoulders.

Roar!

The small fire unicorn erupted first. In a blink, the creature swelled from foal-sized companion to a blazing hill of muscle and scale, its mane of moltengold whipping like solar flares. One titanic exhale followed—a river of Unicorn Sacred Flame that hammered against the array

encasing the valley.

The sacred fire, forged of pure positive energy and absolute strength, was born to scour all that was ghostly or foul.

A Warrior Undefeatable

Sssshhh-

The hiss sounded like red-hot iron plunged into butter. A blistering hole yawned open where the barrier had been, edges dripping like molten glass. Every wraith caught in the torrent shrieked once, then crumbled to ash that never touched the ground.

"Move!" Jared barked.

He and the unicorn flashed forward—one streak of emerald, one of crimson—diving through the breach and landing inside the herb enclosure before the barrier's edges finished sizzling shut.

Heavy medicinal fragrance slammed into them, laced with the copper reek of lingering spirits. The gorge had been diced into countless plots, each crammed with uncanny, faintly glowing demon herbs: blossoms shaped like screaming faces, vines bleeding black sap, tufts of Wraith Grass sparkling with hoarfrost.

"Take the old ones—the richest, the ripest," Jared murmured, sending the words directly into the unicorn's mind. Then he vanished among the rows, a midnight blur. Both hands swept outward. Chaotic energy became two invisible plows, ripping centuries-old specimens roots, soil, everything—straight into his storage ring. He chose only the most potent, the kind that would frustrate his enemies, even though it would be of no use to him.

The unicorn had no taste for those herbs, but it adored destruction.

With each playful breath, it torched entire plots it deemed "unappetizing," leaving charred wasteland where order had stood moments before. Now and then it galloped after low-level demonic cultivators who were in charge of taking care of the herbs, driving them away in terrified, stumbling retreats.

One man looted with surgical precision, one beast rampaged with childish glee-yet their rhythm clicked, a perfect duet of profit and ruin.

A furious roar split the air. "Who dares violate our herb grounds?"

,โฉน

Three crushing auras raced out from the garden's depths, wind howling in their wake. The warding elders, finally freed from whatever distraction plagued the eastern flank, spotted the true invaders in the west and charged. The leader's strength blazed at Heavenly

Immortal Realm Level Six.

Jared felt that tidal pressure and knew he could not stand toe-to-toe-at least, not today.

He scooped the excited unicorn under one arm. "Time to bail!"

Space rippled around him. His outline smudged, re-formed a distance away, and smudged again. A final blink carried man and beast through the molten gap in the array and into the starless wilderness beyond, never once looking back.

The three elders burst from the garden only to confront ruin: ancient plots stripped bare, lesser fields scorched bone-white, sacred fire still dancing in the smoky am. The Teader-face carved by rage threw his head back and howled.

"Myriad Beast Sect! We are your mortal enemies!"

When Jared crossed the threshold of the Myriad Beast Sect once more-packs bulging with trophies and supplies-the entire sect roared to life Cheers crashed over him in

endless waves, shaking banin

stone balustrades, even the pine--scented air itself.

Far away, inside the somber stronghold of the Infinite Soul Demon Sect, Sheldon studied a parchment crammed with losses: more than a hundred elite weapons gone, mountains of ore plundered, the priceless herb garden reduced to cinders.

With a wet, ragged cough, dark blood spattered the black marble at his feet. Rage ruptured his control. A torrent of demonic energy fountained from his pores, rattling every table and chair until they burst into chalk-fine dust.

"Jared Chance! Jared Chance! If I don't scour your soul and grind your spirit to ash, I am no man!" Sheldon thundered.

His roar rolled through the entire fortress, thick with fury, humiliation, and a sliver of fear he refused to name.

A Warrior Undefeatable

Sheldon slumped upon a throne pieced together from bleached bones. In the green wobble of lamps, his figure looked carved from obsidian, yet the black mist that poured from him writhed like living tentacles. Those tendrils coiled around the throne's armrests and hissed, eating through millennial ironwood and behemoth ribs alike until greasy droplets sizzled to the floor.

Below, elders lined up in rigid ranks, heads bowed so low their breath barely stirred. Silence froze the hall solid, as though every heart had been sealed in ancient ice.

"Blackflame Gorge our resource hub of several centuries-stripped bare. Ten parts of our vault, gone, leaving only scraps. Wraith Herb Garden the lifeline for refining Abyssal Soul Pill-now a scorched wasteland. Centuries of cultivation, erased! Outposts harassed, squads annihilated, disciples quaking in corners-morale plummeting past the abyss!"

His crimson eyes blazed like twin blood moons as he swept his gaze over the trembling assembly. "In mere days, we have suffered humiliation unthinkable! Do Jared Chance and the Myriad Beast Sect think we have grown weak?"

With one slap of his palm, the already-rotting armrest exploded, and the entire hall shivered as grit rained from the ceiling.

A shockwave of ebon energy pulsed outward. Elders nearest the throne staggered back, skin leached white, robes snapping like torn sails.

"No more!" The sect master surged to his feet, a towering shadow that seemed intent on devouring the chamber. "Carry my order!"

His voice cracked like thunder.

.n

"Muster every combat-worthy soul. Leave only skeleton crews to guard the Soul Hall and keep the core arrays alive. Any elder, deacon, or inner-disciple of Heavenly Immortal

Realms or above assemble at once! Twill personally lead the march that razes the Myriad Beast Sect. Jared Chance will watch me chain his spirit beneath Netherworld Ghostfire. Paxton's very bones will be broken to powder. And the Myriad Beast Mountains will drown in blood and silence, that the Infinite Soul Demon Sect may be reborn in terror and glory!"

In Sheldon's eyes burned a vengeance so incandescent it promised to consume kingdoms, mountains, even the sky itself.

"Sir, I beg you, think twice!" The

oldest elder his remaining silver wisps plastered to a skull-thin scalp, forced himself out of the line. Kneè shaking, he bowed deep, voice cracked with dread. "If the entire sect marches, our halls will stand hollow. Level ten is a snake pit of rivals. The moment our backs are bare, some hungry faction will slip inside and gut us. We should plan, probe, and strike only when the moment is ripe..."

"No 'ifs.' No slow little plots!" he snarled, killing intent pressing down like winter ice.

The elder's remaining words froze unheard in his throat.

"The whole level ten knows the terror

of the Infinite Soul Demon Sect."

Sheldon's grin gleamed like a butcher's blade. Who dares provoke us? They will never dare to cross us!"

A Warrior Undefeatable

"We march with thunder," he declared, each word a drumbeat. "One strike, and the Myriad Beast Sect is ash. Any tongue that wavers will be sliced from its traitorous mouth on the spot."

His frigid stare swept the chamber like a steel scythe. Under that weight, every throat sealed tight.

Elders and stewards bent in trembling unison. "Your will is law, sir."

The order raced through the sect faster than ever.

Across the Blood-scar Plains, spears of demon light shot skyward from mines, fortresses, and shadowed shrines, converging on the sect's citadel like crows returning to a single carcass.

Forge halls shrieked day and night, birthing hell-black blades and armor. Apothecaries emptied their vaults, hurling battle elixirs into waiting hands. Tamed war beasts—snarling under iron saddles—pawed the cracked earth, hungry for slaughter.

The Infinite Soul Demon Sect—an engine built for war—roared to life at full throttle. Murderous energy punched into the rusty clouds above, then barreled straight toward the distant Myriad Beast Mountains.

In the council hall of the Myriad Beast Sect, panic seeped into every corner.

Unlike the Infinite Soul Demon Sect's feverish aggression, this grand chamber quaked with the dread of an oncoming storm.

Triumphs won in earlier skirmishes now felt like brittle glass pressed against a hammer.

A scout burst through the doors, sliding on his knees. "Urgent report!" he screeched, voice warped by terror. "The Infinite Soul Demon Sect is massing—Sheldon himself vows to lead every warrior and grind us into dust!"

The words struck like a meteor, shattering the fragile calm into towering waves of fear.

"Their entire force? Are they mad?"

"Sheldon is a Level Nine Heavenly Immortal—how do we block such a monster?" "Dozens of Heavenly Immortal elders stand behind him... We're finished!"

"If only we had never provoked them..."

Despair spread like plague spores. Some disciples blanched white, bodies shaking beyond control.

Even seasoned elders pressed bloodless lips together, eyes dim, as if already watching their sect drown in blood.

At last, every gaze climbed to the high seat to the young man in plain green robes who had yet to speak.

Gavin and Yvette flanked Jared, fists clenched until nails cut flesh. All their hopes—and the sect's survival—rested on this quiet miracle-worker.

Paxton, eyes dark with worry, faced Jared. His voice fell like iron. "Sir, their might dwarfs ours. A head-on

clash would smash us like. ego

against a flock. Should we scatter into the deep mountains-avoid their attack until another dawn?"

met

Jared lifted his eyelids at last. The black of his pupils ran deep and still, dark water at the bottom of an ancient well, utterly untouched. The earthquake of danger rumbling outside these walls. His fingertip tapped the wooden armrest steady metronomic. Each muteknock rolled outward like a spell. Whispers faltered. Shuffling feet froze. A hush, heavy as snowfall, settled across the council hall.

"Why the panic?"

Though he spoke no louder than a calm aside, the syllables threaded through the hall with iron certainty.

"When the enemy's spear looks too sharp, step aside for the moment. An army that empties its nest leaves the nest unguarded. Simple military law. What, exactly, is there to fear?"

A Warrior Undefeatable

"Paxton, the Myriad Souls Demon Sect has swaggered through level ten for years." Jared's gaze cut toward the sect master. "Surely they've collected mortal rivals— people who resent every breath they take. Which force clashes with their profits most, matches their strength, and keeps the peace only because neither side can quite crush the other?"

Paxton blinked, momentarily caught off guard, then fell into stony contemplation.

At Paxton's side, Bartram suddenly stiffened, eyes flaring like someone glimpsing dawn after a night without end.

"There is—there is!" He lumbered forward, voice tight with excitement. "The Infinite Soul Demon Sect's arrogance has birthed enemies everywhere, yet none hates them more, or stands nearer their level, than the Mystic Sky Sword Sect!"

Jared arched an eyebrow. "Mystic Sky Sword Sect?"

A faint, intrigued smile touched his mouth. The single word from him felt like a spark against tinder.

"Yes! Their peaks lie in the Myriad Sword Mountains," Paxton continued, voice now quick with purpose. "The Myriad Beast Mountains, Blood-scar Plains, and the Myriad Sword Mountains form three prongs of one great trident. The sword sect cultivators walk a path of blazing righteousness, their techniques forged from the purest, hottest positive energy.

They keep little company with us beasts, but we coexist well enough. Yet their arts counter the Demon Sect's negative energy at every turn. Philosophy, power, even the air they breathe-everything between them breeds war."

Bartram hurried to add details, pinning all his hopes on that sect. "Three centuries back, both sects fought over an ancient sword-saint's tomb. Elders on either side fell like stars; disciples died in heaps. A truce followed, parchment-thin. Since then, they've skirmished for every spirit-stone vein, every herb field. Every few years, blood stains the border again. Balance alone kept either from devouring the other. Mutual dread-the only peace they know."

Mystic Sky Sword Sect, pure positive energy, perfect counter to negative energy, strength near equal, simmering hatred waiting for one push...

"Perfect," Jared murmured, smile widening. "Absolutely perfect. They are the lever we need."

Paxton swallowed. "Your idea, sir?"

His pulse hammered like a war-drum; brilliance and madness often marched together in Jared's plans.

"Nothing complicated."

Jared stood, hands clasped behind his back. His eyes seemed to pierce the roof, clouds, and distance, beholding a saw-toothed range of stone blades stabbing the sky.

"Since the Infinite Soul Demon Sect sends every soldier against us, we strike the hearth they left bare. We set a blaze in their home

base bright enough, loud enough, irresistible. We pred the Mystic Sky Sword Sect into that blaze, force Sheldon Soulsby to whirl around, and, if fortune smiles, let two titans tear each other apart until only wounded beasts remain."

"Turn the Mystic Sky Sword Sect against the Infinite Soul Demon Sect?" A collective gasp rippled from the elders below. The notion thundered through them audacious as ever.

The scheme was madness itself—like dancing on a knife's edge while lighting matches between two sleeping giants. Every misstep promised blood.

"Exactly," Jared said, his voice

steady, threaded with a confidence that would brook no doubt. "If we sharpen the conflict enough, seed evidence so unquestionable it Rowls, and tighten the timetable until breath itself feels late, Master Cloud of the Mystic Sky Sword

Sect will have no choice but to strike. Remember-what looks like perfect balance often needs only one well-placed spark to turn the whole powder barrel into sunrise."

A Warrior Undefeatable

That night, the moon hid, the wind prowled, and the world offered its darkness to anyone bold enough to slip through it. Jared left the Myriad Beast Sect without rustling a single leaf. Even the little fire unicorn that usually padded after him was ordered to stay behind.

A breath later, he became little more than a pale aqua smear, a suggestion of motion folded into night air. His mastery of spatial footwork crushed distance into mere suggestion—rivers blurred, ridgelines bent, and valleys spun backward beneath his boots as he arrowed toward the Myriad Sword Mountains, that third, lonely vertex of territory claimed by mountain, plain, and beast.

Days later, a serrated silhouette rose off the horizon—a procession of peaks so thin and cruel they resembled titanic blades rammed tip-first into the clouds.

Unlike the age-softened Myriad Beast Mountains or the gore-stained Blood-scar Plains, the Myriad Sword Mountains radiated pure, ascetic sharpness. Unseen sword intent sliced the overcast into silvery ribbons, and even shallow breaths stung the lungs of ordinary travelers.

Jared slowed, absorbing the savage beauty, then veered toward a settlement that clung to the outer ridges like the hilt of a hidden dagger.

The place was called Greenblade Town-largest market under Mystic Sky Sword Sect administration, a crossroads where gossip and contraband traded hands with equal ease. Buildings of quarried blue-gray stone rose in clean, severe angles; nothing here was ornate unless simplicity itself counted as ornament. Sword cultivators moved through the streets in streams—backs straight, steps quiet, eyes glinting like whetted steel. Even their murmurs carried the clipped certainty of a cut that could not be taken back.

Drawing a slow breath, Jared suppressed every flicker of his true power, masking himself behind the modest aura of a Level Seven Human Immortal wanderer. As one more anonymous drifter, he drifted—apparently aimless between stalls, his gaze casual while his hearing devoured every whispered shard of rumor, filtering through any useful information.

"You hear about Blackwind Gorge? Those Infinite Soul Demon Sect vermin hit the new spirit-stone vein again—collapsed three main mines and sent half a dozen brothers to the infirmary!"

"Cowards, the lot of them! They wait until our attention turns elsewhere, then scurry out like roaches."

"Worse news-scouts swear they're massing on the edge of the Blood-scar Plains. Supplies, fighters, and bloodlust thick enough to choke a boar. Whatever they're planning, it's big."

"Big? Doesn't take a sage to guess the target—this range, our sect. Someone needs to warn headquarters before we're bleeding in our own courtyards."

The anger curling through those voices pleased Jared. Hostility at ground level meant fertile soil for fear-and fear, properly directed, became a lever.

Excellent. The foot soldiers of the Mystic Sky Sword Sect already teetered on suspicion's edge. All he had to do was hand their chiefs an ronclad, gleaming-with-blood proof, and the blade would finish falling.

That proof was the heart of his design: something heavy enough to make the high elders believe, urgent enough to force their hand before second thoughts could sprout.

From the storage ring at his belt, he drew three items—a stack of pristine communication devices, an ounce of Phantom Moto Clay able to mirror any spiritual signature, and several fractured weapons that still reeked of the Infinite Soul Demon Sect's cold, corroding power.

Carefully, almost tenderly, Jared laid the pieces of tomorrow's conflagration inside

his cloak. The match was struck; now he simply had to let the fuse burn.

The device and the clay had come from Flaxseed long ago. As for the Infinite Soul Demon Sect artifacts, Jared carried more than a

few every one of them stolen, every one of them unmistakably authentic.

A Warrior Undefeatable

Once his supplies were in order, Jared did not remain in the town. He slipped away and, on the barren fringe of the Myriad Sword Mountains, located a lonely ravine where even the thinnest strand of spiritual energy struggled to survive.

There, he planned the heart of his ruse—a forged Infinite Soul Demon Sect command.

He produced the finest blank communication device, crossed his legs, and let his consciousness sink into the crystal lattice.

Soul power surged through him like a midnight tide. With it, he mimicked the Infinite Soul Demon Sect's signature aura—icy, treacherous, and forever quivering with distant screams.

Minute by minute, the words he had drafted earlier settled into the glowing script inside the device. He combed his memory for every scrap of style he had gleaned from Gavin, Yvette, captured manuals, and looted tokens—grammar, jargon, even the order they listed titles. Not a single syllable could betray him.

He shaped the text as a top-secret order from Sheldon to an embedded operative codenamed "Shadow."

"Shadow, hear my command. The sect will wage full war on the Mystic Sky Sword Sect and seize the spirit veins of the Myriad Sword Range. From this instant, you are to watch the sword sect's every move. At midnight three days hence, unite with our main force and strike from within. Target the Alioth Nexus of their Big Dipper Swordsteel Array. The Alioth Nexus anchors one of seven cores. Destroy or cripple it -whatever it takes. I will lead the frontal assault. Inner and outer blades will snap their gate in a single night. Success alone is permitted; failure equals death. Delay or leak this plan, and pay with your head."

The terms "Big Dipper Swordsteel Array" and "Alioth Nexus" were Jared's own deductions, pieced together from marketplace rumors, obscure pamphlets, and his mastery of arrays.

Attacking an array's core was the boldest declaration of war a sect could make.

Inscribing the message, however, was only half the battle.

The linchpin was a soul-seal unique to Soulsby.

Jared kneaded the clay with a thread of purified demonic essence drawn from shattered relics.

Then, breath by careful breath, he sculpted Sheldon's oppressive soul signature—every rise, every tremor. A single misstep would collapse the forgery.

For half an hour he worked, fingertips aglow like jeweler's torches, until the frigid seal burned at the ship's tail only after multiple inspections did he finally exhale. From substance to syntax to soul-print, the piece was seamless. Unless Sheldon himself probed it, no one would sense the lie.

Yet that was not enough. The order needed evidence.

Merging with the night, Jared glided toward a sparsely guarded outpost on the sword sect's perimeter. The sentries never saw him; a few precise taps sent them into harmless sleep.

Low-grade demon artifacts in hand, he clawed fresh scars into nearby rock and let

wisps of foul miasma drift, staging the aftermath of a vicious raid.

A Warrior Undefeatable

Only when the scene reeked of demonic violence did he fade back into the darkness, certain that the forged command now had a battlefield to match its words.

Jared set the last piece of evidence—a vicious-looking demonic relic once carried by the Infinite Soul Demon Sect—squarely in the middle of the blood-spattered floor. The instant his fingers left the cold metal, he dissolved into the shadows. Not a hair, not a heartbeat, remained to say he had ever stood there.

Now came the true stroke of artistry: arranging for that forged command tablet to land in the hands of the Mystic Sky Sword Sect's leaders with just enough shock to ignite their temper. Subtle hints would not do. Jared opted for spectacles.

He drew on his command of spatial energy and drifted over the sect's outer sentries the way mist slides past treetops. Alarms, patrols, even the grand array guarding the sect—none sensed the intruder as he glided straight to a meditation chamber belonging to a high-ranking inner elder.

At the threshold, he placed the counterfeit device where no eye could miss it.

One flick of his nail released a thread of frigid soul energy that perfectly mimicked the signature of Sheldon's cult.

Bzzz!

Inside, the meditating elder's eyes burst open, steel-bright. "Who dares intrude?" He flashed to the corridor, spirit sense pouring out like liquid silver—but found only silence and the device glimmering on the threshold.

Exactly as Jared had plotted, each link of the chain now snapped into the next, and the entire scheme hurtled forward beyond any hope of reversal.

Within Skycrest Hall of the Mystic Sky Sword Sect's forbidden heart—Linden Cloudridge held the device between thumb and forefinger. His face was dark.

Again and again, his vast spiritual sense combed the device. Every pass confirmed the same horrors: Sheldon's soul, corroding aura, an unmistakable tone of command, and a blueprint to cripple the core node of the array. With each discovery, his fury sharpened until the air itself seemed to hiss.

The elders filling the marble floor had already heard of the border outpost's massacre. Now, listening to the message's contents, they trembled with rage.

"Sheldon Soulsby dares plot an
inside-out assault on our sect? That
is a wound to our

roots-unforgivable! No wonder their legions keep shuffling along the frontier. They build a false road to mask a daggers thrust the outpost Strike was only their scouting knife. Master, if we hesitate now, their pincer will close, and Mystic Sky will fall. We must strike first-tonight!"

Their clamor was still climbing when the doors flew wide.

"Report!" a courier cried, breath frosting in the hall's chilled aura. "The main forces of the Infinite Sout Demon Sect have marched off. Blood-Scar Plains. Multiple scouts confirm their vanguard is steering straight for the Myriad Sword Mountains!"

That single report was the spark that reached the powder.

Linden surged from his throne. Until that moment, his sword aura had slept, coiled. Now a forest of invisible blades roared free, slicing the air with a chorus of shrieks.

Elders flinched as stinging currents pricked their skin-proof that their leader's patience had been carved away.

The calm in Linden's eyes shattered. What remained was a storm-gray glare steeped in rage and a savage resolve that scorched like molten iron.

Chapter 5781

"The Infinite Soul Demon Sect has pushed us far enough. Did they truly believe Mystic Sky Sword Sect was some pliant fruit waiting to be squeezed?" Linden's words clanged through Skycrest Hall like tempered steel striking an anvil, ringing from pillar to vaulted ceiling.

"Hear my decree. From this breath onward, every cultivator of Mystic Sky Sword Sect has to prepare for battle. Summon every elite-disciple, elder, all. Leave only a crew to guard the peaks. The rest march with me to Blood-scar

Plains, straight to the heart of the Infinite Soul Demon Sect. Their main force has slunk out to ambush our home; we shall cleave first into theirs, cut the serpent at the belly, and grind their scheme to dust before they can even turn around."

"Yes, sir!" the elders roared, their vow rattling roof-tiles while currents of sword aura burst upward, threatening to spear the heavens.

A legendary blade long kept in scabbard finally flashed free. Mystic Sky Sword Sect, still razor-keen after its years of quiet, now pointed its edge toward the Infinite Soul Demon Sect's black heart.

In that instant, the hall itself seemed to breathe-timbers groaning like war drums- as the chosen of Mystic Sky Sword Sect surged out into the pale dawn.

Blood-scar Plains lay under a suffocating quilt of demon mist. Rank upon rank of black-armored soldiers stretched to the horizon, their combined malice blotting out the sun.

At their head stood Sheldon Soulsby, spine straight, chin lifted-ready to hurl this tidal host against the Myriad Beast Sect and scrub away past humiliations.

Just as he raised his hand to begin the rousing speech he had rehearsed, a streak of panicked demon-light tore across the rear ranks and skidded to his feet, quivering.

"Sir, this is bad! Master Cloudridge of Mystic Sky has led a massive sword corps onto Blood-scar Plains without warning. Three outposts fell in moments. Our defenders were annihilated. Their blades are rushing straight for headquarters!" "What?" Sheldon's triumph cracked, leaving only a raw, incredulous rasp.

"Has he gone mad? How dare he assault the Infinite Soul Demon Sect first?"

Confusion clawed at him. Seconds ago, victory tasted certain; now it curdled on his tongue.

Unbeknownst to him, Jared had planted airtight evidence pinning the planned sneak attack on Mystic Sky Sword Sect's gate to Sheldon himself.

Now his lair was attacked, his foundation trembling. Fury surged up his throat-hot, coppery almost spilling as blood.

Every stratagem, every righteous wrath broke apart under that single stab in the back.

Attack the Myriad Beast Sect now? By the time we arrive, Mystic Sky Sword Sect will have gutted our nest. The Infinite Soul Demon Sect will become a stray cur, nowhere left to stand.

"Fall back!" he bellowed. "Now!"

Veins bulged across his brow as he shrieked, "We crush those sword-wielding lunatics first, then grind the Myriad Beast ants beneath our boots!"

Thus, the war machine known as the Infinite Soul Demon Sect, barely aimed toward

the mountains, was forced to grind its gears, swallow its pride, and wheel around in chaotic haste.

The columns that had been rushing

sthe

forward moments ago snapped into an about-face. Swordsmen who had just been the rear guard now sprinted as point men, racing toward their own fortress in a desperate bid to reinforce it.

The billowing demonic cloud rolled across the sky like an ocean turned upside down, yet inside its swirling darkness, there was a palpable agitation the feverish disorder of a plan suddenly thrown into chaos.

This full-scale war, ignited solely by Jared's unseen hand, had entered a searing crescendo from the very first clash.

On one side, surged the Mystic Sky Sword Sect-prepared, furious, their blades honed to a merciless edge.

Thousands of sword cultivators

locked themselves into a rotating

battle array, a colossal wheel of steel and light that scythed forward, each revolution shedding

sword-light like a summer

cloudburst.

Their purely positive sword energy-sun-bright and unyielding ripped through the miasma of demonic qi, melting it like frost beneath noon daylight.

Individually, the swordsmen were terrifying, but together-moving with choreographed certainty-every burst of their sword art filled the air with the shriek

of space being cleaved.

On the other side, the Infinite Soul Demon Sect had raced home in haste, their bellies full of spite and their sorceries twisted, venomous, and cruel.

A Warrior Undefeatable

The Infinite Soul Demon Sect members brandished foul relics, unleashing legions of howling specters that congealed into a sky-black canopy, clawing at every strand of sword-light in an attempt to devour and corrupt it.

When demonic energy slammed against sword energy, the plain thundered with explosions. Energy storms ripped outward, carving bottomless ravines across the dark-red earth of the Blood-scar Plains.

From the outset, the fight was nothing short of savage.

Low-rank disciples fell like wheat beneath a scythe, blood soaking the soil in seconds while severed limbs spun through the air.

High-tier elders of the Heavenly Immortal Realm sought equals, locking into brutal duels the moment their eyes met.

Sword gales split the sky, demonic flames towered high, and colliding artifacts burst like stars—roars, screams, blasts, and clashing steel blending into a single, merciless symphony.

The entire Blood-scar Plains had become a monstrous grinder, devouring life with every passing heartbeat.

And yet, the architect of this carnage, Jared, lingered at the battlefield's edge inside a fold of near-invisible void.

Space wavered around him, shaping a perfect veil that erased his scent, his power, even the memory of his presence.

He hovered there—part detached deity, part meticulous spectator—gazing upon the maelstrom of flesh and energy beneath him.

When the two armies first collided—two flood-tides smashing together—Jared's eyes had flickered with a spark of admiration.

"Quite the spectacle," he murmured, his words no louder than thought. "That clash of sword aura and demonic energy is nearing peak intensity. Cultivators at level ten really do have a talent for turning power and formation into one seamless blade."

As bodies piled and the earth ran red, the glimmer in Jared's eyes faded back to placid stillness, even a hint of detachment.

"War is the same everywhere—brutal, ugly," he mused. "Resources, ideology, profit—life is always the coin that pays the bill. Each of these cultivators may hold different flags and creeds, yet before death, they stand equally small."

He paused when a Mystic Sky Sword Sect elder, wielding his peerless Splitting- Light Sword Technique, slew three demon stewards in succession, only to cough blood as old wounds tore open.

"Fine swordplay, but too obsessed with offense," Jared noted, lips barely moving. "His guard leaks, and his core pulse betrays an unhealed injury. So the Mystic Sky Sword Sect isn't forged of seamless iron after all. Fissures show."

Like a chess master surveying the board, Jared weighed every strength, every weakness on both sides, filing them away for the twists yet to come.

Then, on the demon flank, an elder raised a Ten Thousand Soul Banner. Wraiths-by the tens of

thousands-erupted, knitting a ghostly realm that snared a sword squad. As those spirits began to feast Jared's eyebrows drew

together, the only sign of discomfort breaking his marble calm.

Soul-refinement—stripping spirits from living flesh-violates everything the heavens once wrote into stone. By mortal morality, it warrants utter destruction, yet here, amid demonic law, the atrocity is treated as nothing more than daily custom.

Jared's expression remained unchanged. No tremor, no flicker of outrage-only the measured stillness of a man who chose to watch rather than be watched.

Beneath that calm, he tallied expenditures on both sides, weighed the stamina of each Heavenly Immortal combatant, and rehearsed a dozen possible endings to the war already roaring across the blood-red plains.

Fight, then. Fight to the death. The heavier the losses, the better. When both armies lie in tatters—when the victor can scarcely stand-Myriad Beast Sect will get a chance to breathe again... perhaps even pluck the spoils while no one is looking.

For several unforgiving days, the slaughter rolled on. More than a dozen Heavenly Immortal elders fell like dimmed stars, their disciples piling around them in mangled drifts.

At last, the wildfire of battle licked its way to the heart of Blood-Scar Plains right up to the outer walls of the Infinite Soul Demon Sect citadel.

A Warrior Undefeatable

Before an ocean of spectators, the two apex predators of this realm strode forward: Sheldon Soulsby of the Infinite Soul Demon Sect and Linden Cloudrige of the Mystic Sky Sword Sect. Heavenly Immortal, level seven, against Heavenly Immortal, level seven-the single duel that would steer the fate of the entire campaign.

Sheldon's demonic essence erupted, coiling into a night-black serpent so massive it bore nine fanged heads. Each maw hissed with hunger as the creature inhaled the world—air, light, even color—into its cavernous throats.

Across the field, Linden raised his sword intent to its perfect apex. Man and blade fused, becoming a sky-splitting arc of cyan steel that blazed upright like dawn piercing midnight. Nine serpent heads lunged—some spewing corrosive hellfire, others looping in constricting knots or howling with mind-shattering shrieks.

The sword aura answered as a silver river from the stars, splitting into rain-sharp shards, then re-gathering into a single needle that sought the beast's every hidden joint.

With each collision, the land quaked as though planets had collided, shockwaves shredding the clouds before they could even thunder.

The ground buckled, splintered, then melted to magma under the pressure of huge forces colliding.

What raged between the two masters was no longer mere swordplay or sorcery. It was doctrine hammering doctrine—law smashing against law.

Every roar from the nine-headed serpent dragged rivers of gloom from the underworld; space warped, soil boiled, and whole ridges liquefied to lava.

The monster was not simple energy. It carried within each scaled plate the wrath of countless sacrificed souls—resentment congealed into armor.

Any ordinary Heavenly Immortal cultivator who drifted too near risked instant madness under that tidal malice.

Linden's sword aura answered with purifying radiance. It rose like a midsummer sun, every ray scorching corruption to ash.

He was in full concentration, merging with his sword as one. Each slash, thrust, and parry distilled the deepest secrets of the Mystic Sky Sword Manual ancient, austere figures that, at the final instant, always found the serpent's solitary weak scale and stabbed truth through deceit.

"Sheldon Soulsby! Your reign of butchery ends today!" Linden's voice rang like struck steel, echoing over the war-torn plain.

The cyan sword aura suddenly tightened, shrinking from a ten-thousand-foot tidal wave into single hundred-foot ray—so condensed its glow folded inward, darkening to deep jade. That razor of focused light flashed—almost teleporting—straight for the largest of the serpent's nine slavering heads.

"Linden Cloudrige, do not be arrogant! You think you can judge me?" Sheldon roared, every syllable rumbling like thunder through the smoky sky.

Even as the words left his lips, the center head of his nine-headed serpent split wide. A jet of demonic essence compressed into a nearly pitch-black spear of light-burst forth and lunged straight toward the jade-green sword are racing down from above.

The collision detonated with a world-tearing boom-an impact so deafening it seemed to rip the heavens open.

This single clash dwarfed every exchange that had come before.

Bright light swallowed the battlefield. A circular shockwave billowed outward, flinging sword sect and demon sect disciples alike into the air like dolls tossed by a cyclone.

Those caught closest simply vanished-ground to dust inside the roiling storm of energy.

High above, even Jared felt the sturdy spatial barrier around him quiver as though the sky itself were a wobbling mirror.

When the radiance finally drained

away, more than half of the

nine-headed serpent's phantom had

faded, and two of its smaller skuffs

“smoke.

dissolved in driftings

Sheldon's body was death-pale. Black blood stained one corner of his mouth, and the aura around him sputtered like a candle struggling in the wind.

Across the void, the turquoise sword-rainbow shattered. Linden—now visible— clutched his blade as his arm trembled.

Hairline cracks spider-webbed the ancient sword's surface, and the fabric over his chest hung in tatters, revealing an inner vest whose glow had nearly gone out. Gold blood traced the edge of his lips, each breath jagged and shallow.

The two masters hovered in silence, eyes locked-exhaustion, gravity, and a flicker of unmasked dread mirrored in both gazes.

A Warrior Undefeatable

They understood with chilling clarity that the strike they had just traded had drained most of their remaining immortal power and forced them to reveal every hidden trump.

Now each was little more than a spent bow. The first to falter would be condemned to eternal ruin. All across the battleground, combat slowed as every eye fell upon the weary pair, waiting to see whose strength would break first.

Now!

In the upper reaches of the void, Jared's eyes flashed like twin stars.

He had waited precisely for this moment—when both titans hung on the edge of collapse, and their vigilance dipped beneath the weight of fatigue.

He stepped forward once. The rippling distortions of space around him flattened out, fading like rings on a pond.

A lone figure in a plain robe appeared, without warning, at the very heart of the scarred battlefield—in the narrow vacuum carved by the last collision, squarely between the two exhausted sect masters.

"Who's there?"

Sheldon and Linden jerked as one, horror snapping them fully alert. Even their formidable spiritual senses had detected nothing until the instant the stranger arrived.

Their startled gazes swept over Jared and registered only the faint ripple of a Human Immortal Realm Level Seven aura.

A junior—barely level seven of the Human Immortal Realm—had slipped through chaotic void currents, bypassed every raging energy field, and materialized between them without a sound. Disbelief flickered to outright shock.

Who is he? How did he pierce the chaotic energy perimeter and come all the way here?

Below, the clashing disciples of both sects broke off mid-strike, heads tilting upward in unison as the impossible newcomer claimed the stage.

The instant Jared glided into view, every cultivator on the gore-stained plain looked up. A thousand startled eyes fixed on the youth who floated in mid-air like a brushstroke spilled across the wrong canvas.

Jared's

gaze fell first on Linden. The old swordsman's face was ash-gray, his breath a ragged whistle. Jared offered a small, almost courteous nod—no more than a ripple in still water.

That nod carried neither sympathy nor scorn. Its unbroken calm made several onlookers shiver, as though the young man had peeled the heat from the day itself.

Then Jared's attention locked onto Sheldon, whose expression flickered between fury and disbelief, as though some lowly insect dared examine a tyrant.

A faint, mocking curve tugged at

Jared's mouth. He spoke quietly, yet the sound seemed forged of

bell metal. His words rolled across the suddenly y silent battlefield, slipping into every warrior's ear as clearly as a whispered secret.

"Infinite Soul Demon Sect's Sheldon Soulsby." Jared's voice was almost

lighthearted. "I hear you've been looking for me."

That casual question detonated inside Sheldon's skull like thunder trapped in a bottle.

For a heartbeat, he merely stared, his mind sluggish from drained reserves and too much killing.

Then the hated name—Jared Chance—fused with the blurred figure he had once pursued through blood-soaked memories using his secret technique.

"You... You... You are Jared Chance? The runt who looted my Blackflame Gorge, leveled my Wraith Herb Garden, and sabotaged the sect at every turn?"

Sheldon's pupils shrank to needle-points. Shock, humiliation, and a volcanic rage howled inside him.

Reason—already frayed by

exhaustion snapped. He had halted an entire campaign against the Myriad Beast Sect because of this

single troublemaker. That meddling hand had even steered today's massacre.

And now the culprit floated before him, wearing nothing but a Human Immortal

Realm Level Seven aura—an insult carved in daylight.

For a demonic sovereign of Heavenly Immortal Realm Level Seven, the very sight felt like chains hammered onto his pride.

"Guilty as charged," Jared admitted, a playful glint in his eyes. "Impressive memory, Sheldon. Looks like rage hasn't clouded you-yet."

"Still, I'm puzzled." He swept his gaze over the corpse-strewn earth, then at the two battered leaders facing him. "You rallied the full strength of your sect, yet you're not storming the Myriad Beast Sect. Instead, you and Master Cloudridge seem locked in a passionate duel here. Is the Myriad Beast Sect too small to hold your magnificence? Or is sparring with the Mystic Sky Sword Sect simply more entertaining than avenging yourself on me?"

Each taunting syllable slid into Sheldon's chest like a needle of ice, puncturing the last veneer of composure he possessed.

A Warrior Undefeatable

Only now did Sheldon see the larger design. From the moment the Mystic Sky Sword Sect had marched out, every twist of this bloody conflict had been orchestrated by this young man.

He was a sect master. A Heavenly Immortal powerhouse. Yet, he was tricked by a junior way weaker than him.

Bitterness surged up his throat. He coughed a dark gout of demon blood across the broken stone, his aura flickering like a candle in the wind.

"You have a death wish, boy! I will tear you apart and refine your soul for a thousand years!" he roared, each word drenched in murderous promise.

His rage boiled over, scorching what little reason he had left. He ignored the hollow ache where his demonic essence should have been and squeezed the last drops of power from a body already split with wounds.

Crackling shadows swarmed around him. From that black tide rose a claw-far thinner than the one he could conjure at his peak, yet still heavy with the wails of a thousand tormented souls. It tore through the air toward Jared with a shriek that curdled blood.

That single strike carried every ounce of hatred Sheldon had nurtured across countless battles. He meant to crush Jared in the time it takes a man to blink.

Not far away, Linden watched, eyes unreadable. He neither shielded Jared nor aided the demon. The swordmaster, too, was running on fumes and welcomed any pause that let his strength knit back together.

Even so, curiosity gnawed at him. Jared was only a Level Seven Human Immortal on paper, yet there was something bottomless about the young man something Linden could not divine.

What is this boy hiding? The old swordsman wondered, weighing every heartbeat, every ripple of force. He decided to let the clash reveal whatever secrets fate wished to spill.

Jared met the advancing claw with eyes gone winter-cold. The earlier hint of

mockery vanished, replaced by a sovereign calm—one that seemed too large for a body so young. For an instant, he looked as though the entire sky had bowed before him.

"Pathetic," Jared said, voice flat and final. "You're at your last legs, and you still dare challenge me?"

He never reached for the sword on his back. Instead, he lifted his right hand—casually, almost lazily—and folded his fingers into a fist.

A primeval presence rumbled awake inside him, as though a slumbering dragon shoved mountains aside while it rose. The ground quivered beneath his boots.

Chaotic energy burst from every pore. Somewhere deep in his bloodline, a dragon's roar answered, echoing across the battlefield like a temple bell struck at midnight. No brilliant glow clung to his knuckles, only power so dense it bent the air—power that felt capable of punching through stars and cracking the ages themselves.

"Holy Light Fist." Jared let the three words fall like a judgment.

Boom!

That plain, unadorned fist shot forward and met the demon claw head-on, a pebble hurled against a tidal wave or so it seemed to every jaw that hung open below.

Contact lasted less than a breath.

The claw, once feared for shredding

Heavenly Immortals, melted like

frost beneath a noonday sun. Glasslike shards of shadow shattered, then blew apart in a cyclone of keening spirits. Those fragments had no time to fight back. Stray sword-energy

lingering in the air-still hot from Linden's earlier strike-flashed white and purified every wisp of darkness.

In a heartbeat, the sky cleared. Nothing remained of Sheldon's attack but silence. "What?"

"That's impossible!"

The exclamations burst from Sheldon and Linden at the same instant. Rage and murder froze on the demon's face, replaced by gaping disbelief.

That claw had drained the last pools of demonic essence in Sheldon's veins-enough power to maim, even kill a Level Four Heavenly Immortal. Yet Jared, a supposed Level Seven Human Immortal, had erased it with a single, effortless punch.

The world that Sheldon understood cracked.

Linden's pupils shrank to pinpoints. A cold breath slipped between his teeth. Never had he felt so shaken-not by foes of his own rank, much less by a junior. This youngster wears his realm like a mask, he admitted to himself, grave and awed.

No Human Immortal possesses such might. Is it some forbidden art... or has he concealed his true cultivation all along? If so, his real strength may rival—even surpass—my own.

A chill rose from the deepest chambers of his heart, unbidden and most unwelcome.

A Warrior Undefeatable

Jared shattered Sheldon's hand with a single punch. He did not pause.

The air rippled and, in the blink of an eye, he emerged before Sheldon, whose face still froze in stunned disbelief.

Before that disbelief could even sharpen into fear, Jared's hand whipped back and came forward in a blur.

The slap was so fast it outran the speed of spiritual sense. Chaos-forged celestial power intertwined with the blood of the Dragon along his palm-quiet power, mountain-breaking power-capped by the faint, terrible majesty of the dragon's own

will.

Crack!

The sound-clear as crystal, loud as thunder-detonated above the battlefield's charred earth.

The noise felt personal. Every onlooker flinched as though the blow had landed on the marrow of their own souls.

Sheldon flew sideways like a rag doll snatched by a storm.

Half his face ballooned, bruising to indigo in an instant; a livid handprint branded his cheek. Teeth—slick with black demon blood—sprayed from his mouth in a grisly arc. He tumbled through the smoky air, slammed into the scorched ground, and skidded to a halt inside a shallow crater while dust boiled up around him.

Coughing up another mouthful of blood, he tried to rise. Strength deserted him. Humiliation, sudden and absolute, churned his viscera until darkness pricked at the edges of his vision. He lifted his swollen face. In those eyes swam confusion, outrage, terror—and the dead blankness of a man whose world had just crumbled around him.

He—Sheldon Soulsby—lord of the Infinite Soul Demon Sect, a Level Seven Heavenly Immortal who had terrorized this place for ten millennia—had just been slapped.

Slapped in public by a mere Level Seven Human Immortal, and in front of tens of thousands of disciples from both sects, right under the nose of his mortal enemy, Linden Cloudridge of the Mystic Sky Sword Sect.

It was a disgrace. An unheard-of disgrace. A disgrace for the ages. For one scorching heartbeat, sect interests, ancient

vendettas—everything was drowned beneath the tidal wave of shame. His mind emptied, leaving only the sting on his cheek and the echo of that terrible slap.

Silence swallowed the battlefield. You could have heard a pin drop.

Infinite Soul Demon Sect disciples and Mystic Sky Sword Sect cultivators alike froze where they stood, eyes wide, mouths hanging open, statues carved from shock.

They stared first at Sheldon—groveling like a beaten cur—then at the young man floating above the crater, green robe fluttering, expression calm as though he had merely dusted off his hands.

Linden worked his throat. An odd numbness tingled along his own cheek, a phantom echo of the blow.

His gaze toward Jared no longer held guarded respect. Somewhere behind his eyes, a thin blade of fear began to glint.

A collective shiver rippled through

the onlookers. Someone

whispered barely daring to

breathe that the young man before them was nothing short of

nove

monstrous. His strength felt

unfathomable, and his willingness to act without the faintest restraint made each bystander wonder

whether any rule, any limit, could

ever hold him back.

Jared stood on the broken

flagstones with his hands clasped loosely behind his back. His white

sleeves fluttered in the mountainne

as he looked

wind like torn banners down at Sheldon, who was struggling to push himself off the ground-humiliated, shaken, eyes darting in panic. Jared's voice slid across the air as cold as a blade gliding over ice.

"That slap," he said in a tone so frosted it seemed to burn, "was delivered for the disciples of Rockhold Gorge who died defending the Myriad Beast Sect, and for every innocent soul your duct tortured, harvested, or fed to its furnaces."

A Warrior Undefeatable

"Sheldon Soulsby," Jared continued, his voice rolling like distant thunder, "were you not already half-dead from your duel with Mr. Cloudridge, I would crack your skull open and raze that wretched den you call a sect. Gather your remaining lackeys and crawl back to the Blood-scar Plains. Tell Soul Devourer that Jared Chance has arrived on level ten and is hunting for him. Remind that b*stard to stand ready. I'm coming to tear his soul apart."

Jared's eyes narrowed, pupils flashing like twin shards of obsidian. A killing intent- colder and sharper than before-poured off him in waves. Soulsby felt as if he had tumbled into a frozen abyss, every muscle locking tight. "You'd do well," Jared added, voice now a low growl, "to make sure Soul Devourer abandons the Infinite Soul Demon Sect altogether. Next time we meet, it won't be my palm that greets him —it will be my sword, and that day, your entire sect will cease to exist."

Rage shook Sheldon's battered frame. Demonic essence battered the walls of his meridians, threatening to drive him into madness. He glared at Jared, hatred boiling so fiercely it almost took form—a phantom knife poised behind his eyes, begging to carve Jared to pieces.

"You insolent whelp," Sheldon spat, his voice raw. "You come hunting for the Lord himself? Do you even comprehend what realm he commands?"

"Realm?" Jared snorted, the sound thick with contempt. "Last time I met him on level nine, I left him scrambling like a whipped cur. He fled here to level ten only because he couldn't survive in there. And you fools still treat him like some grand treasure. Every time I see him, I thrash him—simple as that."

Only after the words had flown did Jared realize, with a faint inner wince, that his old habit of showboating had seized him again. If Soul Devourer actually drops in right now, I'm in for another beating.

But spoken threats could not be swallowed, and retreat was unthinkable.

Sheldon looked ready to explode, demonic essence sputtering around him like sparks in dry tinder, while Linden—standing a little off to the side—frowned sharply at the name Soul Devourer.

"Young friend," Linden asked, voice steady yet edged with unease, "by 'Soul Devourer,' do you mean the tyrant who ruled level nine ten thousand years ago—the one believed lost for a full millennium?"

"Exactly him," Jared replied with a crisp nod.

A breath hissed between Linden's teeth. Color drained from his face, leaving it ashen. He had expected many answers—never that.

"That fiend escaped the place of his confinement?" Linden whispered, almost to himself.

"You know him as well?" Jared asked, brows lifting. It struck him as odd; Linden hailed from level ten—how could he hold such detailed knowledge about a monster from the skies below?

Linden's eyes darkened with memories he clearly wished he could forget.

"Of course I do," he said at last. "The

Mystic Sky Sword Sect was once rooted in level nine. When Soul Devourer was suppressed back then, my master joined the assault and fell, mortally wounded. The sect passed to me, and across these ten millennia we migrated here, rebuilt, endured I had prayed that

creature would remain buried forever but somehow he slipped free and has found shelter inside the Infinite Soul Demon Sect."

"Looks like the storm has broken over our heads," Linden murmured, his sword robe flapping against a balustrade that overlooked the

sects loud wreathed suheet

The

Infinite Soul Demon Sect has stationed the Soul Devourer in their ranks. If that monster remains, our Mystic Sky Sword Sect is in real danger."

Concern etched deep lines across Linden's brow. Moonlight caught in the silver of his hair, making him appear older—and more fragile—than Jared had ever seen.

"Why lose sleep over it?" Jared countered, folding his arms with easy swagger. "I wounded that so-called Soul Devourer back on level nine. He's still licking his wounds, nowhere near his prime."

A faint grin sharpened the edges of Jared's face. "I chased him from level nine all the way down to level ten for one reason—so I could finish what I started and hammer him to his knees until he begs for mercy."

With those words, Jared patted Linden lightly on the shoulder—an oddly casual gesture atop a terrace usually reserved for solemn strategy sessions.

Hearing Jared boast so brazenly, Linden felt a numb ripple race through his limbs, as though the night wind itself had frozen around him.

A mere Human Immortal Realm Level Seven cultivator, yet he talked about forcing the Soul Devourer to grovel. The claim bordered on madness.

"My friend, do you even understand the level of that fiend?" Linden finally asked, voice thinning into a strained whisper "If my calculations are right, the Soul Devourer has already stepped into Heavenly Immortal Realm Level Eight maybe Level Nine, or worse. His power could tear open a path to even higher worlds."

He exhaled hard. "Forgive me, but I cannot believe a Level Seven Human Immortal could defeat him. Unless...are you the pampered heir of some hidden dynasty with a colossus shielding you from the shadows?"

The question hung between them like a drawn blade.

Jared seized upon the convenient escape route. He bobbed his head in exaggerated respect. "Never thought you'd spot it so quickly, Master Cloudridge! Yes, I'm the favored son of a reclusive clan. The senior behind me could wipe out the entire level ten with a single flick of his sleeve."

The moment Jared finished, muffled snorts and open scoffs rose from every corner of the terrace. Swordsmen, alchemists, and even passing servants rolled their eyes in synchronized contempt.

Even Linden let out a weary sigh, wondering whether Jared's tongue might be sharper than his sword.

A Warrior Undefeatable

Wipe out the entire level ten with a flick of his sleeve? The notion echoed around the gathering like a bad joke no one wished to claim.

What kind of godlike strength would that demand? It's unthinkable.

"Enough with the bragging, boy!" bellowed an elder from the Infinite Soul Demon Sect, his voice rough as grinding tombstones. "A mysterious protector who can obliterate a whole heaven with a shrug?"

He jabbed a claw-thin finger toward Jared. "Do you take us for idiots? Summon this backer of yours right now! I'll slap the guts out of him in one strike—and watch him cough them onto the floor!"

The elder's tirade hissed through the cold night air, disbelief curdling into raw fury. Hearing the man brag about knocking Arthur's guts loose, Jared merely chuckled, a low ripple that broke into bright, careless laughter.

"Hahaha! You're so dead," Jared sang, shaking his head with mock pity.

He had not even finished the taunt when, far beyond mortal sight, a silver pin-prick of light streaked through the void silent, swift, almost imaginary.

No sentinel sensed it. No formation alarmed.

The ranting elder stiffened mid-breath, eyes glazing over before his body toppled like a felled statue. He hit the ground with a dead thud—lifeless, noiseless.

A hush gripped the terrace. Every spectator-warrior, alchemist, servant—stood frozen, mouths parted in wordless shock.

Even Sheldon and Linden stared blankly, their minds scrambling for an answer.

None of them could fathom how the elder had died so suddenly—slain by a whisper of light no one had seen, and no one could trace.

They exchanged bewildered glances. Could this really be the invisible hand of the master who stands behind Jared?

The field felt empty no pressure, no aura-yet something had just clawed a life away before their eyes.

"I take it you believe me now?" Jared asked, a cold smile skating across his lips.

Anyone who had ever boasted they'd beat the crap out of Arthur never lived long enough to brag again.

"Master, don't listen to him," another elder barked, stepping in beside Sheldon. "I inspected that elder just now. Heart failure-sheer misfortune. No hidden master stirred a finger."

"I see you still doubt it," Jared said, voice dipped in contempt. "Go on, insult the one who shields me. Forget him—I can butcher you myself. Want a demonstration?"

The elder's mouth opened, yet only a strangled syllable escaped.

"Enough!" Sheldon snapped, thrusting an arm across his subordinate's chest.

Rage still simmered inside him, yet the remnant of reason pressed a warning on him.

He was in bad shape. His face had swollen into a grotesque mask; demonic essence churned, veins of black fire crawling beneath the skin. Every breath tled against hidden Wounds that threatened to burst open.

Across from him, Jared floated in the air, aura long and even, power unfathomable, the earlier strike still echoing in everyone's bones.

If he lingered, vengeance would remain a dream. More likely his corpse would be today's final offering.

Worse, Linden, newly rested, was already knitting his strength back together.

I must be patient. I will repay the humiliation today someday in the future!

"Jared Chance!" Sheldon howled through cracked, swollen lips. "I mark you! Until life's end, one of us falls for today's disgrace!"

Those last words tore free through gritted teeth, swollen with humiliation and venom.

Too embarrassed to stay another heartbeat, he whirled around. A crooked streak of demon light wobbled skyward, racing toward the Infinite Soul Demon Sect headquarters.

With their leader gone, the demon ranks shattered like rotten dam boards. Weapons clattered onto blood-soaked stone as they fled in a black tide; the once-towering menace dissolved into aimless panic.

On the Mystic Sky Sword Sect's side,

Linden watched the rout with the weary eyes of a man who has seen too many wars. He glanced at Jared, still alone in the sky, and a sigh too soft for words passed through him

He issued no order to pursue. His disciples-bloodied, spent, grieving-needed rest, not another mile of slaughter.

Linden studied Jared—the stranger who had materialized out of nowhere, slapped Sheldon clear across the battlefield, and single-handedly reversed the tide.

Jared's loyalties were a mystery. His strength, unsettling. Every breath the young man took pressed against Linden's chest like the promise of another storm. Charging after

Sheldon this instant might wana

token victory, yet Linden sensed fresh calamity lurking behind any rash pursuit.

Worse, the more he replayed Jared's so-called evidence, the more each scrap unraveled, thread by thread, beneath sober scrutiny.

Jared finally turned from the fleeing demon army. He offered Linden a casual salute, as though they were equals meeting at a tea house instead of on smoking ruin.

"Mr. Cloudridge, the skirmish ends here. After tonight, the Demon Sect will lack the strength to trouble the Mystic Sky Sword Sect for quite some time. I'll be taking my leave."

A clean exit felt wise. After all, the night's carnage-carefully orchestrated by Jared -had bled the sect white.

"Wait!" Linden's voice cracked through the drifting ash.

A Warrior Undefeatable

Jared stiffened mid-step. He pivoted slowly, face calm, pulse already braced for treachery.

"Mr. Cloudridge, what else do you require?"

Has he realized I played both sides and wants to settle the score with me?

Chaotic energy slid beneath Jared's skin-silent, coiled, ready to erupt if courtesy soured into combat.

He did not fear the battered sword master, but the sect's surviving disciples still filled the cratered plain like an armed sea.

The words that followed, however, defied every dark scenario he had rehearsed.

"Mr. Chance, please wait." Linden forced a complicated smile, then bowed with genuine respect. "Tonight's chaos may have sprung from murky origins, yet your single palm-well-sent Sheldon Soulsby reeling and spared my disciples further slaughter. Whatever motive guided you, the Mystic Sky Sword Sect owes you its survival. For that, I thank you."

Jared lifted a brow, offering no verdict.

"Your power is unfathomable, your past extraordinary—and rumor binds you to the Soul Devourer. This is closely related to the fate of level ten." Linden's gaze burned with earnest curiosity. "Questions weigh on my heart. Would you honor us by visiting us for a few days? I'll seat you as a treasured guest, not a prisoner. I swear I do not mean you any harm."

To prove it, Linden lifted one hand, solemn as a judge about to take oath. Calculations raced behind Jared's steady eyes-routes, risks, contingencies. Visit the Mystic Sky Sword Sect?

He wanted to return to the Myriad Beast Sect to confirm everything was fine. Although the enemies had retreated, he still hadn't made sure there were no potential risks.

Besides, the puppeteer rarely accepts supper inside the house he just manipulated - awkward at best, perilous at worst.

"Mr. Cloudridge, your generosity honors me." Jared bowed again. "Yet urgent matters drag me back to the Myriad Beast Sect. When I am free, I shall pay my respects in person-this I promise."

"Mr. Chance." The sect master's tone remained polite, but iron threaded every syllable—an invitation that had shifted, unmistakably, into command.

"This is the Soul Devourer we're talking about, Linden said, voice firm yet composed. "He concerns the balance of level ten as a whole. They are not some trivial, personal affair of mine. Because you oppose that monster, you now walk the same path as the Mystic Sky

Sword Sect—and as every righteous force left standing up here. So please return with me to the sect and lay out everything you know about the Soul Devourer. If you refuse..."

Linden let the final word dangle like a drawn sword, eyes fixed on Jared Chance with unblinking heat. "You've just rattled two sects, displayed uncanny power, and dropped the Sour Devourer's name for all to hear. You will draw unwanted attention to yourself and to the Myriad Beast Sect."

Jared's brow tightened. A quiet pulse of annoyance flickered beneath his calm mask, yet he could not deny Linden's logic.

I really did make too much noise today—back-handing Sheldon Soulsby in front of two armies and then naming the Soul Devourer. Hard not to attract every pair of eyes on level ten.

If this dragged more trouble onto the Myriad Beast Sect, he would be the one to blame.

"Set your mind at ease," Linden

added, tone softening. "On the honor

of the Mystic Sky Sword Sect, I invite you only to discuss strategies against the Soul Devourer and the Infinite Soul Demon Sect. No ill intentions. When we finish talking, you may stay or leave as you wish and my people will gladly forge an alliance with the Myriad Beast Sect against the demons."

At this point, outright refusal would smell of guilt and ignite a conflict here and now.

A Warrior Undefeatable

Jared sighed inwardly. Showboating always came with a bill, and the bill had arrived on schedule.

"Very well..." he said at last, forcing a half-helpless smile. "It seems I must impose on you for a few days, Master Cloudridge."

Linden's laughter rang across the scarred battlefield. "Excellent! I knew you were a man who sees the larger picture."

The tension that had coiled in his shoulders slipped away.

Curiosity and guarded respect still churned behind the old swordsman's smile. A fiend who had shaken level nine a millennium ago was stirring again—he needed every scrap of information Jared could provide.

"Tend the wounded, gather the fallen blades, and form up for the march home," Linden commanded. Then he offered Jared a sweeping gesture toward the sky. "This way, my friend."

Jared glanced once toward the distant peaks where the Myriad Beast Sect waited. A faint ripple of unease stirred in his chest, but he pressed it down, stepped beside Linden, and together they streaked off as twin arcs of light toward the Myriad Sword Mountains.

Meanwhile, on the road that cut across the Blood-scar Plains toward the Infinite Soul Demon Sect headquarters, the defeated demon army marched beneath a crushing hush.

They had charged out like conquering wolves and now limped back like beaten strays. Worst of all, their lord, Sheldon, had been slapped clear across the field by a Level Seven Human Immortal upstart.

The shame hung over every soldier like a thundercloud, thick and suffocating.

Sheldon had swallowed a healing pill; the swelling had faded, yet the vivid imprint of five fingers still ghosted his cheek—a mark that burned fiercer than any wound.

He glided across the night sky without a word. The hatred

simmering behind his crimson eyes felt so thick it might drip to the

.n

to the elders who followed, their breaths shallow inside the crushing aura that rolled from their sect master. No one dared speak. The silence felt like razor wire stretched across the wind.

ground A hush of dread clued &

One of Sheldon's trusted elders finally swallowed his fear and edged closer. "Mr. Soulsby," he ventured, voice husky with caution, "our setback is the work of that conniving Jared Chance. He sowed discord

and turned the Mystic Sky Sword

Sect against us. Unless we repay this insult, how can we be respected on level ten?"

Sheldon's flight halted in a violent stop. He pivoted, eyes glowing like live embers, and bored his stare into the trembling elder until the man nearly tumbled from the air.

"Revenge? And with what? My strength has not recovered, and we lost nearly one-third of our elite forces. The Mystic Sky Sword Sect is wounded as well, yet with that uncanny

Jared Chance guarding them, attacking the Myriad Beast Sect right now would be nothing short of marching into a cage."

The elder licked dry lips, a sly glint flashing in his eyes. "Sir, Jared Chance played the game of division. Why should we not return the favor-with interest?"

"Oh?" Sheldon's gaze tightened, the promise of cruelty flickering beneath his lids. "Explain."

"From what I have learned," the elder began, leaning in as though unveiling contraband, "the Myriad Beast Sect is far from united. Pure-blood beast clans hold power, yet a portion of their disciples are born from human or demon unions. Those hybrids are called the Melded Beastkin."

Sheldon's brow creased. "Melded Beastkin?"

"Exactly. By the world's laws, they inherit brutal strength and fragments of both parents' gifts, but their minds rarely develop fully. Many become impulsive, obsessive. Pure-blood clans treat them as mules-heavy labor, endless scorn. Their resentment has festered for years."

A dangerous glimmer returned to Sheldon's eyes. "You mean..."

"We slip into the mountains, find

those hybrids with influence, and promise them riches beyond

imagining the red,

excitement rising with every word. "If they overthrow Paxton and his pure-blood subordinates, our sect will recognize their rule, forge an alliance, even repair their flawed minds if they wish."