

Chaotic 551

Chapter 551: Citywide Commotion

Jian Chen, Ming Dong, and the others continued to travel on top of their Class 3 Magical Beast mounts back to the Kai family's compound as if nothing had happened. Right behind them, Kai Er and the other three pushed and prodded the trussed up Yun Li. Now that Yun Li had been heavily injured by Ming Dong and had been tied up in chains, his body was in an extremely weak state. Combined with the fact that the four men around him were as strong as him and the terrifying figures of Ming Dong and Jian Chen in front of him, Yun Li didn't bother to waste any time with trying to break free from his bonds. He knew that it would be impossible to escape.

Jian Chen and the group continued to walk through the streets of Wake City with the lord held captive. On the way, everyone turned to gawk with disbelieving eyes. None of them ever would have thought that the Flame Mercenaries would actually do something like hold the lord of Wake City captive in chains.

"The Flame Mercenaries are conspiring against the Blue Wind Kingdom! They have plans to rebel and turn traitor against the kingdom, do not let them walk free! Take up your weapons and kill the Flame Mercenaries, and you will all be rewarded for your services!" Although Yun Li was chained up, he was more than willing to speak and try to worsen the crimes of Jian Chen, hoping that he could give them all even more trouble.

The eyes of the bystanders nearby the Flame Mercenaries changed in intensity after hearing Yun Li's words. Shortly after they passed, everyone began to talk among with each other, but none of them were stupid. They simply wouldn't believe that the Flame Mercenaries would rebel against the Blue Wind Kingdom on the words of the lord alone. Combined with the strength of the mercenaries within Wake City, no one dared step into their path to stop them.

Staring disdainfully at Yun Li behind him, Jian Chen prodded, "Lord Yun Li, I respected you two years ago, and thought you to be an honest and upright person. I never would have thought that your true self, hidden deep within, would be so crass, committing the acts of stealing the cub from my Flame Mercenaries and killing a senior figure after being exposed. Your avarice has made me quite mistaken in my judgement. Kai Er, stuff his mouth."

"Jian Chen, you belligerent savage! I am an official of the Blue Wind Kingdom! How can you treat me this way!? You are challenging the authority of the Blue Wind Kingdom itself; we will never let you li-" At this point, Kai Er stuffed a piece of cloth into his mouth.

Jian Chen's words had stunned everyone who heard him.

"I've heard that the Flame Mercenaries obtained a Class 5 Magical Beast before it was taken by a thief in the middle of the night. I never would have imagined that it was lord Yun Li that stole the beast and killed one of their leaders."

"Look, isn't the monster in that cage the Class 5 Magical Beast cub? So, the beast was stolen by lord Yun Li after all."

“The fact that the Flame Mercenaries had so many of their men looking for the one who stole it caused a huge uproar back then. The last I heard was that not even a single clue was found, but if it was the lord that stole it, it’s no wonder no trace was found.”

“Ha, this is most likely some crock-and-bull story from the Flame Mercenaries. The truth of this matter needs to be investigated.”

The streets were buzzing with conversation as everyone began to share their perspectives. Some believed that Jian Chen was telling the truth, Yun Li had stolen the cub and killed a senior figure of the mercenaries. Others believed that Jian Chen was making use of an excuse to frame and trap the lord. However, no matter what was said, not a single person moved to stop them. The Defiance Mercenaries had long since left Wake City, and after their departure, everyone knew that the Flame Mercenaries were back as the strongest mercenary group with no equal.

On the Tian Yuan Continent, power was the most important matter for everything. Everything could be solved through power. Things like reason and logic only existed when both sides were equal in strength.

By the time Jian Chen returned to the Kai family compound, news that Yun Li had been captured by them had spread like wildfire through the city. Practically everyone and everything had heard of it in some form. Like a giant bomb that had gone off, everyone was extremely surprised to hear this news.

Wake City was a Third Class city at most, but Yun Li was still its ruler and an official of the kingdom as a whole. If the Flame Mercenaries were so brazen to capture and imprison Yun Li, then they were directly challenging the authority of the Blue Wind Kingdom, making them an enemy. For the sake of their own honor and prestige, there was no way the Blue Wind Kingdom would ignore this matter.

Back within the inner courtyards of the Kai family, Yun Li was forced to kneel in front of a pillar where the memorial tablet of Duo Kang stood. Outside, plenty of strong-looking men had flowed in one after another. While procuring their equipment for their mission, the men of the Flame Mercenaries had heard about what had happened and dropped everything to return back to the compound. When they heard that it was Yun Li that had stolen the Class 5 Magical Beast cub and killed Duo Kang, their eyes were filled with hatred beyond belief.

Just then, a large concentration of footsteps could be heard outside. Following that, a single guard came running in to report, “Captain! A large group of the city soldiers have gathered.”

Jian Chen lazily waved a hand, “Not to worry — open the doors; let them in!”

Hence, the gates to the Kai family compound were opened wide. A group of armored soldiers could be seen marching toward them in a denomination of over a thousand.

The sounds of their footsteps soon came to a stop, and everyone was keenly aware that they had the entire Kai family compound surrounded.

A single soldier came forward with a small detachment of soldiers following him in. This was commander Duo Li.

Staring at the kneeling Yun Li with hardened eyes, Duo Li turned to look at Jian Chen, “Jian Chen, what is the meaning of this? Why are you treating the lord of the city in such a manner?”

Emotionlessly, Jian Chen replied, "Yun Li stole the Class 5 Magical Beast cub from my Flame Mercenaries and then killed the senior figure Duo Kang. His crimes cannot be forgiven."

Yun Li spat out the cloth that had been stuffed in his mouth, and mustered all the justice he could, "Duo Li, don't listen to Jian Chen's bull! The Flame Mercenaries are planning to rebel against the kingdom; their greed knows no bounds! They have decided to frame me for their schemes." Seeing how honest Yun Li had looked, Duo Li had no idea whether he was being lied to or not.

"You still dare to quibble!" Kai Er snorted and kicked Yun Li.

Duo Li thought for a moment before replying, "Jian Chen, when Wake City had been under siege by a magical beast invasion, your contributions were widely respected by me, but to treat the lord of the city in such a manner is not acceptable. Release the lord and I will at the very least make the report to the higher ups for justice for the death of one of your own."

Jian Chen shook his head, "There is no need for such troubles. There is no injustice or hatred I have with Yun Li, for what reason would I have to put false charges on him? Even if I did hate him, I would not put a such a despicable crime on him if it were false. I have made my decision that he is the assailant without question. Yun Li will be punished in accordance to our Flame Mercenaries."

Duo Li's face grew dark as he cupped his hands to Jian Chen, "Jian Chen, although I respect you greatly, the ruler of the city cannot be disgraced in such a manner. If this is how you will continue, then please forgive this one for my offense!" Duo Li waved his hand and commanded, "Everyone, rescue the lord!"

At his command, every single soldier charged into the courtyards. Even the soldiers surrounding the place had flown over the walls to charge at Jian Chen's group in huge numbers.

With a hearty laugh, Ming Dong held out his azure-colored sword. He said, "Good timing, let me show you the might of my Earth-Tier Battle Skill, Cloud Destroying Cyclone!"

A strong burst of wind attributed Saint Force began to flood from Ming Dong before transforming into a tremendous cyclone that seemed to ascend into the sky where the clouds roamed. Soon, the cyclone spun around so fast that the clouds began to dissipate.

With such a tremendous cyclone appearing in the courtyards, the surrounding walls of the courtyards began to violently shake. Even the soldiers charging at Jian Chen were nearly sucked into it. Unable to keep their balance, it took everything they could to remain attached to the ground. However, the cyclone did nothing to affect Jian Chen's group.

Seeing the dreadful cyclone appear from nowhere, Duo Li's face blanched as he cried out, "Ear-earth Tier Battle Skill! You're... you're an Earth Saint Master!"

Laughing, Ming Dong gave a violent shake of his sword. The cyclone began to expand even quicker now. It forced the winds to blow even stronger so that the soldiers were pulled into the air without any way of protecting themselves.

At this sight, Duo Li couldn't maintain his stoic expression anymore. This was the very first time he had seen an Earth-Tier Battle Skill. Doing his best to retreat several steps without flying away, Duo Li commanded, "Everyone, retreat! Retreat now!"

Seeing the tornado consume several soldiers, all of the surrounding soldiers who had not yet taken part in the charge began to retreat before Duo Li even gave his command. As they tried to flee from the cyclone, their eyes reflected their fear. If they were to be sucked into this cyclone and sent hundreds of meters into the air, chances were that they would die from hitting the ground too hard.

Even Yun Li, who was still kneeling on the ground, turned completely white when he saw the cyclone that reached into the sky. With a rather disheartened murmur, he said, "An Earth-Tier Battle Skill, he has one of those?"

Chapter 552: Men From Tianlong City

A tremendous cyclone speared through the sky into the clouds before turning the sky into a surging sea of clouds for all of Wake City to see. The furious waves of wind let out a wailing screech that kicked up dust everywhere within the proximity of the city. Dust covered the sky and sun, forming a dusky sight.

A Heaven-Tier Battle Skill was strong enough to cause the sky to whirl and transform with its might. Although an Earth-Tier Battle Skill was far weaker than a Heaven-Tier Battle Skill, Ming Dong's strength as a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master was strong enough to create such a sight. In front of the eyes of everyone, all of Wake City was treated to a once in a lifetime event.

The gigantic cyclone was noticeable throughout Wake City and caused another big stir among the populace. Many of them were startled by the sudden sight and displayed panicked expressions. Many of them were curious, but far more of them were terrified.

"Everyone, look! Look at how many soldiers are being sent flying by that cyclone..." Fearfully, one of the more sharp-eyed men cried out at the sight above of them.

Whipping their heads up to stare in rapt attention, everyone noticed, that sure enough, plenty of soldiers could be seen whirling about the cyclone without falling back to the ground.

"If I'm not mistaken, those are the soldiers in charge of our city's defenses!"

"What is going on? Why did this cyclone appear, and why is it not moving at all?"

"It's a battle skill for sure! Dear heavens, this has to be a battle skill, and a high leveled one at that. I heard that when some of the more advanced battle skills are used, they can shake the heavens themselves! Look at this scene, it's similar to what the rumors say."

"It has to be an Earth-Tier Battle Skill at the very least, or one of those legendary Heaven-Tier Battle Skills. Since when did our Wake City have one of those...?"

"That's the area where the Flame Mercenaries entrenched themselves. I heard that they just brought the lord of the city as captive there a small while ago. Now the experts of both sides have to be fighting, but I never expected a battle skill to be used! It has to be a strong battle then, we should take a look! A battle like this is once in a lifetime, it'd be a shame to miss this!"

"Quick, let's take a look! A fight between experts is rare to come by, we can't miss this!"

The streets were filled with people as they quickly fled through them headed to the location where the cyclone was originating from. Mercenaries and civilians alike were trying the most to catch sight of a fight that would undoubtedly be unforgettable.

In the courtyards, commander Duo Li and his soldiers were retreating as far as they could with their faces overwhelmed with shock at the cyclone in front of them.

Kai Er, Qingfeng, Charcas, and Mo Tian were stunned by Ming Dong's technique. They felt a newfound appreciation for him in their hearts. Even in their eyes, their adoration could hardly be concealed.

Half a moment later, Duo Li let out a mouthful of air to try and calm himself, but he could not help but think, "To think that in two years worth of time since the captain of the Flame Mercenaries left, he was able to pull in an Earth Saint Master. With one of those overseeing the group, there would be no faction capable of going against them in Wake City. It would appear that with my strength alone, I will not be able to rescue the lord."

Hesitating, Duo Li yelled in a large voice, "Jian Chen, if there is still room to negotiate, this one hopes you will show some mercy and forgive this simple soldier."

"Ming Dong, cease your hand and don't endanger the lives of these soldiers." Jian Chen commanded Ming Dong.

Ming Dong nodded and slowly began to revoke his Earth-Tier Battle Skill. With Jian Chen's control over the wind elements of the world, he began to slowly ease the flying soldiers back down to the ground. Despite Ming Dong intentionally making his cyclone weak enough to not kill any soldier, they were all still extremely light-headed and blurry-eyed.

"Commander Duo Li, take your men and leave. The matters with Yun Li have no business with you. If you fail to listen, I won't be as merciless as I was just now!" Jian Chen stated.

Duo Li's face grew serious when he heard Jian Chen's words, but he said nothing as he cupped his hands together to leave with his soldiers. He now knew that the Flame Mercenaries had an Earth Saint Master with an Earth-Tier Battle Skill, making them far stronger than what any regular Earth Saint Master could accomplish. Thus, Wake City had no way of way of dealing with the Flame Mercenaries.

With faces ashen from dust and dejection, Duo Li and his soldiers left the courtyards to return to the lord's mansion. As soon as Duo Li entered his own room, he immediately set his brush to paper and began to write. Finally rolling up his message into a scroll, he attached it to the leg of a Lightning Bird and set it free. As it soared through the air, the Lightning Bird gave a flap of its silver-white wings and transformed into a bolt of lightning that quickly disappeared into the horizon.

The Kai family's compound had become a mess with part of the walls partly collapsed because of the cyclone. Plenty of the mercenaries, merchants, and civilians, who had gathered around, stood a decent distance away, fearful of taking another step closer. The lord of Wake City was still kneeling on the ground with the memorial tablet of Duo Kang in front of him.

"Look! Isn't that the lord Yun Li tied up to the pillar? To think that the Flame Mercenaries would treat the lord of a city in such a manner!"

"A mercenary group kidnapping the lord of a city? What a huge story! But this goes to show how strong the Flame Mercenaries are if even the government of the city is helpless to do anything."

"Wouldn't the actions of the Flame Mercenaries mean that they're unafraid of the Blue Wind Kingdom? Although they are strong, they cannot go head-to-head against the entire kingdom."

“Perhaps the Flame Mercenaries have an even stronger support that doesn’t fear the Blue Wind Kingdom.”

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The crowd outside the Kai family’s compound grew larger and larger as news of what happened spread throughout the city. Soon enough, the Kai family and the Flame Mercenaries grew more and more famous in Wake City. For a mercenary group to kidnap a city lord, this was a huge story for the Blue Wind Kingdom.

“Kai Er, we’ll be putting the trip to the Magical Beast Mountain Range on hold for now. Guard Yun Li and make sure he stays in front of Duo Kang’s memorial table to grieve for seven days. After seven days are over, execute him. Do not let anyone near him in the meanwhile.” Jian Chen ordered.

“Yes, captain!” Everyone replied with respect. With Jian Chen being willing to execute Yun Li for his murder of Duo Kang, everyone within the Flame Mercenaries felt moved. Jian Chen won their love and respect once more.

Four hours later in a First Class city called “Tianlong City,” the lord of the city was reading book when a guard came running in with a letter in his hands. Handing it over, the guard retreated.

Taking the letter and opening it, the lord of Tianlong City began to read. As he read, his face grew darker and darker before slamming the table and standing up in anger. “Ridiculous! How utterly absurd this is! A tiny mercenary group has imprisoned the lord of a city? Where is their common sense? It is truly ridiculous! Men! Call out Katata, Katafei, and Yun Long to me!”

Soon enough, Katata, Katafei, and Yun Long arrived in the study room. Each one of them looked to be around forty years old in age. Cupping his hands together, Katata spoke, “My lord, for you to call us brothers together in such a hurry, what seems to be the matter?”

“It is a ridiculous tale. A small mercenary group has kidnapped the lord of a city; they are taking the officials of the Blue Wind Kingdom to be gnats in their eyes. The three of you will lead a detachment to Wake City with due haste.” The lord spoke with a grim expression. Having a group of mercenaries kidnap and tie up a city lord was utterly intolerable.

“Yes, my lord!” All three of them replied before setting off.

Within the Kai family compound, Jian Chen and Ming Dong had already retired to their rooms to rest. They handed over the rest of the matters to Kai Er and the others to deal with.

“Jian Chen, Yun Li is still a city lord, are you really going to kill him? This is the Blue Wind Kingdom, not the Gesun Kingdom.” Tie Ta asked in concern. Although he knew Jian Chen was a Heaven Saint Master, becoming an enemy of the entire Blue Wind Kingdom was something that was very deadly in the eyes of Tie Ta. With his own strength, there was no way he would be able to defend himself.

Jian Chen chuckled, “Tie Ta, what I’m doing is well within what is acceptable. The Blue Wind Kingdom is nothing to fear. You just need to focus on if we ever lose our path of development!”

“Tie Ta, you need some courage in you! Feel free to watch from the side. Look at us. See how none of us are concerned, so why should you be? You only just started your travels on the Tian Yuan Continent, there’s still plenty for you to learn.” Ming Dong added.

Seeing how relaxed everyone was, Tie Ta couldn’t help but feel slightly less worried, “Oh, fine then. I’ll follow you without a word.”

The next day outside of Wake City, a single group of armored soldiers could be seen flying down the roads at high speeds on their Magical Beast mounts. After being welcomed in by Duo Li and his soldiers, the group began to talk to one another.

After the negotiations were over, the detachment of soldiers immediately moved into Wake City and headed toward the home of the Kai family.

Almost a cup of tea’s worth of time later, Kai Er came walking into Jian Chen’s room with a grim expression, “Captain, men from Tianlong City have arrived.”

“I know. You may leave.” Jian Chen’s voice could be heard from inside.

Chapter 553: Meeting An Acquaintance Once More

“Yes, captain!” Kai Er responded before retreating back into the courtyard. The sight of a large group of soldiers could be seen through the broken down parts of the wall as they slowly neared the compound.

Kai Er, Qingfeng, Mo Tian, and Charcas all stood by the gates with the Flame Mercenaries standing behind them in silent solitude. Each one of them had a grim expression, but there was no worry to be seen.

Not too far away, the disheveled and haggard face of Yun Li had noticed the arrival of the reinforcements from the Blue Wind Kingdom. With eyes that reflected his joy, Yun Li had already begun to think of himself as good as rescued. However, with the cloth still stuck in his mouth, he could not talk; otherwise, he would have long since let out a loud yell.

The five hundred soldiers from Tianlong city came to a stop near the Kai family’s courtyard while three middle-aged men came forward. These three men were Katata, Katafei, and Yun Long who had been ordered by the lord of Tianlong City to go help.

Seeing the tied up figure of Yun Li, Yun Long’s eyes flickered with a furious glint. “How absurd is this group of mercenaries!? To treat the lord of a city in such a manner is unforgivable!”

Katata sighed, “I did not think that the mercenary group that captured the city lord would in fact be the Flame Mercenaries. That makes this situation quite difficult.” Looking to Yun Long, Katata said, “Brother Yun Long, let us wait a little longer before we reach a conclusion. Two years ago, I happened to meet the captain of the Flame Mercenaries and learned a little about him. He is not as simple as one might think he is. Please allow Katafei and I to handle this and ask what has caused this situation to happen. The captain Jian Chen is not an impulsive and reckless person. If he treats the city lord in such a manner, there is surely a reason for it.”

“Fine, I’ll leave it to you. I hope that the captain is as you say he is.” Yun Long spoke apathetically.

With a smile, Katata leaped off his magical beast mount and strode into the courtyards. Smiling to everyone, he said, "If I might bother everyone, please inform your captain Jian Chen that Katata has come to pay a visit." Katata did not reveal an angry expression at all, but rather a kindly one as he smiled at everyone.

"Haha, it's been two years since we last met, Katata. You haven't changed a bit." Just as Kai Er was about to respond, a single voice could be heard from behind him as the white-robed Jian Chen came out of his room. Right behind him were Ming Dong, Dugu Feng, Senior An, Yun Zheng, Tie Ta, and You Yue in close succession.

Recognizing Jian Chen, Katata smile and cupped his hands in greeting, "Yes, I haven't changed at all, but on the other hand, Jian Chen, you've changed quite a bit. I barely recognized you just now." As he spoke, Katata's eyes swept over the men behind Jian Chen. Although he couldn't tell the actual level of strength of Jian Chen, Ming Dong, Dugu Feng, Senior An, or Yun Zheng, they all looked to be as powerful as himself. When Katata saw those four, his eyes wavered with confusion.

Katata had no way of confirming just what cycle Ming Dong and the others were at in the Earth Saint Master realm, but he could distinctly tell that they were of the same level of strength as him, Earth Saint Masters!

At this result, Katata was extremely shocked. Two years ago, the Flame Mercenaries weren't nearly strong enough for him to take note of. Aside from Jian Chen, there were no other noticeable figures. However, within a mere two years, four Earth Saint Masters had appeared out of nowhere, that was news of shocking proportions.

"Haha, captain Jian Chen, these four brothers must be your friends!" Katata laughed.

Knowing that Katata was trying to discern the relationship between the four men behind him and himself, Jian Chen smiled. "They are members of my Flame Mercenaries!"

Katata could only grumble to himself in silent pain. If the Flame Mercenaries had four Earth Saint Masters, then his strength had been curbed here. He had originally thought that this would be a simple task, but now that the opposing side possessed such a large strength, Katata felt that he and the others wouldn't be enough for this task.

Katata showed no emotion on his face other than a faint smile, "Captain Jian Chen, I did not expect the Flame Mercenaries to grow so much in two years; I am truly impressed."

Jian Chen returned the smile Having no desire to skirt around the issue with Katata, he said, "Katata, you must have come to Wake City for the purpose of saving Yun Li I assume."

Seeing that Jian Chen had taken the initiative to speak, Katata minced no words either. Thinking for a moment, he nodded his head, "You are correct. We came here to Wake City on behalf of the city lord all the way from Tianlong City."

Katata's face grew stern as he continued to speak to Jian Chen, "Jian Chen, I don't know what issue was started between you and the lord of Wake City, but your treatment of a city lord has made the lord of Tianlong City startled."

“Some time ago, my Flame Mercenaries managed to obtain a Class 5 Magical Beast, but a mysterious assailant snuck in and stole it one night. That assailant also killed a senior figure of my Flame Mercenaries unfortunately. This mysterious assailant was found out to be the city lord, Yun Li.” Jian Chen stated calmly.

Katata was silent for a moment before saying, “Jian Chen, even if what you say is true, he is still the lord of Wake City and an official of the Blue Wind Kingdom. You cannot treat him in such a manner. Even if there is a crime, you should have let the Blue Wind Kingdom deal with him; why not release him for now?”

Jian Chen shook his head without hesitation, “Katata, I know that you come from Yun Li. But I have made my decision and no one will be able to change my mind. It would be best for you to return.”

“Jian Chen, have you thought about the consequences of your actions if you do this!” Katata spoke.

“What consequences? I care not for them. I, however, am resolute on executing him.” Jian Chen replied.

Seeing how Jian Chen was still unperturbed about the matter, Katata let out a sigh in his mind. This expression of Jian Chen meant that there would be no point in trying to waste words and energy to convince him.

Yun Long strode forward at this moment, “Flame Mercenaries, release the city lord immediately. If not, then you won’t like the future consequences in store.” Yun Long did not bother to negotiate with Jian Chen nor be as gentle as Katata was. Although he knew that there were four Earth Saint Masters here, he did not have any fear for them at all. With the Tianlong City supporting and championing him as a representative of the Blue Wind Kingdom. People as trifling as a mercenary group was thus far beneath his notice.

Yun Long’s words had caused Jian Chen to knit his eyebrows together in irritation. Smiling coldly, Jian Chen said, “What was that? It looks like I’ll just have to see if my Flame Mercenaries will be able to handle these consequences then.”

Yun Long snorted, “If you wish to die, then don’t blame me. Allow me to experience the ‘might’ of your Flame Mercenaries!” With that, Yun Long materialized a bright-silver sword in his hand as he sent a beam of white light toward Jian Chen. He then transformed into a blurry shadow that shot toward Jian Chen as well.

Seeing the white light, Jian Chen was slightly surprised, “So he is an Earth Saint Master with Radiant Saint Force.”

“But what good is your Radiant Saint Force? Allow me to see what you got.” After Jian Chen spoke, Ming Dong piped up and transformed into a bright ray of azure light that zoomed toward Yun Long.

“Bang!”

When the milky-white light of the Radiant Saint Force came into contact with the azure light of the wind Saint Force, an explosive boom could be heard as ripples of energy surged out like water into the surrounding area. The marbled ground began to fracture once more into a series of spider-web-like cracks.

A single strike later, Ming Dong could be seen standing without a change in expression. On the other hand, Yun Long had been sent staggering back several feet with shock and disbelief on his face as he stared at Ming Dong.

“You’ve reached the Sixth Cycle of being an Earth Saint Master!” Yun Long cried out in disbelief.

His words caused Katata and Katafei to feel shocked as well. A Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master was a paramount existence for all Earth Saint Masters. All they needed was a single step to become a Heaven Saint Master. Such an individual like this was strong enough to be able to fight Katata, Katafei, and Yun Long to a stand still without a problem.

“Wh-what? A Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master? Im-impossible!” Yun Long was dumbfounded. Compared to a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master, a Second Cycle Earth Saint Master was completely insignificant.

Laughing, Ming Dong replied, “And yet you tried to say that our Flame Mercenaries would be unable to handle the consequences with your strength. Hmph, how haughty and arrogant of you.”

Yun Long’s face turned pale-white to pale-green in an unchanging flow of color. Earlier, he had underestimated the Flame Mercenaries. He never would have entertained the thought that the Flame Mercenaries would actually have a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master.

Chapter 554: Exit

Standing awkwardly in the courtyard, Yun Long and Katata were now stuck in a rather difficult situation. The strength of the Flame Mercenaries had been beyond their expectations. If they were to use force now, then their side would be hurt the most. At the same time, if they were to retreat, it would be quite shameful and would serve as a slap to their faces.

With a calm voice, Jian Chen turned to speak to Katata, “Katata, you should turn back. This matter with lord Yun Li is something you should not interfere with. My Flame Mercenaries will make no compromises on this matter.” Jian Chen was not at all close with Katata. However, since they had once fought shoulder to shoulder two years ago during the beast invasion wave in Wake City, Jian Chen did not wish to make things too difficult for him, so he had spoke with a softer voice.

Katata sighed and gave a complicated stare to Jian Chen. “Very well then. Jian Chen, if you are so determined to choose this path, then you leave us with no choice. We’ll leave this for today!” With that, Katata pulled the still ashen-faced Yun Long away. They got onto their magical beast mounts, and lead the group of five hundred soldiers back to Tianlong City.

Still kneeling on the ground, Yun Li’s face was despondent and his eyes reflected his despair as he watched Katata and the other two ride away.

Katata, Katafei, and Yun Long had led five hundred soldiers from Tianlong City to Wake City in order to suppress the Flame Mercenaries. In the end, it was the Flame Mercenaries that had done the suppressing. The mercenaries had forced the group away without achieving their goals. News of this spread across Wake City like fire and caused many of the civilians to begin to reevaluate the Flame Mercenaries.

Without rest, the group from Tianlong City rushed back on their mounts straight to the city lord’s mansion in order to report what had happened. Their story of what happened in Wake City was

recounted for the lord to hear. The important parts such as there being four Earth Saint Masters with one of them being a Sixth Cycle Earth Saint Master in the Flame Mercenaries were particularly stressed.

The lord of Tianlong City grew grim after hearing that. Four Earth Saint Masters with one at the pinnacle was an extremely important matter that even the lord had to regard with all due importance.

“How strange that there is such an unknown mercenary group with such a powerful amount of strength. Were you able to find out the background of these people or what power supports them?” The lord asked with concern.

The three shook their heads before Katata said, “My lord, my brother and I once met the captain of the Flame Mercenaries two years ago. At that time, he was only a Great Saint Master, but even then, his fighting strength was simply enough to astound the both of us. When Wake City was in a crisis with the magical beast wave, three Class 5 Magical Beasts came. Shockingly, the three of them were completely killed by the captain! And one of the Class 5 Magical Beast was the Green Scaled Ape!”

Katata’s words were so shocking that even the lord was unable to stop himself from bolting straight up from his chair. Shocked, he questioned, “What was that? The captain of the Flame Mercenaries was able to kill three Class 5 Magical Beasts as a Great Saint Master? Are you sure this is true? Are you lying to me?”

“It is completely true. My brother and I were there to witness it. My lord, the captain of the Flame Mercenaries isn’t a simple person. He cannot be belittled. Even now, he somehow managed to find and bring four Earth Saint Masters into his mercenary group. This is already enough to paint him as a very unique person.” Katata replied in a serious manner. Thinking back to how Jian Chen had killed those three Class 5 Magical Beasts, Katata felt some lingering surprise reappear.

“Since when did such a genius of this aptitude appear within our Blue Wind Kingdom? How strong is the captain of the Flame Mercenaries now?” The lord asked with a grim expression.

“I know not. I wasn’t even able to see his strength.” Katata replied.

The eyes of the lord slid to the other two individuals, “Were either of you two able to see his strength?”

Yun Long and Katafei shook their heads.

The lord’s eyebrows furrowed together as he hummed in thought, “He most presumably used some sort of way to hide his strength. From what I gather from you, the captain is a rather mysterious character. I’d like to meet this person and see just what type of person this captain really is. Very well, you may leave first. This should bear no matter with you anymore.”

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A week passed by in Wake City. During these seven days, nothing out of the ordinary that happened after Katata, Katafei and Yun Long had visited. Therefore, Jian Chen and his group had lived for a period of peace.

The prestige of the Flame Mercenaries had constantly grown throughout Wake City by the words that came from the mouths of the civilians. Practically everyone within a thousand miles knew about the Flame Mercenaries, which helped give rise to their reputation in the Blue Wind Kingdom.

Within the courtyards of the Kai family, a half meter tall scaffold could be seen. The haggard and disheveled figure of Yun Li could be seen kneeling over the scaffold. Beside him was a strong-looking man with a huge blade towering over him.

Today was the day Yun Li's execution. The entirety of the Flame Mercenaries had gathered here, and even more curious passersby were standing around to point at Yun Li and gossip.

Yun Li displayed a face that was sallow and despondent. His eyes were completely devoid of life, and his hair was so disheveled that he looked more like a beggar than his known image as the high and lofty lord of a city. His Saint Weapon had long since been destroyed by Jian Chen personally, but his life had been kept intact. As of now, he had already degenerated to a cripple that could not fight. All of the precious Saint Force he had spent years cultivating had been ruined without a chance of returning, and now even escape was impossible.

"Ladies and gentlemen, today I, Kai Er will declare the sins that Yun Li is guilty of..." Kai Er began to recount the tales of Yun Li's crimes with the Flame Mercenaries for everyone to hear once more. Everyone had already heard the story in clear detail, so Kai Er was merely just saying this as a formality without trying to invoke the reactions of the audience.

Having finished speaking Yun Li's crimes, Kai Er knew that the time was nigh. He said in a loud voice. "And now is the time. Let the blade fall!" At his order, the man holding the cleaver brought his hands straight up into the air. In front of the thousands of eyes of Wake City, he slashed off the head of Yun Li with a splurt of blood flying from his detached neck. As if offering a sacrifice, the blood of Yun Li splattered on the memorial tablet of Duo Kang.

With Yun Li's death, Duo Kang's revenge had been absolved as well. However, there was still a feeling of mourning in everyone's hearts. No one was happy. Even though Duo Kang's revenge had been fulfilled, Duo Kang would never return to them. Thus, they would never see him again.

Yun Li's death had given rise to talk throughout Wake City for only a moment before dying back down. Although Wake City was now without a lord, the business and everyday life was completely unaffected. It continued as usual. Commander Duo Li was now in charge, and had rarely been seen in the city. Ever since Katata and the others left Wake City, he knew in his heart that even Tianlong city was mindful of the Flame Mercenaries. Hence, he had never bothered to ask about the matters regarding the Flame Mercenaries.

The day after, the members of the Flame Mercenaries followed Kai Er and the other three into the Magical Beast Mountain Range as per Jian Chen's instructions. Everyone left the Kai family's compound, and only a few servants and artisans were left behind to hurriedly repair the place.

Jian Chen had sent Yun Zheng and Senior An with the Flame Mercenaries to protect them while they were training in the Magical Beast Mountain Range. In the case that someone's life was in danger, they would intervene. These men were after all the most loyal of mercenaries, and Jian Chen had no wish to see them come into any danger during their training. With the strength of the Flame Mercenaries revealed, if some Earth Saint Master came to fight with them, Yun Zheng and Senior An would be enough to fight them off or bide time for Jian Chen to arrive.

While the Flame Mercenaries were off training in the Magical Beast Mountain Range, Jian Chen and the others left Wake City as well on top of their Class 3 Magical Beast mounts.

The dark-skinned but straightforward Tie Ta sat on top of his newly confiscated mount. Weighing on his mind was the events of yesterday's execution of the lord Yun Li.

Having only just begun his journey on the Tian Yuan Continent, Tie Ta had never yet experienced the rules of survival that the Tian Yuan Continent followed. Although he had killed plenty of magical beasts, this was the very first time he seen a person die. Yesterday's sight remained a heavy shock in his mind to the point where he was still perturbed.

Jian Chen understood what Tie Ta was feeling and went to comfort him. "Tie Ta, the Tian Tuan Continent is a world where the weak are the food for the strong. The future will remain like this in almost a daily experience. Wait until you have the strength and you'll learn to adapt."

"The Tian Yuan Continent is a cruel place." Tie Ta muttered.

Jian Chen laughed. "Let's go to Fengyang City. You'll learn plenty over there perhaps."

Chapter 555: Revealing the Strength of the White Tiger Cub

On the way, Jian Chen and the group continued to laugh and chat in peace as they made their way to Fengyang City. They were traveling rather slow. Jian Chen and Ming Dong decided to explain the situation of the Tian Yuan Continent to Tie Ta. You Yue would sometimes interject a word or two of her own, for the sake of helping Tie Ta adjust.

As the princess of a kingdom, You Yue rarely traveled the continent. However, her knowledge was rather vast, and she was more than aware of the rules surrounding the continent and what type of world she lived in.

At that moment, Jian Chen suddenly felt an abnormal sensation. The white tiger cub that had been asleep against to his chest finally woke up. Slowly opening its eyes, the tiger cub shook its head from side to side to observe the surrounding area with curiosity.

Seeing that the tiger cub was finally awake, Jian Chen couldn't help but smile and rub at the cub's scraggly and furry head, "You've finally woken up you hungry rascal."

"Mrowrrrr..." Like it understood what Jian Chen was saying, the cub let out a growl of discontent as if protesting Jian Chen's description of it. Leaping gracefully onto Jian Chen's shoulder, the cub fondly licked at Jian Chen's cheek.

"Jian Chen, where did you get this little cub? I never really noticed it when it was asleep. Now that it's awake, I can see that it's pretty cute." Ming Dong laughed as he asked. He had indeed noticed the cub before, but he had never paid it any attention until now.

"Back in Mercenary City, I was able to come across this cub in a nearby mountain." Jian Chen smiled without divulging the actual identity of the cub. The less they knew about the cub, the better.

Then, the cub leaped down from Jian Chen's shoulders onto the saddle they were riding on. Sniffing incessantly at the hand that carried the Space Ring, the cub looked up at Jian Chen with a pleading stare.

Knowing just what the tiger cub wanted, Jian Chen couldn't help but force out a laugh, "You hungry rascal. You have already ate everything; there's nothing left." After such a long period of time, the heavenly resources that the Spirit Ape King had given him had run out. As of right now, there was nothing left in Jian Chen's Space Ring.

The intelligent tiger cub understood what Jian Chen said. The bright glint in the tiger cub's eyes began to dim, and its energetic expression became depressed.

Seeing the tiger cub in such a state, Jian Chen grimaced. Holding the cub tightly to comfort it, he said, "Wait until we get to a nearby city. I'll buy you some heavenly resources to eat."

Regaining some spirit in its eyes, the cub gave two growling sounds in response as if ensuring that Jian Chen would deliver his promise.

What Jian Chen casually said caused everyone to do a doubletake.

"What? Did I hear you right, Jian Chen? You're going to buy heavenly resources for this little thing? Heavens, that can't be true!" Ming Dong looked incredulous at Jian Chen, completely unconvinced at what he had heard.

Smiling, Jian Chen replied, "This little one enjoys eating heavenly resources, and will eat plenty of it at a time."

"That can't be right Jian Chen! Y-you... you're actually feeding extremely pricey heavenly resources to this little thing? Ow! Dear heavens, even if you have a lot of money, don't go throwing it around!" Ming Dong clutched at his head in pain as if experiencing the pains of Jian Chen's thrifty manner with his money for him.

Seeing the reaction on Ming Dong's face, Jian Chen could only laugh, but he gave no explanation. The cub understood that Ming Dong was indirectly insulting him, so it leaped onto Jian Chen's head. Lifting its cute head high into the air, it stared down at Ming Dong. It gave a discontent growl as if it was a king overlooking his subjects.

"Yo-you-you little thing, are you looking down on me?!" Ming Dong was practically on the verge of spitting out blood from his anger because of the fact that a little animal, that wasn't even half a meter long, was treating him as a lower life form.

When the normally silent Dugu Feng saw how the tiger cub reacted, an astounded light appeared in his eyes. "What intelligence! This tiger isn't a regular one."

You Yue was amused by the antics of the cub and smiled warmly at it with undisguised love and affection. "What an adorable little cub. It looks like it can understand us. Jian Chen, may I hold it?" As she spoke, You Yue was reaching out to hug the cub.

Immediately leaping down from Jian Chen's head and into his robes, the cub stared vigilantly at You Yue. Aside from Jian Chen, it would not allow any other person to touch it. As an ancient race of a tiger beast, it was naturally proud and unyielding.

"Jian Chen!" You Yue pleaded with Jian Chen. As a female, she loved seeing such a cute animal. Not only was it cute, but it was highly intelligent. Thus, You Yue was attracted by its adorable antics.

Forcing a smile, Jian Chen replied, "I don't have any choice. I won't try and force the cub to do something it doesn't want to."

"Ai, forget it. If I can't hug it, then I'll just watch it from here." You Yue responded with a crestfallen face.

"Roar!" Suddenly, the tremendous growl of a beast could be heard as a giant black bear came flying toward Jian Chen and the group.

Now that everyone's attention was on the black bear, Dugu Feng emotionlessly said, "It's only a Class 4 Magical Beast. Let me take care of it."

Before Dugu Feng could even finish speaking, the tiger cub had managed to let out an excited yelp, and flew from Jian Chen's robes as a bolt of white lightning in the direction of the black bear.

Without stopping the cub, Jian Chen laughed, "Let the little cub take care of the Class 4 Magical Beast." As of now, the tiger cub was also at the Class 4 Magical Beast level. Jian Chen himself wished to see just how strong the cub was; since cub was one of the ancient Winged Tiger Gods, Jian Chen was not concerned for its safety.

Staring wide-eyed at the distant tiger cub, Ming Dong cried out, "Dear heavens, how is it so fast!? Its speed is almost on par with my own; Jian Chen, where did you find this cub?" Shocked, Ming Dong could only watch the tremendous speed of the cub in shock.

Dugu Feng and You Yue were equally shocked at the cub with utter disbelief on their faces.

"Don't underestimate the cub. This tiger cub may be small, but it has the strength of a Class 4 Magical Beast as well. However, I can't tell you where I got this cub." Jian Chen chuckled as he stared at the speeding cub.

Speeding off toward the black bear with its tiny body, the cub was able to reach a curiously fast velocity. From afar, the cub looked like a straight white line with a speed that made its body hard to see.

When the opposing black bear saw the cub charge at it with no regards for itself, the bear looked as if its own dignity was being challenged. Growing even angrier, the bear opened its large jaw wide to let out an animalistic roar. Gathering its speed, it charged mercilessly toward the white tiger cub in an attempt to devour it whole.

Suddenly, a pair of wings unfolded from the back of the small cub. With a single shake of its wings, a bright-white blade of wind burst forth, and it shot toward the black bear.

The wind blade was exceedingly fast — far quicker than what the black bear could react against. Finally spearing through the head of the black bear, it bisected the entire body in half without resistance. Without losing any speed, the blade of wind continued off into the distance. It finally disappeared into the bushels of grass, out of sight.

The black bear had been cut in two without even having time to let out a roar before its death. Stopping by the mountainous body of the black bear, the tiger cub let out a content purr and strutted around its body with its short stubby paws as if congratulating itself on flawlessly killing such a large black bear.

By now, Jian Chen and the rest of the group had arrived on the backs of their Class 3 Magical Beast mounts. However, after they looked at the bisected corpse of the black bear, they now scanned the tiger

cub with a new light. Not a single one of them would underestimate the cub now. If a Class 4 Magical Beast was killed with such ease, that meant the cub was at the very least equivalent to an Earth Saint Master in strength.

Leaping up into the air, the cub began to purr excitedly on Jian Chen's shoulder as if extremely proud of its own achievement.

Letting out a sigh, Jian Chen recollected himself. Watching the tiger cub kill a Class 4 Magical Beast so easily had really astounded him. The tiger cub had never been in a battle before, so even though it had its strength boosted to the Class 4 Magical Beast level with heavenly resources, it was still in its adolescent phase. It was not quite yet fully grown.

If a child possessed such a tremendous amount of power like this, its battle strength would be ridiculously terrifying when it fully matured as an adult!

Chapter 556: Arriving at Fengyang City

The amount of power that the small tiger cub had revealed was simply astounding. Ming Dong, Dugu Feng, and You Yue could only stare dumbfounded at the cub. Not a single one of them had expected to see a tiger, roughly the size of a small cat, contain so much power. Enough power that it was able to kill a Class 4 Magical Beast as easily as blowing off dust. A sight like this was simply too much to take in, so everyone found it rather hard to believe.

"Jian Chen! T-th-this tiger cub, why is it so strong?" Ming Dong's eyes were glued to the corpse of the black bear as he stuttered.

Jian Chen laughed, "I've told you before. Don't underestimate the little cub, its strength is far beyond what you can imagine."

Staring at the little cub with eyes that contained a little fear, but a renewed amount of adoration. You Yue said, "How strange to see it be so strong. If I didn't see it for myself, I would never have believed that a cub this small would be able to easily kill a Class 4 Magical Beast. Jian Chen, what's its name, and what does it normally like to eat?"

Taking the cub from his shoulder and hugging it to his chest, Jian Chen leisurely scratched at its head. The tiger cub did not resistance Jian Chen's actions, and instead closed its eyes bliss, quietly enjoying the sensations.

"I don't know what its name is either. I've always called it the little white tiger. What's its favorite food? Hm, it likes to eat any heavenly resources. It also likes roast meat as well." Jian Chen chuckled. The princess seemed as if she was planning to use food to get the cub to like her.

"Heavenly resources and roasted meat, wait until we get to the city, I'll find some there." The princess eagerly replied. She began to anxiously await their arrival at the city.

"Ah, then. If the cub doesn't have a name, why not give it one? Constantly calling it tiger cub or little white tiger can be tiring to hear." You Yue stared expectantly at Jian Chen.

Jian Chen had felt that this was a rather reasonable suggestion and nodded. "Very well then, but what name shall I give it?"

You Yue was quiet for a moment, "The cub has a pair of wings on its back, that much cannot be ignored. Even with its small body, it is extremely brave like a god. Yes, we should give it a name like that." You Yue's eyes sparkled, "I have it! We should call him the Winged Tiger God! It's not only a powerful name, but it fits the tiger's full might. If it can kill a Class 4 Magical Beast with ease, then being a tiger god would be apt."

Jian Chen couldn't help but feel startled at the name You Yue picked. On a whim, she had managed to guess the actual name of the race of the tiger. This was the identity of the tiger. Even if very few people knew the backstory of the Winged Tiger God, there would most likely be trouble in the case that news of one made its way to one of the hidden experts in the world.

"No-no-no, I refuse. That name isn't good to hear, let's change it." Jian Chen hurriedly shot down You Yue's suggestion. No matter what, the name the Winged Tiger God could definitely not be used. Right now, Jian Chen was doing his best to hide the identity of the tiger cub. He was afraid that if news were to reach the Gilligan clan, then things would be disastrous. Although You Yue had only given this name on a single whim, this name was no ordinary name. It determined whether a life would be saved or destroyed.

"I thought the name was pleasant to the ears, why not?" You Yue was confused about Jian Chen's adamant refusal. It was only a name, there was no need to react as Jian Chen did.

"It's not a nice name. Let me choose, we should call it Xiao Bai from now on." Jian Chen hurriedly replied.

Unable to laugh nor cry, You Yue stared at Jian Chen, "Xiao Bai!? That name is far too simple. It doesn't show how strong the cub is at all. It sounds even worse than mine!"

"I don't feel that it's a bad name. The cub has fur as white as snow and is small. Xiao Bai suits it rather well." Jian Chen looked at the cub in his robes and asked, "From now on I'll be calling you Xiao Bai, do you like that name?"

"Mrrowrrr~" The cub nodded its head in excitement and stamped its short four paws against Jian Chen's chest repeatedly as if it favored the name.

Somewhat satisfied, Jian Chen glanced at You Yue, "Look, Xiao Bai likes that name."

The road forward was long and slow. They would often spend their time traveling without seeing anyone else, but sometimes, several groups of merchants or mercenaries crossed their path. However, Jian Chen and the group continued on their mounts without stopping. They headed to Fengyang City chatting and laughing the entire way.

Although the group was short Yun Zheng and Senior An, it did not impact them much. Jian Chen had wanted the Flame Mercenaries to leave Wake City for the Magical Beast Mountain Range, so he had the two protect them in secret. Otherwise, he would never feel at ease.

The group was currently holding onto the Human-Tier and Earth-Tier Battle Skills. Furthermore, Kai Er was still holding onto the Golden Fur Tiger King's cub to raise with the other three.

In the past, it was because of the Golden Fur Tiger King that the Flame Mercenaries were almost wiped out. So for the past few days before his departure, Jian Chen had been vexed on whether to execute the

beast or not. He had planned on it at first, but when he thought back to how the cub was like a very young child that did not know the ways of the world, especially during the time when the Flame Mercenaries were killed, he reluctantly decided to spare it.

Although some blame still had to be assigned to the greed of the group. If the group had not sought out the cub, then they would not have incurred the wrath of its mother and fallen to such a disastrous position.

The senior figure Duo Kang had been killed because of the Golden Fur Tiger King's cub as well. However, the Flame Mercenaries had exhausted far too much sweat and blood for it now. If he were to execute the beast, then the Flame Mercenaries efforts would have amounted to nothing. Therefore, Jian Chen gave it even more thought and decided that Kai Er would be given the cub to tame. It would also serve as compensation and proof that their efforts were not in vain.

Fengyang City was roughly one thousand five hundred kilometers away from Wake City, and with Jian Chen's groups slow speed, it would take an entire day and a half to reach the city.

Fengyang City was a Second Class city and was consequently far more accomplished and fancy-looking than Wake City by far. As they approached, large groups of travelers could be seen on the main roads walking to and fro. As far as the eye could see, merchants and mercenaries could be seen sharing the roads.

At the gates, several soldiers could be seen standing in a line. They were there to make sure every single merchant paid an entrance toll before entry. After paying that entrance toll, entry to the city would be given without trouble. Otherwise, there would be a forceful inspection of the goods being brought in.

Slowly, Jian Chen and his group drew closer and closer to Fengyang City. Unlike Wake City, Fengyang city would rarely see Class 3 Magical Beast mounts instead of never. Some of the stronger mercenaries would even use those mounts, so not much attention was given to Jian Chen's group.

The soldiers of Fengyang City were the type who loved to bully, but couldn't stand to be bullied in return. Knowing that anyone who rode such beasts would not be of ordinary stature, the soldiers didn't dare trouble them. Hence, Jian Chen's group was easily able to enter the city without any hindrance.

Entering the city, Jian Chen looked around the place with observing eyes. In his mind, the visions of the past events that happened in this city appeared in his mind like an animation.

Two years had already passed since his last visit, but Jian Chen was still able to remember the events that happened. In the past, he had brought two Class 5 Magical Beast carcasses into the auction house, causing a stir. The greedy hearts of the families and clans caused them to try to steal the carcasses from him. It was only after a valiant effort that he was able to escape, but an Earth Saint Master had managed to chase after him and force him down a cliff.

Arriving at a rather decent inn within the city, Jian Chen had everyone book a room and tidy up their affairs. After all that was done he turned to Dugu Feng, "Dugu Feng, there is a Heavenly Phoenix Auction House within this city. Take these two Class 5 Monster Cores and auction them off. Remember not to reveal your strength. However you wish to do it is up to you."

“Jian Chen, you’re not exactly short on money, why are you auctioning off two Class 5 Monster Cores?” Ming Dong asked in confusion. Even Dugu Feng and You Yue were rather confused by the actions of Jian Chen.

Jian Chen gave a secretive smile, “I have my reasons for what I do. Don’t ask for now, it’ll become apparent to you soon enough.”

“Very well, I know what to do!” Dugu Feng replied as he took the two monster cores from Jian Chen.

“One more thing. Don’t let the auctioneers learn of our identities. I know you are capable of this. It shouldn’t be difficult for you at all.” Jian Chen complimented.

Dugu Feng gave a nod of his head, “Understood!” With that, Dugu Feng left the inn with the monster cores.

After Dugu Feng left, Jian Chen decided not to stay in their rooms. “Let’s go eat something. Then we’ll go on a walk to see if there are any heavenly resources available.”

Chapter 557: Conflict

Jian Chen and the others walked downstairs. The inn was serving plenty of local delicacies, so they decided to sit down at a table to eat. Although there were no heavenly resources for the tiger cub to eat, the smell of the food was extremely delectable. Seated right next to Jian Chen, the tiger devoured a platter of roasted meat — much to the curiosity of everyone else around them.

“Xiao Bai, come eat this! It’s delicious!” The delicate and jade-like hand of You Yue lifted a piece of roasted meat toward the cub as if to coax it. Her limpid eyes stared unwaveringly at the cub with an expression of love that was all too noticeable.

The cub didn’t even bother to look up as it continued to eat the platter of food in front him with gusto. The rate at which the food was devoured was almost as if the tiger cub had been starved for several days.

With the cub completely ignoring her, the princess let out a depressed sigh. She propped her chin on her left hand as she stared at the hungry tiger with worry.

“Jian Chen, just what in the world did you do to capture Xiao Bai’s heart? Why is it so attached to you while it ignores me completely? What do I have to do in order to get Xiao Bai to accept me?” You Yue pleaded with Jian Chen.

Shaking his head with a small smile, Jian Chen replied, “I really don’t know either. However, if you like Xiao Bai so much, then I can only assume that after some time, Xiao Bai will slowly come to accept you.”

By now, the cub had completely finished the platter. With eyes that were as equally as pitiful as You Yue’s eyes, the cub stared at Jian Chen as if it wanted more.

Laughing, Jian Chen scratched at the cub’s head gently. “Waiter, another platter of five spice roast meat. Make it a big platter!”

“Got it!” Came the enthusiastic response of the waiter who quickly reappeared with another platter of meat for the cub. With the aroma of the scent being so deliciously tempting, the tiger cub could resist no longer and began to eat the meat.

“Waiter, prepare your biggest private room! The second master of the Heiming clan will be dining with the third lady from the Yun family!” Suddenly, a resonating cry could be heard from outside the inn as a single middle-aged man came striding in with a voice that demanded respect.

“Ye-yes! I will prepare a room right away!” The Heiming clan and the Yun family were both very well known names in Fengyang City, so the waiter immediately dropped his other tasks and went off to prepare a room.

After the waiter retreated, the soldier turned around. He gave a smile to the people outside the door. “Second lord, third lady, if you would please!” A twenty something year old male with a haughty face could be seen walking in. He was dressed in white robes to give off a handsome look. His eyes swept across the inn with an expression that hinted everyone else was beneath him.

Right by his side was a pink-skirt wearing young woman. Refined and quiet, her age was slightly younger than him — around eighteen — but she was exceedingly beautiful. With skin as white as cotton, her jet-black eyes would sometimes flash with light of intelligence.

“Yun Lian, let us head upstairs!” The handsome man beckoned to the young woman with a gentle voice. His eyes hid nothing but admiration for the woman.

Giving a gentle word of agreement, the woman prepared to follow the man upstairs. Within her bright and intelligent eyes, a nearly imperceptible glint of boredom and helplessness could be seen.

As the group walked by Jian Chen’s table, the sight of the tiger cub eating the roasted meat on the table had suddenly caught the young woman’s eye. She couldn’t help but exclaim, “What an adorable little animal!”

The surprised cry of the woman caused the man she was with to suddenly turn around. Looking at the tiger cub in question, he smiled, “This little thing is indeed quite cute. Yun Lian, it’ll be your birthday in three days, why don’t I gift you this pet as your birthday present? Would you like that?” The man was exceedingly arrogant; without even consulting the owner for negotiations, the man had already assumed that the pet was his own personal property.

In his eyes, everyone that was eating within the common area of the inn were men with no status. Only those who ordered their own personal rooms were of status. So taking a little pet from these people would be an easy task. He could simply drop a few purple coins for them to enjoy and everyone would be happy.

The words of this youth made Jian Chen’s group narrow their eyes.

“Xiao Bai belongs to us. We did not even consent. Why do you think we would give him to you?” Tie Ta sharply responded. The way this youth talked made Tie Ta feel quite unforgiving toward him.

Tie Ta’s words caused the young man’s face to darken as the glint in his eyes grew nefarious. A smile that didn’t quite reach his eyes could be seen on his face. “I can see that this little pet of yours is worth

some money. It seems to happen that I am a young man with plenty of wealth. Are you afraid that I won't pay you? Speak your price and we can be on our way."

As he spoke, the young man's eyes quickly swept over the people at the table with eyes full of disdain. Although the clothes they wore weren't that bad, they just weren't even of any defensive value, which meant they wear no one of importance.

However, the young man's eyes flew wide open when they landed upon You Yue. Dazed at the penultimate beauty that was You Yue, he did not speak for a long while.

Beautiful! Truly too beautiful! She was a beauty that would leave any male breathless where he stood. He could swear that since his birth, he had never seen a single woman as beautiful as she was. Even the princess of the Blue Wind Kingdom didn't possess a beauty as great as hers.

The sudden loss of composure from the man had caught the attention of the young woman next to him. She discovered You Yue's existence at that point as well. When she saw the fairy-like beauty of You Yue's face, she too was stunned. However, there was some envy aside from her shock.

She took pride in being the absolute beauty of Fengyang City. Even in the entire Blue Wind Kingdom, there were very few women that could outrank her in beauty. With the arrival of princess You Yue, no matter how much faith she had in herself, she would definitely have to step down.

The light in her eyes flashed brilliantly and clearly as if they could see through the darkness within a person. Carefully studying the group, she began to observe their calm nature before growing pensive.

Quickly realizing where he was, the man didn't even notice the look on the woman with him. He continued to stare at You Yue. Feigning to be a man of honor, he cupped his hands in salute, "This one is the second master of the Heiming Clan in Fengyang City. If I might ask for the name of this beautiful lady. Oh, it is truly a disgrace for such a beautiful woman to be sitting in such an area to eat. This one has already ordered a private room upstairs with plenty of delicious and exotic food. If this beautiful lady might feel so inclined to do me the honor, please come upstairs with us to wine and dine,"

Before Jian Chen could even speak, Ming Dong responded. Slamming his hand on the table with anger, he growled, "You're being gutsy kid. You're asking for trouble by trying to flirt with the fiancée of my brother here."

Hearing herself referred to as Jian Chen's fiancée, You Yue couldn't help but blush and feel bashful. When her eyes moved to Jian Chen and saw that he was as calm as ever, her heart couldn't help but feel disappointed.

Ming Dong's words had caused the entire inn to grow silent. Even a crow or peacock would refuse to make a sound in this tense environment. Pausing mid-speech in their conversations, every diner in the inn stared at the table where Ming Dong was. Many of them sighed to themselves when they realized the situation. Within Fengyang City, no one could handle the consequences of fighting the Heiming clan.

The young man's face hardened with fury. As the second master of the Heiming clan, his status was majestically high. Standing within this inn and being scolded by such an insignificant person was an unbearable shame to him.

“Men! Come and take away this sharp-tongued fool. Then carve out his tongue!” The man barked out for his soldiers to hear.

“Yes, second master!” Several doughty guards spoke in quick succession before moving to grab Ming Dong.

“Come and die then!” Ming Dong’s eyes coldly flashed. His right hand shot forth with a burst of Saint Force. It flew forward and struck the nearby soldiers, causing them to fly away with blood coming from their mouths.

Ming Dong’s actions stunned the entire inn into silence. Their opinion of Ming Dong drastically changed after this display, and no one dared to belittle him now.

The young man was wide-eyed at this display of strength as well. He didn’t think that the strong guards he brought with him would be so easily thrown back. A strength like that was quite unbelievable.

The man had not been cowed just yet. Barking at Ming Dong, he yelled, “You dare strike at my Heiming clan! Aren’t you the one asking for trouble?”

Sneering, Ming Dong replied, “You’re the one seeking trouble. Go ahead and get lost!” Ming Dong pulled at the robes of the man and threw him mercilessly through the window and into the streets. Ming Dong’s strength had been so massive that the man tumbled across the ground with enough force to shatter the marble beneath him.

With a miserable scream, the young man’s face grew deathly pale, but he did not crawl up from his position. After being tossed by Ming Dong, his entire body had been broken in several places.

The people in the streets quickly began to talk in a large hubbub as they pointed at the young man. When they realized just who the youth was, their mouths instantly snapped shut. They spoke no more. Despite this, some of them looked gleefully at the miserable state of the man.

Under the stares of the crowd, the young man’s anger reached a boiling point. Glaring angrily at Ming Dong, he growled beneath his breath, “Just you wait. I’ll definitely remember this!” The affairs that happened today would become an unwashable shame that he would never be rid of. This was the biggest humiliation that he had ever experienced within Fengyang City.

Chapter 558: Draconix Wood

Jian Chen and the others no longer felt in the mood to eat after such an event. Throwing down a purple coin, they left the inn.

The woman stood still without a word as she stared at the retreating figures with a light that betrayed nothing of her thoughts.

After Jian Chen’s group left the inn, they began to stroll around Fengyang City. This was the very first time Tie Ta had ever been in such a luxurious-looking city. As they walked, his head swiveled back and forth. He took in all the sights while curiosity filled him. Not a single sound could be heard from his mouth, and in that moment, he was the epitome of a villager visiting the city for the first time ever.

Plenty of people on the streets found themselves turning their heads to look at You Yue because of her stunning beauty. Plenty of surprised whispers could be heard, and many mercenaries made less-than-

discreet eyes at her. There had been several young masters, who thought themselves to be quite handsome, that tried to come up and court You Yue. Each and every one of them had been kicked back by Ming Dong. In the end, Tie Ta couldn't handle it anymore and took it upon himself to protect the princess as well.

You Yue had long since been immune to the gaze of the common populace, but with so many of them being so annoying, she gave up and bought a cloak from a nearby shop. It covered her face so that there would be fewer problems.

Unbeknown to them, four hours had passed since the start of their saunter. They had attempted to buy heavenly resources from any store that would sell them. However, none of the rare ingredients sold by the stores they visited were over a hundred years old. The very sparse few that were were still not old enough to be of any assistance to the tiger cub. Their price tags had been overwhelming as well, so Jian Chen continued on empty-handed after visiting several stores.

"Let us go to the free market then." Jian Chen made a proposal before heading in a certain direction with the tiger cub and the others.

Casting an eye behind them, Ming Dong's eyebrows furrowed together with an impatient look, "Jian Chen, shouldn't we get rid of those annoying gnats behind us?"

"Forget about them. If they want to follow us, we'll let them." Jian Chen replied without even looking back.

At that moment, a drumming sound could be heard from the front as a group of red-robed men came striding through the city with a huge clamor. The scene looked like a wedding procession with the festive celebration, but the contents of their words caused everyone on the streets to feel stunned.

"Good news everyone! Our Heavenly Phoenix Auction House will be auctioning off two Class 5 Monster Cores seven days from now..." The man leading the group was speaking through a giant, gold horn with a blast of sound that could be heard in all directions.

"What? The Heavenly Phoenix Auction House has Class 5 Monster Cores to sell, is that true?"

"Heavens, more have appeared? And there's two of them at the same time, did I hear that right...?"

"If the auction is going to be selling one of those, we must go and inform the lord..."

The news shocked everyone. A Class 5 Monster Core was a very rare thing to come across anywhere other than a First Class city. With the Second Class Fengyang City coming across two of them at once to sell, it was far too much to take in. One core was one thing, but two cores were another.

Everyone had begun to react in varying manners to this bombshell of information. Some of the mercenaries and merchants began to buzz with words while the men with powerful backgrounds retreated to their respective families. They reported the matter to the head of their family.

Jian Chen smiled when he heard the news. "The Heavenly Phoenix Auction House works quite fast. In such a short amount of time, they already created a huge uproar. Though, two Class 5 Monster Cores appearing out of nowhere should create such an attraction."

The fact that there were two Class 5 Monster Cores being auctioned off by the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House bore no influence on Jian Chen's group; hence, they continued to travel on their way to the free market.

The free market of Fengyang City was exceedingly large. All sorts of peddlers selling all sorts of things could be found here. There were plenty of buildings constructed all over the overflowing streets, making it hard to walk from one place to another.

Jian Chen and the rest continued to visit each and every store that sold heavenly ingredients and heavenly resources in order to find any heavenly resources that were at least a thousand years old. After two hours of walking, they were still empty-handed. A heavenly resource over the age of three hundred wasn't even found, let alone one a thousand years old. Only a few stalks of hundred year old ginseng were uncovered, but they had exorbitantly high prices. The more important thing was that a ginseng of that age would no longer serve any purpose to the Class 4 Magical Beast tiger cub, and would be the same as being fed some bok choy.

"Master! I've discovered some Draconix Wood, that is one of the materials that can be used to forge the hilt of the Azulet Sword. Hurry and buy it!" Suddenly, Ziyong's voice could be heard in Jian Chen's mind.

Jian Chen faltered for a moment as a smile overcame his face. Hurriedly he asked Ziyong, "Where is it?" As soon as he asked, a strange sensation flooded his mind. At this moment, there was a strange connection between his spirit and a peculiar but mysterious object that brought his eyes to a nearby building.

Without hesitation, Jian Chen walked into the building at a brisk pace.

"Hey, Jian Chen! Where are you going? Wait for us." Ming Dong called out from behind before the other three ran after him.

This was a store that specialized in selling wooden sculptures. Inside were plenty of precious wood carvings and other wooden arrangements of considerable value. Some of the more powerful families would sometimes come and buy some for their own homes.

When they entered the store, a young shopkeeper was immediately visible with a welcoming smile on his face, "My lords, welcome to the most exquisite wood carvings within Fengyang City. All of the items here are carved by the master sculptor Mu Chexuan, whose skill is among the best in the city! I guarantee my lord's satisfaction here with whatever the item."

Ignoring the shopkeeper, Jian Chen's feet carried him straight to the second floor.

However, just before Jian Chen could enter it, the shopkeeper hurried to stop him with an apologetic but courteous smile. "My lord, this one is truly sorry, but the second floor is only accessible to those guests with a purple card. If my lord wishes to view our wares there, then please show me a purple card!"

With a twist of his hand, a purple card appeared in Jian Chen's right hand, "Do I have the right to go up now?"

Seeing the purple card, the smile on the man's face rekindled. Hurriedly nodding, he said, "Welcome my lord. Welcome. If I offended you with my actions earlier, please forgive me. Allow me to welcome you to the second floor."

On the second floor, Jian Chen ignored all else and simply stared straight at a giant log seated in the very center of the room.

The entire thing was a dark-red with golden light running throughout it. With a diameter of a third of a meter and a height of one meter, the block of wood looked as if it once used to be the trunk of a tree. With the tree trunk twisted and distorted in a strange pattern of grains, the sight of a "dragon" and "phoenix" could just barely be seen carved into it in a lifelike manner.

Looking at the dragon and phoenix pattern on the wood, Jian Chen's eyes flashed with light. He could distinctly tell that the pattern contained the essence of the world that was particular hard to fathom and extremely profound in nature. It was almost identical to a Saint Tier Battle Skill, and seemed to just contain every part of the world within its secrets.

"My lords, might I welcome you to our Thousand Hand Workshop where we display the finest of sculptures and carvings. Is there something my lords find of interest?" An elderly man approached them with a smile as he spoke in a friendly manner.

Surveying the area with confusion, Ming Dong could only ask Jian Chen, "Jian Chen, what are you doing in a place like this? The sculptures here might be nice to look at, but you don't have any interest in stuff like this, do you!?"

Completely disregarding Ming Dong's question, Jian Chen slowly walked to the dark-red log of wood, and stared at the dragon and phoenix carving. "Shopkeeper, where did you get this block of wood?"

The old man laughed, "What an eye my lord has. This magical piece of wood is the treasure of our Thousand Hand Workshop. It's rumored that it was taken from one of the wild zones of the Tian Yuan Continent — the Sea of Yangfire. It is there that this piece of wood was baptized by the strongest of flames and became as hard as steel. Flames cannot burn it, and steel cannot break it. This is truly a treasure among treasures."

"Just how much are you exaggerating? An item brought back from one of the wild zones of the continent would indeed be an item in great demand, but would one really end up in a Second Class city? Do you take us to be three year old children that are easy to bully?" Ming Dong snorted.

"Haha, this rotten old man knows that my lords will not believe me. Even if you believe me or not, this piece of magical wood is truly worth what it is as a treasure. That cannot be changed." The elder laughed without being insulted.

Jian Chen's eyes slowly moved away from the block of wood as he tried to restrain the surging emotions he felt within him. With a calm voice, he asked, "How much for this wood? Name your price."

Seeing that Jian Chen was interested, the shopkeeper's eyes lit up. Hurriedly, he said, "What an eye my lord has, this old man greatly admires such an eye. Since this wood is quite unnatural as well as being the treasured jewel of this store, the price will be quite high." The shopkeeper didn't say a price and instead held up three fingers.

With wide eyes, Ming Dong said, "Don't tell me you're selling it for three hundred purple coins. That's a huge price for a single block of wood."

The shopkeeper shook his head. "My lords, if you take a look at this piece of wood, the naturally formed pattern on it is beyond what man can do. With that alone, a price of three hundred purple coins is not enough to buy it."

"Then are you selling it for three thousand purple coins?" Tie Ta spoke with a look of disbelief on his face.

The shopkeeper shook his head, "Incorrect, thirty thousand purple coins!"

"What! Thirty thousand purple coins?!" Ming Dong cried out. A price like that made him leap up into the air in shock. Swearing out loud, he spat, "You might as well rob me of my money! A single block of wood costing thirty thousand purple coins? Three hundred purple coins was already beyond what I was willing to spend. But this price? Who'd ever buy it?"

A smile appeared on Jian Chen's face, "If this piece of wood is indeed that price, then shopkeeper, I would like to purchase it." From the mouth of Ziying, Jian Chen had learned that this Draconix Wood was one of the materials used to forge the Azulet Swords. Materials like these were extremely rare in nature and priceless beyond all else. For something like this to be for thirty thousand purple coins, Jian Chen only saw it as a delectable deal.

Whether it was thirty thousand, three hundred thousand, or three million purple coins, Jian Chen would purchase this without hesitation. The moment he knew an item was one of the materials for the Azulet Sword, he would buy it.

Chapter 559: Prosperous Auction (One)

Realizing that Jian Chen was prepared to pay thirty thousand purple coins to buy the piece of wood, the shopkeeper was sent into a daze. In the scope of Fengyang City, very few people could shell out such a sum for something like this; anyone who could would never use it to purchase a piece of wood that would only serve as a piece of decoration in their homes. At the very least, this piece of wood had lain within the store for many years, and had attracted the eyes of just as many people. However, when they heard the price, every single person had been intimidated by it and retreated.

Thirty thousand purple coins was not a small sum by any means. A sum like this could raise the status of an entire clan as well as their power by a tremendous amount. Using so much money to pay for a useless block of wood was of no use to those clans.

In disbelief, the shopkeeper looked at Jian Chen before asking with a quavering voice, "My lord, do you really wish to purchase this block of wood? It costs thirty thousand purple coins!" The shopkeeper was afraid that Jian Chen had heard wrong and made sure that he stressed the price again.

Taking out a purple card from his Space Ring, Jian Chen said, "Here is my payment. Take this. From now on, this block of wood is mine."

The shopkeeper's eyes remained glued to the Space Ring Jian Chen had used to take the purple card from in wide-open shock. "Sp-space Ring!" He cried out in shock. The light he saw Jian Chen from was completely different than before. A Space Ring was an extremely precious storage item that was far

better than a Space Belt, and it was also far more rare than one. Only the strongest and most illustrious figures would have the right to wear an accessory like that. At least in Fengyang City, only a meager four people were able to wear a Space Ring. Each one of these people were extremely important and influential — the first was the lord of Fengyang City, and the other three were the lords of their own clans.

Before, the shopkeeper had only thought Jian Chen to be a young master of the city with plenty of wealth to spare. When he saw the Space Ring on Jian Chen's finger, that thought had been thrown out the window. From this ring, the shopkeeper could guess that this was not a youth he had seen before. This youth held an identity that was far beyond what he could possibly imagine.

A Space Ring was far more reliable way to establish one's identity than a purple card. A person who possessed a Space Ring was a person that could not be looked down on.

In a single moment, the shopkeeper's treatment of these shoppers changed to an extremely respectful manner. Smiling wide, his face reflected the ideal shopkeeper's face when talking to a customer.

The thirty thousand purple coins were quickly traded to the shop. Handing the card back to Jian Chen, the old man smiled, "Esteemed lord, here is your card. This piece of wood is yours now."

Receiving the purple card emotionlessly, Jian Chen took the block of wood and stored it in his Space Ring along with the card.

"Jian Chen... you-you really bought a piece of wood for thirty thousand purple coins!?" Tie Ta stared at him in shock. His heart felt as if it was about to collapse on itself. Thirty thousand purple coins was a tremendous amount of wealth; and Jian Chen had used it to purchase a block of wood!

The materials he had for the Azulet Swords had increased by one more with the Draconix Wood in hand. Knowing that he was one step closer to the swords, Jian Chen was elated. "This piece of wood is something I desperately need; its value to me is beyond what you could imagine!" He smiled. Jian Chen hadn't bothered to hide the fact that the Draconix Wood was beyond ordinary since it was as good as safe in his hands. There was no need to fear anyone that had their eyes on it now.

"Esteemed lord, this old man recognizes that you are a knowledgeable person and you seem to know the history behind this piece of wood. I am quite curious of its nature now, would it be possible for my lord to explain to this old man a thing or two about its uses? I would like to further my realm of knowledge." The man inquired with a pleading tone.

Laughing, Jian Chen replied, "Shopkeeper, did you not say before that this piece of wood was retrieved from a wild zone? You already know then. What use is there to ask more?"

"That... I... I..." The shopkeeper sputtered. When he had said that the wood was from a mysterious place, it had been a fabrication he knew nothing of. It was only meant to raise the mystique and price of the wood. What he didn't expect was that he would meet someone more knowledgeable about it than him.

With a hollow laugh, the man hurriedly changed the subject, "Esteemed lord, there are still many more excellent sculptures within our Thousand Hand Workshop. Why not take a walk around and peruse them? Perhaps my lord will find something of interest."

Humming, Jian Chen began to communicate with the azure and violet Sword Spirits. “Ziying, Qingsuo, is there anything else of value here?”

“Master, only the Draconix Wood is of value. Neither of us thought that the Tian Yuan Continent would have it. Could they have brought it here?” Ziying thought.

Now knowing that the Draconix Wood was the only valuable object here, Jian Chen couldn’t help but feel disappointed. Losing all motivation to stay here any longer, Jian Chen and the others left the store; much to the disappointment of the shopkeeper.

“Jian Chen, I am fully aware that you wouldn’t buy such an expensive piece of wood without reason. Just what in the world is different about this piece? I can’t wrap my head around it at all.” As soon as they left the store, Ming Dong immediately piped up with his question.

“This piece of wood is called the Draconix Wood. I don’t know its history, but it is an item with value beyond belief. To me, it is an indispensable item needed to forge a weapon.”

“What? Forge a weapon?” Ming Dong was flabbergasted. As if unclear, he asked again for clarification, “Jian Chen, what did you just say? Forge a weapon? With your strength, do you really need materials for a weapon?”

At this, You Yue and Tie Ta looked curiously at Jian Chen as well. Forging a weapon was extremely rare on the Tian Yuan Continent.

“As of now, I have no way of responding to that question in earnest. Let’s not discuss this for now and continue on our stroll to see if we can find Xiao Bai any heavenly resources.”

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One of the three strongest clans, the Heiming clan, sat in the southside of Fengyang City. As of that moment, the entire place was quite lively with noise.

Within the luxuriously decorated rooms, a white-faced youth could be seen lying on top of a bed. His entire forehead was drenched in sweat, and his face was contorted in pain.

A white-robed middle-aged man slowly withdrew his palm from the youth. With exhaustion, the man stared at the other middle-aged man who stood gravely nearby, “Lord Heiming, the wounds of your second son are quite severe. With my capabilities as a Radiant Saint Master, I am unable to fully cure his wounds in a single attempt. I will require several attempts.”

This grave-faced man was in fact the head of the Heiming clan.

The man nodded his head, “Esteemed master Zha Ke, please rest.”

After Zha Ke left, the man strode to the bed and grimly asked, “Jian’er, who did this to you?”

“Father, you must take revenge for me...” The youth began to recount the events that happened with even more details added to the fire like oil, so he shifted the blame completely onto Jian Chen.

Listening to his son, the head of the Heiming clan narrowed his eyes before sighing. “The Heavenly Phoenix Auction is currently selling two Class 5 Monster Cores. The auction has sent the entire city into

an uproar. For now, let's set aside this issue until this matter with the monster cores has been fully resolved. Several experts have gathered in the city as of late, you'd best keep quiet for now and avoid trouble."

"Father, are we going to let that bastard get away with this so easily? I was humiliated in front of the eyes of many people; if our Heiming clan sits by the side and does nothing, then how will the people of Fengyang City see us? What face would we have to continue to call ourselves one of the three strongest clans of the city?" The youth sputtered in indignation.

"That's enough. I will make the preparations, but now is not quite the time for it. Acting rashly will only create a new knot in the tree. Stay here and continue to recuperate." With that, the man left the room.

Within a large courtyard in another part of the city, a red-skirt-wearing woman sat next to a window with a troubled expression. "Who would have known that the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House would suddenly sell two Class 5 Monster Cores at this time? What a ruckus that'll create — what a battle it'll cause. The Yun family doesn't have time for this, but that only means it is a chance for my mother's blood debt to be fulfilled."

The woman thought back to the spectacle that happened back at the inn, "I wonder who those people were," She muttered. "Even their personalities were out of the ordinary. They must be men from a major clan with high positions. Their clan must be very strong if they don't fear the Heiming clan." As she spoke, a sudden gleam appeared in her eyes without disappearing.

After a long time, the woman finally whispered another line, "Perhaps, if possible, I could borrow their strength to destroy the Yun family..."

Jian Chen and the others continued to stroll around the city a while longer before finally returning to the inn they were staying at. They had traveled to many different streets and stores today. Aside from the Draconix Wood, they had found nothing to show for their efforts. Not even a five hundred year old heavenly resource could be found in the city, let alone a thousand year old one.

that night, Jian Chen sat on his bed in a meditational position. However, he was not using the energy from the monster cores to refine into Chaotic Force. He was instead trying to understand the energy of the world. Understanding this primal energy was the road one had to follow to become a Saint Ruler. There were no shortcuts for this path. It was only with full comprehension of the utmost degree would one be able to understand the mysteries of the world.

Since the cub had no heavenly resources to digest, it did not fall into a deep sleep this night. Instead, it rolled around with a bored expression on the bed. Its sharp claws tore the blankets to shreds in its attempt to alleviate its boredom.

The cub suddenly halted playing. Both of its eyes began to shine brightly toward the window like two candles in the dark room.

Without a sound, the windows began to open before a single figure darted into the room. It landed silently on the ground.

"Mrrrr..." It let out a discontent growl. As if it had lost interest in the shadow, the tiger resumed rolling around on the bed.

Chapter 560: Prosperous Auction (Two)

At the same time the figure entered the room, Jian Chen slowly opened his eyes. He was seated on the bed, "Were there any problems?"

"None, but plenty of people were trying to follow me. I was able to throw them off with ease, but not too long after each try, they managed to find me again. I would assume they are the local powers of the city with eyes all over the place. Unless I can alter my face and change my body, I won't be able to completely throw them off." The figure replied in a plain voice. It was Dugu Feng.

"Yes, this situation was within my expectations. A Class 5 Monster Core is far too rare of an item to appear in such a city like this. Not attracting their eyes would be strange." Jian Chen pondered. "Dugu Feng, for now, hide yourself and do not let them find you. Do not reveal your strength either; otherwise, it might hinder my plans."

"I understand." Dugu Feng emotionlessly responded. Although he was confused by what this plan was, he did not voice his concerns.

"You may go, wait until the auction ends before convening with us." Jian Chen commanded.

With a faint nod, Dugu Feng said nothing more, and disappeared into a black shadow out the window and without a sound.

Waving his hand, Jian Chen blew the window covers back into their closed position...

News of the fact that the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House was selling two Class 5 Monster Cores had quickly spread throughout Fengyang City like a torrent of rain on the roofs of every household. The very instant they heard that the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House selling them, many of the more powerful families had sent out a flying type magical beast to give reports to distant places. Within a mere four hours, everyone within a thousand mile circumference had heard the news.

Class 5 Monster Cores appeared within First Class cities at a decent rate, but they were still considered a rare sight. Now that two of them had appeared in a Second Class city, everyone who heard the news was rather taken aback by it.

Not long later, every single person that was in charge of a local power came running over. They brought along their strongest experts as they rushed to Fengyang City. Despite there being time until the auction, everyone was impatient to get there as fast as possible.

On the second day after the news was sent out, many strong individuals had already shown up in Fengyang City on their mounts in numbers of a hundred.

When these people arrived in Fengyang City, the power holders of the city felt a considerable amount of pressure. The leaders of the three strongest clans had convened to form a collaborative might that would discourage anyone from trying to knock them out of their positions. Although it was very unlikely that something malicious would occur, this collaboration would let all of the foreign visitors know who the strongest were in the city and show that they were not to be trifled with.

Following the arrival of these men, the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House grew rather lively. There was someone practically every day who would come to inquire about the Class 5 Monster Cores. Some would ask to verify if it was true while others came to ask just which individual had supplied them.

No matter how highly the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House safeguarded their secrets, the power of these foreign individuals was not to be belittled. After a good amount of work, they were able to uncover a shallow bit of information about who supplied them. Soon, this piece of information made its way around the city.

Dugu Feng found himself watched by the eyes of many. He was not capable of changing his face as easily as Jian Chen was, and even with his strength as an Earth Saint Master, there were far too many informers that scoured every nook and cranny of the city to find him. With his prideful nature, he was loathe to hide in a dingy and desolate area. Neither did he wish to continue running and hiding from the weaklings that chased him. However, Jian Chen had told him to keep his identity hidden while not taking any drastic measures. In the end, Dugu Feng's arms and legs were tied. Without using his skill to intimidate everyone, he could only temporarily leave Fengyang City.

News of Dugu Feng's departure from the city had quickly made its way around. How could anyone who wasn't an Earth Saint Master possibly hope to catch the fast Dugu Feng after he entered the vast outskirts? Therefore, after Dugu Feng left, everyone felt dejected to find that their clues were no longer any use. Such a realization had angered plenty of leaders.

Within Fengyang City in a very luxurious room, several of the more authoritative powers of the Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion had gathered inside. On the bed was an elderly man who sat in a kneeling position — he was the headmaster of the pavilion. Knowing that Fengyang City was now auctioning Class 5 Monster Cores rather than the carcass of a Class 5 Magical Beast, he had personally made the trip here to see it.

"Zhou Tong, two years ago two Class 5 Magical Beast corpses found their way into the auction house of Fengyang City. And now two years later, two Class 5 Monster Cores are being auctioned. Do you think the supplier behind it is the same person?" The headmaster's eyes turned to look to the man next to him.

Zhou Tong was the vice-headmaster of the Flowing Cloud Sword Pavilion. Although his appearance made him look like a middle-aged man, his true age wasn't too far off from the headmaster.

Humming, Zhou Tong said, "The man today looks very different compared to the Wu Yun of two years ago. However, that Wu Yun had a mysterious technique that could change his face. If it weren't for the fact someone managed to douse him in a powder two years ago, we would have been completely fooled by his disguise. I can only guess that today's person is the very same Wu Yun as before."

"I've heard of the matter two years ago. This Wu Yun is a complex person if he was able to make his escape with so many experts blocking his way. Having him kill so many is only a testament to his strength. Even I would find it hard to accomplish what he did." The headmaster sighed in praise.

Zhou Tong couldn't help but think back to the alarming memories of two years ago, "That Wu Yun's strength was indeed tremendously strong. With two years passing by now, he has to have made great strides in improvement. Otherwise, he wouldn't be selling two Class 5 Monster Cores in Fengyang City."

Growing silent to think to himself, the headmaster grunted, "Zhou Tong, this Wu Yun is a person our pavilion should not offend at all costs. If possible, we should rope him into our good graces; this man is not a regular man."

"Yes, headmaster!"

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In another inn, several middle-aged men were currently seated in a luxurious room.

"The one who is selling these Class 5 Monster Cores has to be the very same Wu Yun as two years ago. Bah, he killed plenty of the expert of our Youlan clan, and siphoned away plenty of our power. This time our Youlan clan will show our true might without forgiveness. Not only will we obtain the Class 5 Monster Core, we will take what blood he has spilled from us out from his own body." A middle-aged man fumed with rage as his eyes reflected his hostile intentions.

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Not too far away from the auction house, a black-robed elder smiled coldly from on top of a nearby inn. Laughing to himself, he said, "Wu Yun, oh Wu Yun. What a vitality you have. Two years ago, you plummeted down a bottomless chasm, yet you survived! Now that you've appeared just this once again, I won't let you escape again like last time. Even if you've grown much stronger than you were two years ago, you will still not be a match for Ankhs and I. For the very reason of fighting you for that battle skill, I have enlisted Ankhs to help me from the Harido clan!"

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The following days came with an influx of people that flowed into Fengyang City. News of a Class 5 Monster Core spread farther and farther as well. From earlier, only people within a thousand miles had heard of it, but now, people over a thousand miles had heard it as well. Even some of the families from the First Class cities had come to visit.

It was truly a gathering of dragons within Fengyang City. The entire city was not in an uproar because of the situation. Instead, they were quite subdued by their lifestyles. No matter how much they tried to hide it, the people of the city felt a tremendous amount of pressure on them. Even the mercenaries and the young masters of the richer clans had kicked their arrogance down a notch. Even they realized that one could never be too sure if one would meet a civilian or a person one could not offend.

After all, men of great strength did not need to reveal it to the public.

Seven days quickly passed by; it was now the day that the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House would begin its auction. All of the individuals from the city gathered in front of the auction house. Their gathering allowed the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House to witness an unprecedented amount of incredible experts that had never been surpassed in their history.

In these seven days, Jian Chen and the group had lived relatively well. With the Heiming clan otherwise preoccupied with the internal affairs of the city, Jian Chen and the others could safely walk through the city without being bothered.

Plenty of men had already gathered outside the gates to the auction house before striding through the opening gates. Jian Chen and the others did not enter there. They took the entrance for the honored guests. These rooms had been paid for by Jian Chen for a considerable amount of money earlier.

Sitting down in a well-decorated room in boredom, Jian Chen had to wait another two hours before the auction would formally start. This auction would be very important to the Heavenly Phoenix Auction House, so they had the manager miss Yulian take charge of the entire ceremony.

When Yulian stepped onto the platform, she stepped behind a rather pricey-looking table where a single fist-sized stone could be seen. Distributing all sorts of color, this Class 5 Monster Core sparkled where it rested. Right by Yulian's side was a cold-faced middle-aged man.