

## Chaotic 631

### Chapter 631: The Transformation of Little Fatty (Two)

The sky above was sunny. There was not a single cloud in sight for kilometers around. A slight breeze could be felt as golden rays of light brightly sprinkled down onto the equally golden ground below. The entire continent basked in the golden rays of sun as it warmed up.

Jian Chen flew across the azure sky with Wang Yufeng at sound-breaking speeds. They were traveling fast enough that the scenery below was a blur.

“Jian Chen, you really are amazing to kill even a Saint Ruler! I wasn’t able to see the fight, but the sounds alone were enough to terrify me! The earth and the heavens themselves felt as if they were threatening to fall to pieces, and even the mountains had been utterly destroyed! I had almost thought that you were going to destroy the world.” Wang Yufeng spoke passionately without pause. “A Saint Ruler is really strong after all, they’re not someone any person can easily fight. Even if I came across a Saint Ruler, I’d be like a piece of paper to be blown away! A battle between Saint Rulers is something that is barely seen even once every hundred years.”

Laughing, Jian Chen replied, “You praise me too much. How could a Saint Ruler be that easy to kill? The patriarch and I fought an intense battle, but we were evenly matched. Neither one of us could harm the other, so he was unable to be killed by me.”

“That couldn’t be helped, Jian Chen. You don’t look all that much younger than me, but you have already become a Saint Ruler! Your potential is definitely limitless in the future. I, Wang Yufeng really think that it is luck that I will be able to travel with you. I’ll definitely be able experience my own ups and downs too.” Wang Yufeng happily smiled. To be able to follow a Saint Ruler was an undeniably joyful event to be excited for.

Suddenly, Wang Yufeng thought of something and looked to Jian Chen in panic, “Jian Chen, you can’t throw me away, okay? I may just be a Second Cycle Earth Saint Master, but my potential isn’t weak by any means either. I’m thirty-five years old this year, but I’m still considered a genius of the continent! Becoming a Heaven Saint Master is just a matter of time! Becoming a Saint Ruler wouldn’t be out of the question either!”

“If you are willing to join my mercenary group, I will of course never toss you away, but you must understand, following me is not going to always be a good thing. Although I am strong, the opponents I have are just as strong. They are not to be trifled with.” Jian Chen responded.

“Haha, I don’t care about that. The events of the future are unknown to me, but I, Wang Yufeng, still wish to travel with you.” Wang Yufeng laughed in ardent support of following Jian Chen.

Afterward, Jian Chen brought Wang Yufeng to Mercenary City and left him there to wait. After exchanging a few words with Little Spirit, he left for Longevity Valley once again.

At the same time as he was leaving Mercenary City, a stalwart middle-aged man currently sat in a personal room in a First Class City in some other kingdom.

“Respectful sir, we’ve investigated the matter you wished for.” Within the room, another elderly man smiled professionally at him.

“Say it! If your information is reliable, there will be a bountiful reward.” The man spoke with bright eyes and a cold voice.

As soon as he heard the words ‘bountiful reward,’ the other man’s face grew serious. The wrinkles on his face tightened as he said, “Respectful sir, our Labyrinthine sect has made our investigations and have made a preliminary report on the actions of Jian Chen. When he was in Mercenary City, the uproar he caused there made its way to the outskirts of the city. About a month later, he arrived at a First Class city in the Tianzhu Kingdom and lay waste to a strong clan. Even the city itself was harmed, it’s assumed that a Heaven Tier Battle Skill was used...”

The middle-aged man impatiently waved his hand, “Spare me the useless facts and get to the point. I wish to know where he is.”

“Yes, right away!” The elder replied without delay. Looking as if he was thinking, he said, “Since Jian Chen is a Heaven Saint Master, he can fly off to places that even we cannot track with ease. We only know that two days ago, he arrived back at Mercenary City with another person and then left headed to the Cross Mountains it seems.”

“The Cross Mountains!” The man’s eyes lit up as he spoke, “Why is he going there?”

“Respectful sir, Jian Chen’s destination might be the Cross Mountains, but we don’t dare guarantee that he is going there. Whether he might alter or change his destination, we don’t know, but we can guarantee that if we come across news of Jian Chen’s destination, we will make sure to inform you with most haste.” The elder finished his report.

The man nodded his head and dropped a hefty bag of coins onto the table in front of him. “This is your reward. Remember, you must follow Jian Chen and where he goes. If he heads far away from Mercenary City, tell me at once.”

“Yes yes!” The elder quickly responded as he took the bag of coins. Opening the bag up, he allowed himself to look at the glittering coins inside with a transfixed expression.

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Jian Chen traveled back to Longevity Valley by himself. Now that he was done with most of his affairs, he could spend the rest of his time waiting in Longevity Valley for little fatty to return. He could also make use of this time to familiarize himself with the Chaotic Force he had recently gained.

With patriarch Shi dead, the Shi family wouldn’t dare send any more Heaven Saint Masters after Jian Chen. He wouldn’t even need fear them. Since he was a Saint Ruler in strength, his foresight had greatly expanded. No longer did he fear the entirety of the Shi family, but neither did he feel like going on a trip to destroy the family. He was instead more focused on the expansion and training of the Flame Mercenaries.

After he returned to Longevity Valley, Jian Chen began to converse with the villagers once more. Then, he went with uncle Xiu Mi to rest for some time.

That night, Jian Chen ate dinner with Xiu Mi and his wife before shutting himself in his own room. From there, Jian Chen sat as still as a stone statue on and began to converse with the sword spirits to learn more about the Chaotic Force.

“Master, you are truly using the Chaotic Force now. It’s power and might are much stronger than before. When master uses the Chaotic Force, master cannot use it to attack at random. Not only does this waste the Chaotic Force, it weakens the power.” Ziying explained to him.

“Does that mean I must use my fists when I fight in the future?” Jian Chen asked with some vexation.

“Yes, master. The Chaotic Force is quite tyrannical. The average weapon wouldn’t be able to withstand the Chaotic Force if it ran through it. Without the Azulet swords being forged, you must fight your enemies with your bare hands.” Ziying answered.

“Master, you shouldn’t be so worried. You just have to get enough materials to forge the Azulet swords. Yin and Yang were born from chaos, and Ziying and Qingsuo were evolved from this Yin and Yang. Ziying and Qingsuo are extremely strong. As long as master succeeds in forging the Azulet swords, the swords will become extremely strong when combined with the Chaotic Force. From that moment on, no one in the world will be able to stop master.” Qingsuo added.

Qingsuo’s words caused Jian Chen’s mind to race furiously with delightful thoughts. He was extremely impatient to forge the Azulet swords, but the task of forging them left him with a feeling of annoyance. The materials to forge the swords were far too difficult to find. Who knew just how long it would take before he would be able to gather enough materials to make the swords?

“Master, a Ruler Armament would be able to sustain the power of Chaotic Force. Why not find a suitable Ruler Armament to use in the meantime?” Ziying suggested.

“Yes, master. A Ruler Armament should be strong enough to withstand the Chaotic Force. Until the Azulet swords are made, master can use a Ruler Armament as a replacement. I know that only a Saint Ruler at the Ninth Heavenly Layer is capable of leaving behind a Ruler Armament, but if that’s the case, then a Saint King at the Ninth Heavenly Layer shouldn’t be too different. Master, you should find the weapon that a Saint King has left behind. Those would definitely be better than a Ruler Armament a Saint Ruler made.” Ziying spoke.

“Ninth Heavenly Layer Saint King!” Jian Chen could hardly contain his pained smile. A Ruler Armament was already a treasure that was nearly impossible to obtain, let alone items a Saint King at the Ninth Heavenly Layer has left behind. A godly weapon like that was most likely impossible to find, but the sword spirits’ suggestions hadn’t been too outlandish. Whether or not he could one was up to luck.

“Ziying, Qingsuo, a Saint Ruler can harness the power of space by understanding the profound mysteries of the world. Even if I’m able to use the Chaotic Force, I’m unable to harm them. Would you two have any ideas on how I can change that?”

Chapter 632: The Transformation of Little Fatty (Three)

“Master, the Chaotic Force can destroy the world if there’s enough. Your proficiency with the Chaotic Force can be considered subpar, but even now it’s not something that a Saint Ruler could survive against. Unless master gets to a higher level of proficiency with the Chaotic Force or perhaps forges the Azulet swords, dealing with a Saint Ruler that can use the powers of space will be impossible.” Ziying spoke.

Jian Chen's eyebrows furrowed together, "In other words, I have no ways of dealing with a Saint Ruler that can use the power of space."

"That may not be the case. Master, you've forgotten that movement skill you have, the Illusionary Flash. That movement skill embodies the laws of space. If master were to comprehend it, then you will be able to understand the laws of space to some degree. Once that happens, even a Saint Ruler can be dealt with." Qingsuo explained.

"Wouldn't that mean to say that I'll breakthrough to become a Saint Ruler?" Jian Chen suggested. Although he was a Saint Ruler in strength, he was not one in status or actual power. The powers a Saint Ruler wielded were not things he could do.

This time, Ziying and Qingsuo hesitated to answer for a moment. It was finally Qingsuo who said, "Master, our analysis of a Saint Ruler suggests that their understanding of the laws of space is far more comprehensive. The Illusionary Flash focuses purely on speed and disregards the other aspects of space. Saint Rulers are using what is perhaps the power of the world itself, and that barrier they often use is likely a construct of the world's power given a form."

"Qingsuo is correct. Master, according to what we know of the Illusionary Flash, it should be able to elevate your speed based on the principles of the laws of space and nothing else, but even that will be enough to deal with a Saint Ruler." Ziying spoke.

Jian Chen pondered what they said for a few minutes before finally saying, "It seems that I just have to try and comprehend the Illusionary Flash." With a momentary pause, Jian Chen continued, "Ziying, Qingsuo, I've already reached the Minor Achievement realm with the Chaotic Body. How much further away is the Major Achievement realm? If I reach that realm, would I be comparable in strength to a Saint Emperor? Which one of the two would be stronger?"

Ziying and Qingsuo both let out a peal of laughter in response to Jian Chen, "Master, you belittle the Chaotic Body far too much. You are only at the entrance of the Chaotic Body, and the path ahead of master is a long one. There is no doubt that the Major Achievement realm would be vastly superior to a Saint Emperor."

"Master, the realms to the Chaotic Body aren't that clearly divided. There are far too few people that cultivate the Chaotic Body. They could possibly be counted on ten fingers of two hands. Furthermore, there has been no one that has ever reached the Major Achievement, but for the sake of fully explaining the Chaotic Body to master, we shall divide it up into eight different parts. As of now, master, you are only at the first layer." Ziying explained.

Jian Chen was surprised to hear that. The very first layer of the Chaotic Body was enough to match a Saint Ruler. That would mean that once he reached the highest level of the Chaotic Body, his strength would be at an unbelievably frightening level. This thought filled Jian Chen with no small amount of joy.

Afterward, Ziying and Qingsuo both began to explain many of the more important points of the Chaotic Body to Jian Chen. No longer would Jian Chen be as ignorant of the Chaotic Body as he been, only knowing that the Chaotic Body was strong and nothing else.

Jian Chen spent the following days in Longevity Valley. During the day, he would go to the forest and practice the Illusionary Flash. At night, he would stay within his room and try to comprehend the secrets

of the Illusionary Flash. He hoped that he would one day make a breakthrough and become proficient enough to fight a Saint Ruler.

The tiger cub hadn't stopped either. Day after day, it would eat and digest the heavenly resources that Jian Chen had been given from the grand elder of Mercenary City to increase its strength. Afterward, it would lay on the bed and sleep off the food.

In the blink of an eye, Jian Chen had stayed in Longevity Valley for an entire month. During this one month, he had made a good deal of progress in his studies of the Illusionary Flash. Although he wasn't at a level of mastery where he could deal with a Saint Ruler, he had still reached a far greater level of mastery.

Over the span of this one month, the tiger cub had made a breakthrough to become a Class 5 Magical Beast with the help of the heavenly resources.

The elevation in its power also caused the tiger cub's outer appearance to undergo a transformation as well. It could still freely control the size of its body, and it remained its previous small size with its adorable cat-like appearance. Its pure eyes were still filled with a bright light that seemed to have a life of their own.

In addition, the wings on its back had grown even more, making the tiger look even softer than before. A touch of the cub felt warm and pleasant.

Hidden within the forests behind Longevity Valley, a white blur traveled at great speeds through. The speed of this figure was so great that it seemed as if its body was just a mirror image that had been blended with one another, making it hard to discern the outline of the body.

It was almost as if this person was one with the world, body moving without generating any wind, traveling swiftly and silently — like a ghost.

At that moment, the blurry mirror images suddenly came to a stop. As soon as the figure came to a stop, a young twenty-something-year-old man wearing coarse clothes could be seen. It was Jian Chen.

With his eyebrows perked, Jian Chen turned his hand to reveal an object. In it was a single piece of white jade that had silently cracked in two.

When Jian Chen saw that the jade had split into two white halves, his face grew serious. Turning his hand, he ground up the remaining pieces of jade into dust, and let them fly into the air. With the dust gone, Jian Chen turned around and disappeared from the forest with such speed that it was hard to discern where he was headed.

After returning to Longevity Valley, he went back to the room where the tiger cub was sleeping. After leaving the house, he headed straight to the field where uncle Xiu Mi was working.

As soon as he took several steps toward the field, the expression on Jian Chen's face suddenly changed. He hurriedly turned his head to the entrance of the valley. He could see a white blur traveling toward him from far away. Despite the distance, Jian Chen's eyes could clearly make out the blur. It was the distinct figure of a young man and elderly man traveling through the air.

“Hey! Jian Chen, I’m back! You’re here in the valley too. That’s great!” A loud voice called out from the air with great excitement. His voice was so loud that the entire valley heard it, giving everyone an idea of just who had returned.

“That’s Little Fatty, he’s back!” A middle-aged farmer cried out before tossing down his hoe to run with the others toward the village entrance.

“That’s Little Fatty’s voice. The village elder has to be back too!” From the fields, another middle-aged woman paused her actions to look into the air. When she saw two figures slowly descend from the sky overhead, a slightly reverent but admiring expression appeared on her face.

The figures in the sky slowly came to a stop on the ground in front of Jian Chen. Of the two, one was elder Xiu and the other was a young stalwart youth right next to him. The youth was filled with a boastful aura, but Jian Chen could barely make out the hint of a bloody scent on him. This was the appearance of a young man who had experienced a path of massacre, a trial by fire, and a near-death experience.

Staring at the young man in confusion, Jian Chen could hardly believe his eyes. The young person in front of him was really the Little Fatty he knew from before. The difference between him now and before was simply far too astonishing. It was practically impossible to recognize it was the same person.

Chapter 633: Is That Really You?

“You’re... you’re really Little Fatty.” Stunned at the sight of the person in front of him, Jian Chen couldn’t believe his eyes that this well-built person was the very same person he knew before.

“Are you... are you really Little Fatty?” Even Xiu Mi was having second thoughts. With his hoe hefted on his shoulder, Xiu Mi stood there in stunned disbelief. Was this really his own son?

The Little Fatty of today was drastically different to the Little Fatty of before. Not only was his aura different, even his appearance and build had changed. Not a bit of fatty meat could be seen on him. He was extremely skinny compared to before. He wasn’t as straightforward looking anymore, he had gained a feeling of being a highly capable person.

“Father, how did you change Little Fatty so much?” Xiu Mi smiled to elder Xiu.

“Little Fatty, you’ve become so skinny! You must have suffered terribly outside.” Little Fatty’s mother wailed in despair before rushing out from the house to meet him.

“Wow... Little Fatty, you’ve changed so much I barely recognized you.”

“Are you really Little Fatty? You seem more like a stranger.”

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The people from the village who were barely older or younger than Little Fatty muttered to each other in disbelief. Not a single one of them could believe their eyes at his transformation.

Little Fatty scratched his head with slight embarrassment when he saw just how shocked everyone was. With a chuckle, he said, “Even I don’t know what happened, but I’ve changed a lot over the past few months. Please don’t worry everyone, I’m still the same ol’ Little Fatty from before.”

Looking to Jian Chen, he apologetically said, "Jian Chen, I'm really sorry. A year ago, grandpa took me to train so we had to delay our meeting. Sorry for keeping you waiting."

Jian Chen smiled in return, "No worries. I've only just arrived myself. Little Fatty, congratulations on becoming an Earth Saint Master. You are now one of the stronger people of the continent."

"Jian Chen, I've finally become an Earth Saint Master." Little Fatty laughed. "Grandpa will finally let me travel the outside world with you. When can we set off?" Little Fatty ended impatiently.

Thinking about how to answer the question, he finally responded, "The sooner the better. I have something to do back home, so we need to hurry back."

"Jian Chen, why not leave tomorrow? Little Fatty and his grandfather must have gone through a lot in their travels. Let them rest well for tonight." Little Fatty's mother reluctantly suggested.

"Ah, then let us go with aunty's suggestion!" Jian Chen nodded.

Little Fatty's sudden return delayed Jian Chen's trip back home by one more day.

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The next morning, everyone in the village gathered to send off Jian Chen and Little Fatty. They both left the valley after one final farewell.

The villagers didn't go beyond the village entrance. Instead, they watched the two leave from afar. Some of the villagers revealed envious looks.

"Ai!" The plain-robed elder Xiu heaved a heavy sigh to the sky. "I didn't wish for Little Fatty to be entangled with the matters of the outside world. I wanted him to live a life of peace here, but Jian Chen's sudden arrival brought him dreams of traveling. Whether this is a blessing or curse, I'm not sure."

"Father, we should be approving of Little Fatty's wish to travel the outside world. Little Fatty will become wiser with this trip. Remaining in the village will only stifle Little Fatty's talent, and only with this journey will Little Fatty's true potential will be drawn out. Perhaps Little Fatty will one day become strong enough to set down a basis of strength to replace even you, father." Xiu Mi spoke.

Elder Xiu shook his head, "No. I won't hand over my responsibilities to Little Fatty. This is only a cumbersome burden, and no matter how talented Little Fatty is, he is unsuited for this responsibility."

"Why, father? It can't be a matter of strength!" Xiu Mi protested.

Elder Xiu sighed with a bit of a pained groan, "Your mother died because of the Bloodsword sect. Before her passing, she made me swear to not interfere with the continent. So from then on, I sought a quiet place to hide away, like the rest of the hermit clans. A place to live out the rest of my life in peace."

"No matter how strong a person's cultivation becomes, they will still end up as skeletons. Nothing but a false name is left after that. Your mother was wise to say that an unordinary but peaceful life isn't a bad one. One shouldn't try to be so concerned about leaving a mark on the mortal world; instead, they should try to live a life without worry." Elder Xiu sighed.

"Father, how do you plan to deal with the Bloodsword sect then?" Xiu Mi asked.

Elder Xiu grew silent for a moment. "I can tell that Jian Chen isn't a bad choice. He's outstanding in almost every aspect, and his potential is quite terrifying to say the least. If he's able to become a Heaven Saint Master at that young age, then I can say that he won't be inferior to me in the future."

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Flying over the mountains, Jian Chen carried Little Fatty through the sky, quickly bypassing the Cross Mountains. The tiger cub on Jian Chen's shoulder had already long since woken up. It glanced around with great bright eyes.

"Mrrrr..." Suddenly, the cub let out an excited cry as it unfolded its wings. Leaping off of Jian Chen's shoulder, it disappeared into the verdant forests down below. Not even a moment later, it came flying back to Jian Chen's shoulder with a fruit in its mouth.

Jian Chen was rather startled by what the cub did, but he laughed in the end, "I had thought that your wings were just for decoration, but it seems that flight with them is possible, that's a first."

Little Fatty looked at the tiger cub on Jian Chen's shoulder. "Jian Chen, I can tell that this cub is very strong. Is it a Class 5 Magical Beast already?"

"Correct. It became a Class 5 Magical Beast cub several days ago. Little Fatty, I recall that you've never seen a high class Magical Beast before. How were you able to tell the cub's strength?" Jian Chen asked curiously.

Little Fatty laughed, "At one point grandpa took me to some strange place where I had to kill all sorts of magical beasts time after time. I'm familiar with a Class 5 Magical Beast now, so it's only natural that I know how strong it is."

At that moment, Jian Chen's face grew grim and his body came to a sudden halt in the middle of the air. His face also darkened for some strange reason.

The reason for this strange occurrence was because his blood had suddenly started to bubble as if it was boiling water. This abnormality quickly spread throughout his body, causing his body temperature to increase.

"Jian Chen, what's wrong?" Little Fatty was at a loss of words. He had no idea why Jian Chen was acting this way.

Jian Chen did not respond since even he didn't know what was going on with his body. It was the first time he had experienced such a sensation.

"Could there be a problem with the Chaotic Body?" Jian Chen thought, but even as he finished that thought, the two sword spirits immediately answered him.

"Master, the blood within your body has the anti-venom factor from the Golden-Striped Silver Snake. This is a reaction caused by that anti-venom. Since the Golden-Striped Silver Snake is a rare being, the two sides definitely have an attraction to one another. There has to be one of those snakes nearby. Presumably a strong one, Class 7 Magical Beast at a guess." Ziying spoke.

A change over came Jian Chen's face, but he did not say a second word about it as he immediately left the area. A Golden-Striped Silver Snake was extremely strong. It was also hard to come by. He had Little Fatty with him, so Jian Chen didn't wish for some sort of conflict to happen.

Quickly leaving the Cross Mountains, Jian Chen headed straight for Mercenary City without pause. After two days, they finally arrived.

As soon as he entered the city, Jian Chen headed straight to the inn where Wang Yufeng and patriarch Jiede were residing.

Exchanging several words with Wang Yufeng, he introduced everyone to one another. However, he did not divulge Jiede Tai's identity and gave a careless introduction when it was his turn.

After the introductions were made, Wang Yufeng and Little Fatty became quick friends. Soon enough, they were laughing and chatting with one another as if they had always been friends.

Jian Chen took Jiede Tai to another room to talk. After giving several heavenly resources to the tiger cub to let it fall asleep, he said to Jiede Tai, "Come with me to the Cross Mountains."

"What? the Cross Mountains!" Jiede Tai cried out loud with great fear. Refusing Jian Chen, he said, "Out of the question. That is a forbidden zone to even the strongest of the continent. One couldn't go there unless one was a Saint King."

Knowing that Jiede Tai was afraid, Jian Chen explained, "Rest assured, we won't be going deep inside; it'll only be the outside perimeter. I know the dangers of the mountains, so we won't be going to our deaths."

Knowing that they wouldn't be going to the depths of the mountains, Jiede Tai sighed in relief, "As long as we don't go too deep in and don't cause too much trouble, that's fine. But what in the world are you going there for!?"

"There's no time to waste. Come with me for now. You'll understand when we get there." Jian Chen placed the sleeping cub on the bed and turned around to leave the room with Jiede Tai right behind him.

After leaving the room, Jian Chen mentioned to Wang Yufeng and Little Fatty that he and Jiede Tai would be leaving Mercenary City. After that, they rushed to the Cross Mountains.

#### Chapter 634: Meeting Another Golden-Striped Silver Snake

Two days later in the vast sky above the Cross Mountains, two figures could be seen streaking by at sound-breaking speed. They came to a stop at a nearby mountain peak.

"It should be near here." As his robes flapped around due to the rapid winds, Jian Chen spoke in a serious voice while his eyes scanned the ground with rapt attention.

Jiede Tai was wearing a white robe as he floated right next to Jian Chen. An elegant aura pervaded his body as his bright spirited eyes looked all around. "Jian Chen, what are you planning on doing here, killing a strong magical beast?"

"There's a rather strong Golden-Striped Silver Snake nearby, I wish to see if we can make it submit." Jian Chen softly replied.

At the mention of a Golden-Striped Silver Snake, Jiede Tai's expression froze with shock, "A Golden-Striped Silver Snake is considered a part of the royal family of snakes. They're a rare breed even on the continent, and even in the historical past, they were said to be extremely strong in battle. Their venom is said to be extremely toxic — perhaps one of the top three most venomous. Dealing with one is no simple task, let alone trying to make it submit. Unless you find one in its childhood, it'll be unwilling to submit to you thanks to its sentient nature."

Jian Chen was more than aware of the logic that Jiede Tai spoke, but he nodded his head after some thought anyways, "A Golden-Striped Silver Snake is far too rare on the continent. Whether we'll be able to make one submit is up in the air still. Jiede Tai, you stay here and keep guard. I'll find its nest and call out to you if I require help."

"Don't be reckless. The venom of a Golden-Striped Silver Snake is extremely potent. Not a single antidote in this world would be able to cure it. You might have a strong body, but you haven't even grasped the powers of space. If you met a Class 6 Magical Beast, there's no way you'll be able to deal with the venom it spits out. If that venom hits you, that'll be trouble." Jiede Tai spoke in a grim manner.

Although he was extremely displeased with becoming a lackey for Jian Chen, Jiede Tai was a farsighted person. He knew that Jian Chen's talent was absolutely terrifying, and if he continued to follow him, there would perhaps be exceptional rewards for him in the end. It was unclear if Jian Chen would breakthrough to become a Saint King as he said before, but if he did, then Jiede Tai would have managed to secure a strong patron for his clan.

"It wouldn't hurt to try. I've a way to protect myself from its venom after all." Jian Chen carelessly replied. Since he had managed to form the Thousand Immunity long ago, his Chaotic Body naturally benefited from its strong anti-venom property.

Jian Chen left Jiede Tai to stand guard while he went off by himself to look for the lair of the Golden-Striped Silver Snake.

Jian Chen could also use his presence and bubbling sensation of his blood to search the surrounding ten kilometers for the snake. Soon enough, he finally ended up at a mountain ridge ten kilometers away. With his presence surrounding the entire area, Jian Chen found a hidden hole. His presence infiltrated the depths of the cave, but he didn't discover any signs of the snake inside.

"It's without a doubt worthy of being a Class 7 Magical Beast." Jian Chen muttered. His figure dropped down from the sky to reach the cave. He slammed the stone hiding the hole into pieces before striding in.

The depths of the cave were extensive with plenty of curving passageways. The interior was also very dark, one wouldn't even be able to see their own hands in front of their faces. However, it bore no problems to Jian Chen who could see clearly in the cave as if it were day.

Following the passageway for a hundred meters, Jian Chen finally arrived in a thousand meter wide cave. The walls of the cave were scattered with fist-sized night pearls. They lit the cave with a soft white light, giving it the feeling of night time.

At the center of the cave was a two-meter-tall stone altar, and wrapped around that altar was a two meter long snake. A strand of gold and silver streaked across its finger-width back, and its thumb-sized snake head was raised high into the air, cautiously staring at the unexpected guest.

Jian Chen smiled at the gold snake. He knew that despite its small size, it was not to be underestimated. Clapping his hands together in greeting, he said, "This one is Jian Chen. I came here today to visit. If I offended you with my visit, I hope you won't take offense!"

"Human, you are a brave one to dare intrude on my home. Do you wish to die?" The golden snake lifted its mouth open just slightly to hiss out several words in the human tongue. Its voice echoed around the cave, but the sharp tone made it difficult for Jian Chen to determine if it was male or female.

Almost as if he was completely unfazed by the snake's threat, Jian Chen continued to smile. "This one came here to visit your distinguished self for a specific reason. I have an item that I wish to offer you. An item I'm sure would provide no small amount of help to you!"

The snake's eyes flickered slightly as it said, "I can sense the smell of my kin on your body. You've used the blood of my kin to create the Thousand Immunity."

"Correct! I came across a young Golden-Striped Silver Snake once before in the Magical Beast Mountain Range. After a great battle, I was able to obtain its body and use its lifeblood to forge the Thousand Immunity. Its body has been left in my possession ever since, left in perfect condition and without use." Jian Chen took out the clean carcass of the snake from his Space Ring. Since there was no air in Space Rings, items could be stored indefinitely in them. Thus, Jian Chen had been able to keep the corpse in his ring without it ever decaying, keeping it as fresh as the day he killed it.

As soon as the Golden-Striped Silver Snake saw the carcass of its own kin in Jian Chen's hand, its eyes immediately revealed a bright gleam. There was a flash of gold as its body sprung toward Jian Chen's. It snapped its jaws to try and take away the carcass.

Smiling, Jian Chen used the Illusionary Flash to travel several meters away to dodge the surprise attack of the snake. With a shake of his hand, the carcass of the dead snake was returned to his Space Ring.

"Hiss!" The snake's tongue flicked from its mouth as its entire body disappeared once more in a flash of gold. It shot toward Jian Chen again. Its mouth opened wide to show off its sharp teeth as if to tear away Jian Chen's throat.

Allowing the Chaotic Force to cover his body with a single thought, Jian Chen made use of the defensive might of the Chaotic Body to form a fist with his hand. He then punched the snake head-on.

"Bang!" There a muffled sound appeared when the fist connected with the snake. The entire cave shook unsteadily from the power, but Jian Chen's fist remained unharmed. The snake, on the other hand, was sent flying away. It smashed against the wall behind it, leaving behind a giant crater.

After this single exchange, the Golden-Striped Silver Snake realized that Jian Chen would not be as easy to deal with as it initially thought. Floating into the air without a problem, the snake glared at Jian Chen with venomous eyes, "You might not be weak, but you are still no match for me. Hand over the body of my kin to me, or face death!"

Jian Chen tried to shake the numb feeling in his right arm. He was slightly shocked at the defensive might the snake boasted. "This one came here specifically to visit your distinguished self with a gift, but there's no such thing as a free meal. I cannot give the item to you so freely."

"Then what is it that you wish to take from me?" The snake questioned.

"I want you to follow me for ten years. I'll give you the item after that period of time." Jian Chen answered.

A malevolent glare entered the snake's eyes as killing intent began to leak from its body. With a furious laugh, it hissed, "Human, you are far too naive. Do you really think the high and mighty Nubis would follow you for ten years? Even a Saint King has no right to ask, let alone you."

Jian Chen laughed in return, "I presume you know, far more than I do, that the carcass of your own kin is extremely important to you. A Golden-Striped Silver Snake is a beast of antiquity. Even its body is filled with strange oddities. What separates one from any other regular magical beast is that it can devour its own kin to evolve. Not only does your strength increase, even your fighting strength is elevated. It's unfortunate that Golden-Striped Silver Snakes are extremely rare on the continent. Meeting one is already hard enough. I'd say this puts an end to your hopes of devouring another one of your kin to increase your strength. So, the carcass that I hold should be an unbelievable chance for you. Although it was a Class 3 Magical Beast when I killed it, it should still be a benefit to you. I will give it to you in exchange for ten years of your time. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain."

"Human, you speak correctly. Devouring my own kin allows us to grow due to the hidden essence that only we Golden-Striped Silver Snakes can process. As long as that is absorbed, this Origin essence grants us a great boon. To absorb enough of that Origin essence is to allow us to evolve into a divine beast from legends. What you might not know, human, is that I can easily take the skin from your dead corpse once I kill you!" As it finished speaking, the snake's body began to go through a series of permutations in the air. In a flash, it became a young man with a rather skinny build. He wore a golden robe, and possessed golden irises. His hair was also long and golden, giving him the look of an handsome male. From his appearance, the man looked no older than Jian Chen.

"Do you really think you can kill me?" Jian Chen replied as he stood his ground.

#### Chapter 635: The Great Nubis

Jian Chen's words were clearly meant to provoke the Golden-Striped Silver Snake, a snake that held a mighty position as royalty of all snakes. The golden eyes of the snake in human form gleamed scarlet for a single second as killing intent exploded from its body. Coldly, the man said, "Human, if you have such confidence in yourself, allow the great Nubis to see just how strong you are." And with those words, a golden flash was seen as the man flew forward. Following his charge was a bright silver light as if a goddess had illuminated the area with a flowery glow. With the speed of lightning, the man shot toward Jian Chen.

Before Jian Chen could dodge, Jian Chen was covered with strands of silver that began to weave around his body. In the blink of an eye, he was completely cocooned in the silver strands as if he were a silkworm.

As soon the strands wrapped themselves around Jian Chen, they began to tighten around his body. Each strand was like a silvery steel as it covered every inch of Jian Chen's body. They were all as sharp as the edge of a blade. With Jian Chen nestled inside, he felt countless of blades cutting deep into his body, and if not for his Chaotic Body and its defenses, he would have been reduced to minced meat long ago.

The Chaotic Force circulated around Jian Chen's body, protecting every inch of him. He let out a sudden grunt and shook his body, causing the silver strands to be shaken off his body and away into the air. Looking to the Golden-Striped Silver Snake, Jian Chen said, "It seems that the famed Golden-Striped Silver Snake only amounts to this much. Show your full strength or suffer defeat at my hands." Jian Chen used the Illusionary Flash to immediately charge at the youth with an outstretched fist.

"The strength of your body is astonishing to even me. Are you truly a human?" The male spoke with surprise. His eyes were leveled calmly at the fist coming at him. He received it with a powerful fist of his own.

"Boom!"

When the two fists clashed, a powerful explosion rocked the cave as a wave of energy burst away from the impact zone. The entire cave shook to its foundations as stones fell one by one from the ceiling. In every corner of the cave, several fractures could be seen starting to spread.

The golden-robed youth was sent flying from the punch before impacting against the cave wall behind him. Another crater was formed upon impact and the youth's body sank deep into the wall.

Despite the young man being a transformed state of the Golden-Striped Silver Snake, it still boasted a powerful defense and equally powerful strength. Even that wasn't enough to contend with the strength of the Chaotic Body that Jian Chen used.

As the young golden-robed man walked out of the crater, it looked a little worse for wear. However, there were no inherent injuries to his body, and his face was several shades more serious. He no longer showed that previous disdain for Jian Chen. Instead, he stared at his slightly shaking right arm in shock.

This time, it had been the snake that had eaten up a loss.

"No wonder you are known as a beast of antiquity. Your body is so strong that my fist didn't break your arm." Jian Chen laughed. He was rather surprised to experience the strength of a Class 7 Magical Beast. Compared to a Saint Ruler, the contrast in strength was far too much.

"Your flesh is enough to stop even mine. But how? Humans shouldn't possess strength like that. Are you a half-breed? Or a wargod from the ancient Bai clans?" The snake questioned, no longer was there as much confidence in his voice.

"What wargod from the ancient Bai clans? I have no idea what you're talking about. I am a genuine human." Jian Chen laughed.

"Impossible! How could a human possess a body like that? It's stronger than even the flesh of a magical beast." The snake snapped unconfidently.

Quirking his lips, Jian Chen replied, "How about it then? Why don't you think over my previous suggestion. Follow me for ten years and I'll give you the carcass of your kin. That's the only way you'll be getting it since you have no way of killing me."

The snake's face grew darker and darker the more it listened to Jian Chen, "Wishing for the great Nubis to follow you for ten years is no easy task. The battle has only started; even if your body is strong, I still have plenty ways of harming or disposing of you."

"Is that right? Then please allow this one to experience your guidance." Jian Chen laughed. Using the Illusionary Flash to get close to the snake, Jian Chen brought forth a tremendous amount of Chaotic Force into his fist and slammed it onto the male's chest. Following the wake of his fist was a series of ripples in space itself, showing just how strong the punch was.

After experiencing a loss the last exchange, the snake knew just how troublesome Jian Chen's fist was. He no longer wished to take it head-on. Using the powers of space to travel behind Jian Chen, a flash of golden scales could be seen covering the male's right fist. Forming a claw with it, the snake flashed forward to grab Jian Chen's back.

"Pft!" As soon as the sharp claws of the male's hand made contact with Jian Chen's Chaotic Body, they were stopped. The tips were unable to penetrate Jian Chen's skin. It was almost like there was some sort of energy blocking them, causing the male to be unable to move any further.

A brilliant gleam entered Jian Chen's eyes as he swallowed another burst of Chaotic Force from his dantian. A burst of energy flew forth from his body as wildly as a rampaging horse. He moved his hand to slam the five fingertips of the male whose claw was touching him.

The male trembled briefly before he took back his claw hand with lightning quick speed. There was a slight aching pain from his fingertips, causing the male to feel alarmed. He knew that this feeling meant his finger bones had been broken.

"What power is this? How is he so strong? Perhaps he really is a wargod from the ancient Bai clans? Aside from the wargods, no other human could possibly have such strength or power." The snake thought to himself, completely befuddled.

Unwilling to give the golden-robed male any more time to think, Jian Chen flew forward. His fist moved through the air to deliver yet another stunning strike.

However, the male used the powers of space to escape ten meters away, gain some room, but his actions had been predicted by Jian Chen. He used the Illusionary Flash to arrive in front of the male with his fist still traveling unimpeded.

A crimson light entered the golden irises of the male. Unable to dodge, its only option left was to take the blow. With his arms an equal distance apart, the energy of the world began to gather in between the open space of his hands. Strand by strand, a mysterious power began to gather from the surrounding world into the center of his hands. He then pushed the mysterious power toward Jian Chen's incoming fist.

Chapter 636: The Penultimate Compromise

The golden-robed youngster's worldly-energy-filled fist clashed with Jian Chen's Chaotic-Force-filled fist, but not a sound could be heard. Instead, a tremendous wave of energy splashed out and ravaged the area. The cave itself collapsed, reduced to rubble.

With the cave falling apart, pieces of the mountain came crashing down from the ceiling. With dust and stone everywhere, the visibility was reduced to nothing. There were practically no footholds for the two combatants to stand, leaving them with no other choice but to fly. Holes, that traveled so deep they disappeared into an abyss, littered the area because of the destruction they caused. The night pearls that had adorned the walls of the cave had long since been reduced to dust, leaving the area in perpetual darkness.

A faint cyan glow surrounded Jian Chen's body, a sign of the wind element being used. The wind allowed his body to fly up into the air. At the same time, the Origin energy of the sword spirits manifested in his hand. It formed a twenty-meter-long spirit sword that he used to cut apart the remnants of the cave ceiling to get a clear view of the sky.

Similarly, there was golden glow around the other male. Turning back into a two-meter-long golden snake, it flashed into the air in a golden blur, and broke straight through the cave ceiling to reach the open sky above. After freeing himself, he turned back into his human form.

In just a few seconds, Jian Chen and the golden-robed male had gone from a fight in the cave to a fight in the sky outside.

Far below them, the previously giant mountain sank down into itself. The forest was ravaged several dozen kilometers around the cave as if doomsday had struck.

A white figure watched the spectacle in the sky from far away. This figure was was Jiede Tai, the patriarch of the Jiede clan. Even his interest was piqued by what was happening.

"That golden-robed youth has the aura of a magical beast to him. Perhaps it's a Class 7 Magical Beast that can take human form? If it's a Class 7 Magical Beast, could it possibly be the Golden-Striped Silver Snake?" The patriarch wondered aloud to himself full of curiosity. The Golden-Striped Silver Snake was an extremely rare beast on the continent, and the patriarch had only heard about them even though he had lived a long time. He had never seen one in real life until today, and it was a Class 7 one too.

"If it's a Class 7 Magical Beast, then a Saint Ruler could use the powers of space to avoid the venom it spits out, but even against a Class 7 Golden-Striped Silver Snake, that would no advantage at all. The snake is still a strong one even without its venom, is Jian Chen even capable of fighting one?" Jiede Tai muttered with furrowed eyebrows. A Class 7 Golden-Striped Silver Snake was something that gave him a tremendous headache. When he thought about how immense Jian Chen's bodily strength was, the patriarch felt a little relieved. "But Jian Chen himself is a unique person as well. His defenses are an absolute abnormality, and even my strongest blows were unable to leave lasting injuries. I can see that this Golden-Striped Silver Snake has reached the Sixth Heavenly Layer. It will be hard for it to hurt Jian Chen, but still, stories of meeting a Class 7 Golden-Striped Silver Snake would be taken as the ravings of a madman."

Countless of kilometers away, Jian Chen and the golden-robed man stood an equal hundred meters away from one another in the sky. Jian Chen had a very calm look on his face. The other male was staring at Jian Chen with a rather grim but concentrated look.

This Jian Chen in front of him was a hard enemy to fight. Although the snake himself was a very strong creature with equally strong defenses, he found it very difficult to strike down this foe to take the carcass of his dead kin. What gave him the biggest headache was the fact that Jian Chen had managed to gain the Thousand Immunity, making him immune to even his venom. A Class 7 Magical Beast was far stronger than a Class 3 Magical Beast, but the venom was still unable to harm Jian Chen.

“You should understand by now that you cannot kill me nor can you steal away what I own. The only way to earn it is by following me for ten years. Ten years is nothing to a being like you. It’s an infinitesimally small loss with extremely huge returns. Take your time to consider it.” Jian Chen goaded.

Growing silent, the golden-robed man stared ahead with bright eyes that gave no hints to what he was thinking.

After waiting for some time, Jian Chen said, “I have very little time to waste around here. I’ll give you a few more moments to think. If you’re still unwilling, I’ll be taking my leave with this item, taking away your only chance of earning this treasure. If I step back into the human world, you’ll be hard-pressed to find me.”

The fists of the golden-robed man clenched as hints of scarlet entered his eyes. Just faintly, a strong urge to kill could be felt radiating from him.

Sensing the killing intent of the snake, Jian Chen sneered, “I know that your true strength isn’t just this, but you’ve experienced how strong my body is first-hand. You cannot kill me. You cannot wound me. If I wish to leave, you have no way of stopping me, and to reinforce the matter, I’ve another strong companion nearby.”

“Human, I am a being of the magical beasts. Would my travels with you in the human world not cause you to fear the troubles that accompany me?” The male spat.

Shaking his head, Jian Chen replied, “There are plenty of magical beasts living in the human world — many of them are strong. I know there is a treaty between the strongest of the human world with your magical beast clans, but this only applies to those of the Gilligan clan. You aren’t of the Gilligan clan, so there would be no trouble for you to travel in the human world.”

“You know quite a bit of information, but how did you come to know that I’m not of the Gilligan clan?” The male asked.

Smiling, Jian Chen replied, “The strongest that humanity has to offer has prohibited Class 7 Magical Beasts of the Gilligan clan from stepping beyond the Cross Mountains. You’re a Class 7 Magical Beast, yet you live so close to the exterior of the mountain range. Furthermore, you fought with me without worrying about humans coming after you. I could tell from that that you’re not of the Gilligan clan. To ignore these hints would mean I, Jian Chen, am an ignorant fellow.”

“You speak correct. I am not of the Gilligan clan.” At the mention of that clan, the golden-robed man had a look of disdain enter his eyes. “The Gilligan clan is nothing more than a chess piece placed on the Tian

Yuan Continent from the Divine Beast Continent. How could I, the great Nubis, be a chess piece for another?" The male pridefully stuck out his chest.

Jian Chen refrained from smiling when he heard how the snake referred to itself. The snake in front of him was clearly a prideful one. Similar to the aristocratic sons of nobility, but instead of being proud of being rich, the snake was prideful of its strength and its heritage as a beast of antiquity.

"We've already gone past the time limit. What is your decision?"

The snake grew silent. He was an inherently prideful being. He felt it beneath his station to work as an attendant to another, but he desperately coveted the dead corpse of his own kin. He knew that if he could absorb the Origin essence, he would be able to grow much stronger, which made it difficult to give up on the idea.

"Very well, human. You win. I, the great Nubis, will travel with you for ten years. Once those ten years are up, we will have nothing to do with one another." The male compromised. Since the carcass of his dead kin was far too important, he would not refuse the offer.

"Good, that's settled then." Jian Chen smiled happily. A Class 7 Magical Beast as a new entree to his ranks would tremendously increase the strength of the Flame Mercenaries. Even the Sect of Dragon and Tiger would be completely intimidated by one.

"Let us make one thing clear first. In our ten years together, I will not do any heartless tasks or anything that I am not willing to do." The male spoke.

Jian Chen nodded his head after thinking for a moment, "No problem. I can promise you that, but in return, you will not stand by the sidelines if there is any trouble that comes our way."

"Deal!" The snake felt that this deal was a good one. He agreed with Jian Chen as a result.

A smile reached Jian Chen's face at that. Although the snake would only follow him for ten years, ten years was far more than enough for him to finish what he needed to do.

Jian Chen took out the corpse of the Golden-Striped Silver Snake he had killed years ago from his Space Ring and threw it to the other male, "This is yours."

As the corpse floated over to the male, the male's sharp eyes stared at it with excitement. Turning to look at Jian Chen, he asked, "You have that much faith in me? Are you not afraid that I would renege on the deal?"

"You're of the royal family of the snakes with pride beyond all else. Your word would be equivalent to the nine sacred tripods. I am of the belief you are a being of your word."

A great big smile appeared on the male's face, "I am fond of these words. I, the great Nubis, am not a being that speaks empty promises. Worry not, when I say ten years, I mean ten years and not a day less."

## Chapter 637: Epiphany

Laughing, Jian Chen smiled, "I'm Jian Chen. You can call me by that name from now on. Your name is Nubis, I take it? I'll be calling you that from now on as well."

The completion of his mission made Jian Chen extremely happy. After exchanging several happy words with Nubis, the two enemies became a group that would later be fighting shoulder to shoulder in battle.

Jian Chen and Nubis flew toward Jiede Tai who was waiting for them several kilometers away in the air. When Jian Chen saw the astounded look on the patriarch's face, he couldn't help but give a wry grin, "From now on we are all part of a family. Allow me to introduce everyone then. This is the Class 7 Golden-Striped Silver Snake, Nubis. This is a Saint Ruler, Jiede Tai."

"The great Nubis!" The male corrected Jian Chen in dissatisfaction.

"It is an honor to meet you, the great Nubis." Up against a Golden-Striped Silver Snake, Jiede Tai did not desire to be negligent of his manners. He made sure to cup his hands in respect. While he was calm on the outside, his mind was in disarray. In truth, he found it hard to believe that Jian Chen had managed to make a foe like the Golden-Striped Silver Snake submit to him, especially since a Class 7 Magical Beast was by no means easy to fight.

Attentively, Nubis stared at Jiede Tai for a moment before haughtily saying, "Third Heavenly Layer, your strength is just barely adequate."

A series of color changes washed over Jiede Tai's face at those words. He was angered by the words of Nubis, and if it were a human Saint Ruler that had said them, then he would have immediately become hostile. However, just thinking about how different a Golden-Striped Silver Snake was, he had no other choice but to quash his anger down enough for it to not show on his face.

He didn't have the Thousand Immunity, which could negate the snake's venom, like Jian Chen did. The venom from a Class 7 Magical Beast was far more than what Jiede Tai could take.

"The great Nubis, sire, this one will be a comrade in arms in the upcoming times with you. I hope that you and him will be able to get along and avoid any conflict." Jian Chen spoke. He felt rather unhappy at the contemptuous words Nubis said when he spoke to Jiede Tai. Although Jiede Tai was his lackey now, he was still a Saint Ruler that brokered far too much power and dignity to be ridiculed.

"Very well then!" Nubis shrugged his shoulders. He was a being that was inherently proud, so it was only when Jian Chen asked that he would bother trying to tone it down.

Jiede Tai felt slightly relieved when Jian Chen spoke. A simple phrase caused Jiede Tai to look at Jian Chen in a slightly better light. Now he was a little more accepting of his lowly status.

Afterward, the three of them didn't bother to stay in the area much longer. They flew toward Mercenary City.

Not too long after the three left, a purple-robed elder appeared out of nowhere. His eyes stared at the three retreating figures as he muttered to himself, "Only a year has passed since I last saw him, yet Jian Chen's strength has already progressed so much that even that little snake cannot harm him. How truly astounding, but how is his body that strong? Is he really a reincarnation of one of the wargods from the ancient clans?"

Thinking for a moment, the elder then shook his head, "His body and the special characteristics of the wargods of the past are completely different. He must have used some sort of secret technique to gain such a strong physique. If a Fifth Heavenly Layer Saint Ruler is unable to inflict a mortal wound on him,

then it seems that I'll be able to feel at ease while Little Fatty travels with him. He will be able to achieve the goals I have for him soon enough, I hope." At this, the figure of the elder gradually faded away from the world.

In the end, his body could no longer be called the body of a human. It was more like a construct made from the powers of the world.

For two days, the three men traveled back to Mercenary City in a hurry. However, only Jiede Tai and Jian Chen had entered the city while Nubis stood a thousand meters away from the barrier. Mercenary City prohibited any high class magical beasts from entering. It only allowed mounts free entry.

Jian Chen was worried something had happened back at home since his half of the jade slip had broken. Thus, instead of staying in Mercenary City for a moment longer, Jian Chen directed Little Fatty and Wang Yufeng to hurry out to regroup with Nubis.

As Jian Chen approached Nubis once more, the snake gave a sudden start. Both of his eyes swung to the tiger cub that was resting on Jian Chen's shoulder with a look of absolute shock.

"I-Im... th... impossible! It... it has appeared once more in this world!" As soon as he saw the tiger cub, Nubis immediately cried out without a single bit of his previous regal dignity to be heard.

Despite the tiger cub being only a weak Class 5 Magical Beast that Nubis would normally disregard, the origins of the cub were something overwhelmed Nubis.

The power that ran through the bloodline of the tiger cub was far too massive. Nubis swore that not once in his life had he ever felt such a domineering pressure. Even a Class 8 Magical Beast — the magical beast equivalent of a Saint King in the human world — would not be able to force Nubis to feel this very intense, dreadful pressure. It was a pressure that shook his soul to its very core so that he wouldn't dare rebel. In fact, he even felt the urge to kneel down on his knee to swear his allegiance to the cub.

As a Golden-Striped Silver Snake, Nubis was a Class 7 Magical Beast that knew plenty of the world. He understood just what sort of existence this magical beast was to possess such tremendous power. Combined with the special characteristics of the cub, Nubis was sure of its true identity, but even still, he was completely dumbfounded by the revelation.

Jian Chen could tell that Nubis had learned the truth of the tiger cub's identity from his reaction, but this outcome was something he had expected. Thus, he was not surprised.

"O' great Nubis, I hope that you'll be able to safeguard this secret!" Jian Chen discretely spoke to him.

Still not yet fully recovered from his shock, Nubis continued to stare at the sleeping tiger cub a moment longer before looking at Jian Chen, "Jian Chen, does this mean you know its identity?"

Jian Chen nodded his head, but the proximity of Jiede Tai, who was carrying Wang Yufeng and Little Fatty, made Jian Chen pull Nubis away before he whispered, "Great Nubis, the Winged Tiger God is a divine beast of antiquity. It'll definitely become the true king of the magical beasts in the future, but since it is a cub, now would be the best time to foster friendly relations with it. This for you is a great opportunity. I believe you understand just how terrifying the Winged Tiger God is."

Nubis' eyes filled with a bright light while he clenched his fists. He wasn't an ignoramus; Jian Chen's words left him to ponder to himself even more than before. He knew that this was a once-in-a-lifetime event that he couldn't possibly hope to miss. The strength of a Winged Tiger God was something that far surpassed any human he knew of. In the case that the Winged Tiger God matured fully, not a single force in this world would be able to stop it.

"Worry not, I know what must be done." Nubis reassured Jian Chen.

Letting out a sigh of relief, Jian Chen smiled, "Let's go then!"

Afterward, Jian Chen and the others traveled toward the Qinhuang Kingdom. Nubis had been very quick to regain his regular calm, but every so often, as they traveled through the sky, his eyes could be seen lingering on the tiger cub with a hint of fear.

Nubis' earlier loss of composure had been noticed by Jiede Tai. He now kept his eyes on the tiger cub on Jian Chen's shoulder. He had noticed the cub earlier but had took it to be a small cub that Jian Chen was fostering. Thus, he didn't bother wasting any thoughts about it, but Nubis' reaction from made him realize he was a bit too hasty when he made his evaluation.

"What history does this magical beast youngling have to cause an ancient beast like the Golden-Striped Silver Snake to be at a loss like this?" Jiede Tai thought to himself in curiosity, wondering what the tiger cub was.

As Jian Chen and his entourage were on route to the Qinhuang Kingdom, the stalwart middle-aged man from last time was seated in yet another private room of a building in a First Class City in the kingdom closest to Mercenary City. Right in front of him was the same old man that had greeted him last time.

"Respectful sir, there was an important message that had to be reported straight away. Our spy has made a concise report that Jian Chen has left Mercenary City. He is traveling in the direction of the Qinhuang Kingdom. According to what we know, the Qinhuang Kingdom most recently gained another Imperial Protector that goes by the name Jian Chen. It would be my guess that they're the same person!" The elder informed the man.

A brilliant light entered the seated man's eyes as he said, "This information isn't half-bad. You've done well. Take this. Consider it your reward and the surplus a bonus." Throwing down an exquisite Space Ring onto the table, the man left the room.

After two days worth of traveling over thousands and thousands of kilometers, Jian Chen's group finally managed to make it to the edges of the Qinhuang Kingdom. Without any time to rest, the group headed for the palace.

Unbeknownst to them, an extremely faint image floated several thousand meters overhead, looking down on the group. This image looked similar to the middle-aged man, but his face was extremely sinister.

"Winged Tiger God, I've finally found you." The man excitedly spoke.

Chapter 638: The Return

The middle-aged man's eyes lingered on the winged tiger cub on Jian Chen's chest. As big as the continent was, he had been able to learn of the Winged Tiger God by accident, causing him to feel extremely excited.

Half a moment later, the middle-aged man tore his eyes away from the tiger cub to look at the gold-cloaked Nubis. As soon as Nubis' figure registered in his eyes, the man let out a small start, "Hm? That's Nubis! Why is an ancient beast like him following this group?" For a moment, the man pondered to himself. "With his strength, he has surely sensed the bloodline of the Winged Tiger God. He's made his choice to help the Winged Tiger God mature to adulthood it seems. Pity. This choice will only lead him to the road of death."

"How unexpected to see a Class 7 Golden-Striped Silver Snake and a Saint Ruler following Jian Chen around. I could kill them, but that'd alert the Saint Rulers in the Qinhuang Kingdom. With how close Mercenary City is, if one of their strongest found out that I've entered the human world, that'd spell the end for me. I'll have to retreat for now. Bah, I'll let you live another day." The man thought to himself before his transparent image began to fade away from its spot and then out of sight.

Jian Chen and the others remained completely oblivious to the fact that they were being followed. Traveling toward the palace, the group then soon arrived at the entrance.

At Jian Chen's command, everyone landed on the ground and strode into the palace. As an Imperial protector, Jian Chen was a figure that was known to everyone. Not a single person moved to stop him; they instead bowed from their waists while they stood off to the side.

Simultaneously, four enormous bursts of energy resonated from within the palace as if four ancient beasts had awakened from their slumber. The entire area was filled with this aura, almost freezing time itself. Four figures could be seen flying from each corner of the palace into the air above, and behind them, a crack in space itself could be seen. It was as if they were traveling within space instead of air. With unbelievable speed, the four figures surrounded Jian Chen and the others.

"Jian Chen pays his respects to the four seniors!" Jian Chen spoke with a calm smile to the ones around him. Since he knew that these four were the Imperial Protectors of the Qinhuang Kingdom and were Saint Rulers, he could speak without fear. In fact, he even knew two of the four already.

"Jian Chen, it's you!" One of the middle-aged men spoke in surprise. Turning his eyes to the golden-robed Nubis and Jiede Tai, his eyebrows furrowed together, "Jian Chen, who are these two?" With his strength, he could sense that the two figures in front of him were also Saint Rulers.

"Seniors, these two are Jiede Tai and Nubis, two good friends of mine." Jian Chen explained with a smile.

The four Imperial Protectors looked on in uniform shock. They couldn't believe what Jian Chen had said. They would never have thought that Jian Chen would have yet another two Saint Ruler friends — this was a strength that even the Qinhuang Kingdom valued greatly.

"The great Nubis!" Nubis argued in annoyance.

"Hehe, o' great Nubis, you are truly so great. How could I be so blind to not see that?" Wang Yufeng cajoled from the side.

As soon as Wang Yufeng spoke, Nubis took the words as a personal attack and insult to his pride. To hear this from an insignificant ant that hadn't even yet lived for a fraction of his life, Nubis' inherent pride felt greatly insulted.

Nubis' face darkened several shades as a hint of crimson light entered his eyes. An intimidating aura began to leak from his body. It moved toward Wang Yufeng before Nubis grabbed Wang Yufeng's throat with a hand. "Youngster," Nubis started coldly, "Do you even wish to live if you mutter these words? Do you not think the great Nubis will not kill you where you stand right now?"

Wang Yufeng found it impossible to escape or even move because of the death grip that Nubis had on his throat. A feeling of suffocation began to well up from his body. He started to feel as if he was on the verge of death. What had been even more terrifying was the fact that Nubis' eyes were scarlet, adding yet another factor of anger that struck fear into Wang Yufeng.

"Nubis, what are you doing, let go of him!" Jian Chen barked out. The light in his eyes hardened as if to become as sharp as the blade of a sword. Nubis' actions had startled even Jian Chen since Wang Yufeng was a member of their party instead of an enemy.

Nubis turned an eye to look at Jian Chen and shrugged, "Youngster, for the sake of giving some face to Jian Chen, I'll spare your life. You will not speak to me with such a tone in the future. Remember that. Or else I, the great Nubis, will not hesitate to kill you no matter how good of a friend you are to Jian Chen." Nubis released Wang Yufeng's throat, allowing his captive to drop to his knees and gasp for breath. Wang Yufeng's entire body was entirely drenched with sweat because of the previous situation.

"You're not a human — you're a magical beast." One of the Imperial Protectors spoke. When Nubis released his aura, all four of the Imperial Protectors had been able to recognize his true identity.

"Are you of the Gilligan clan?" Another Imperial Protector asked. After he asked his question, the other three Imperial Protectors froze for a fraction of a second.

Nubis gave a level stare at the four Imperial Protectors in front of him and proudly said, "Don't take the great Nubis for a being from the Gilligan clan. There is nothing between them and the great Nubis."

"Four seniors, please don't misunderstand. Nubis may be a magical beast, but he isn't a member of the Gilligan clan. He is a friend of mine and is by no means an outsider." Jian Chen explained. Although he was unhappy with the fact that Nubis had let loose his arrogant attitude, it was far more pertinent to explain the situation and the relationship between Nubis and him or else risk a misunderstanding.

"If that's so, then he's no outsider to us as well." The four Imperial Protectors sighed in relief. However, in their hearts, they were curious how Jian Chen had been able to make friends with such a powerful magical beast. Such a feat filled each and every single one of them with awe and even some envy. The natural fighting potential of a magical beast was far greater than their human counterparts. Some of the rarer magical beasts could even overstep the boundaries of rank and kill humans of a higher level.

Just barely recovering from a near-death experience by Nubis, Wang Yufeng's entire body grew as rigid as a statue when he heard that Nubis was in fact a magical beast. Looking at Nubis with extreme terror, Wang Yufeng realized at that moment that this young golden-robed youth in front of him was a majestic Class 7 Magical Beast. A being that was on par with the Saint Rulers of the human world.

A parade of footsteps could be heard at the same time as well as a dense amount of soldiers came flying in from every direction possible. In the sky, twenty something Heaven Saint Masters appeared — they were the Imperial Advisors that stayed behind to protect the palace while the others were away.

These Imperial Advisors had clearly been startled by the outburst of strength from the four Imperial Advisors when they had made themselves known. The entire palace in fact had been made aware of their presence which caused security to increase to the maximum.

“Go back to what you were doing before.” One Imperial Protector commanded with a calm voice that traveled into the ears of all the soldiers there.

The dense crowd of soldiers soon trickled back into the palace as if they were water. As soon as they appeared, all of them had left, leaving behind only the twenty something Heaven Saint Masters in the sky. Each one of them were looking at the four Imperial Protectors in shock. The four Imperial Protectors were generally hidden within the palaces cultivating. They’d only leave the palace once every ten or so years to get some exercise, but to have all four of them appear at once was an extremely surprising sight.

“We pay our respects to the Imperial Protectors!” The Heaven Saint Masters bowed respectfully.

One of the Imperial Protectors waved his hands and replied, “You may leave!”

“Yes!” The twenty Heaven Saint Masters replied before glancing curiously at the entourage behind Jian Chen. Silently withdrawing, each one of them was extremely curious despite their calm demeanors. These strangers had been enough to startle even the four Imperial Protectors; this meant that these strangers were definitely important people.

“Jian Chen, I heard that you came across some trouble while in Mercenary City. Although we wanted to help you, the Qinhuang Kingdom was facing some dangers that we had to address. Thus, we could spare no time to help. We hope that you won’t take offense to that.” An Imperial Protector apologetically smiled at Jian Chen. It didn’t matter if it was the feat Jian Chen had accomplished back in Mercenary City or the fact that two Saint Rulers were traveling with him, the four of them couldn’t risk mistreating Jian Chen right now.

A great big smile appeared on Jian Chen’s face before he began to make conversation with the four Imperial Protectors. After several words, he got to the main problem at hand, “Seniors, something is happening back within my homelands, so I must hurry back there right away. If we may speak another day.”

“That’s fine, we won’t take up brother Jian Chen’s time any longer if that’s the case.”

Afterward, Jian Chen and the third prince, Qin Ji, managed to say their goodbyes. Then the four Imperial Protectors led Jian Chen’s group to the Space Gate where they would leave the kingdom from.

Chapter 639: The Leaking of the Tungsten Alloy Deposit

The Imperial Advisors had made the preparations for Jian Chen’s group to travel to the Heavenly Kingdom via the Space Gate some time ago. Thus, they were able to arrive there extremely fast.

As soon as they stepped through the gate, Jian Chen's eyes swept the area only to realize that the palace was still the same as it always was. The only difference was the fact that there was a slightly cold and tense feeling throughout the place. All over the area, there were war banners flying high with mimicking the fire-red symbol a flame.

Jian Chen was no stranger to these banners since they marked the Flame Mercenaries.

Suddenly, a series of footsteps quickly came echoing into the courtyard as several hundred men came flying toward Jian Chen, surrounding him and his group. As they moved to encircle them, the men glared viciously at Jian Chen.

"Who are you? State your names at once!" The leader of the group commanded.

"Jian Chen!" Jian Chen replied.

Straight away, the man's face froze. He was no stranger to this name and was in fact quite familiar with it. That was the name of the captain after all.

The leading captain concentrated on Jian Chen some more before finally recognizing him. A startled look appeared on his face before he bowed his head down to his waist in salute, "Ah so it was the captain! Your subordinate would have no eyes if I was unable to recognize the captain, please forgive this one!"

The people around the captain recognized Jian Chen by this point as well. An immediate change overcame each and every single one of them, causing them to bow. "We pay our respects to the captain!" Several hundred voices called out at once, breaking the monotonous silence in the palace. Hence, the entire palace now knew that Jian Chen was here, causing everyone to file toward his position.

A faint azure glow made itself known as a young figure in white flew toward Jian Chen. When he came to a stop in front of him and saw Jian Chen's face, the figure smiled widely, "Jian Chen! You're finally back! Any longer and I would've gone out to look for you." This youth was Ming Dong.

"Jian Chen, you're back!"

"Brother, you've come back!"

At the voice of Ming Dong, the voices of two women rang out. It was You Yue, Huang Luan, and Bi Lian that came rushing toward Jian Chen with joyous expressions.

All of the higher-ranking members of the Flame Mercenaries gathered in the interior of the palace, so in no time at all, the empty space was quickly filled with people.

Jian Chen gave several words of greeting to everyone before he was guided into the grand halls. This specific hall was the hall where the nobles of the old Heavenly Eagle Kingdom had conducted business relating to the kingdom, but since the Flame Mercenaries had taken up residence, it had been repurposed and renamed to the Flames Hall.

Jian Chen was seated on top of the golden throne in the middle of the hall with Nubis, Jiede Tai, Wang Yufeng, and Little Fatty standing by his side without a word to say. Little Fatty was looking around filled with great curiosity. He had only just started to travel the continent, so every single thing he saw in this strange world was a new wonder to marvel.

Beneath Jian Chen and them were the Heaven Saint Masters, Ming Dong, and the others of the Flame Mercenaries standing together.

Jian Chen gave a cursory look around as if preparing to say something. He then started off with an introduction of Jiede Tai and the others, but he only gave a brief introduction of their backgrounds. He did not mention how strong they were.

After the introductions were finished, Jian Chen wasted no more words. He immediately got to the crux of the problem. Taking out the crushed jade piece he had in his Space Ring, he asked, "What was so serious for you to call me back using the twin jade stones?"

"What else but about the tungsten alloy? Jian Chen. Half a month ago, news of the vein was leaked to the world. The fact that the Flame Mercenaries are harboring a vein of tungsten alloy is making its way around so fast that everyone knows about it." You Yue replied.

Jian Chen smiled, "Paper can't resist being burned by fire. News that the tungsten alloy would be leaked was within my expectations, but I didn't think it'd be revealed so quickly. What plans have the ones that know about the tungsten alloy made so far?"

"Ever since we garrisoned the Flame Mercenaries here, the strength of the seven factions grew dramatically especially with the Qinhuang Kingdom as support, but the surrounding kingdoms have grown jealous. While they haven't made any open plans just yet, there is still one problem. The Sect of Dragon and Tiger." Bi Lian explained. She and You Yue were very capable of managing the Flame Mercenaries, so Jian Chen had left the group in their care while he was away.

While there were plenty of strong individuals in the Flame Mercenaries where even Heaven Saint Masters were abundant, strength was not a decisive factor in regards to management. What was important was not talent in cultivation, but a sharp mind and intelligent soul.

At the mention of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, a furious glare entered Jian Chen's eye. He could still remember the Saint Ruler of that sect had done to him, and he would never forget it either.

"Does the Sect of Dragon and Tiger hope to seize the tungsten alloy?" Jian Chen asked with an increasingly colder glare. If it were before, the Sect of Dragon and Tiger would've brought a great deal of pressure onto him. However, right now, the Saint Ruler posed no problem at all to him.

You Yue nodded. "Correct. They want their portion of the soup, but their appetites are far too large. They've demanded two-thirds of the deposit; naturally, we refused. Maybe it's because they fear the Qinhuang Kingdom, but they didn't do anything after our refusal. They instead gave us seven days to think it over."

"Brother, the Sect of Dragon and Tiger want to see just how the Qinhuang Kingdom will treat this affair. We've already made a detailed report on the strength of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger compared to our Flame Mercenaries. We've concluded that our Flame Mercenaries don't have the power to refuse them. I'm afraid that if the Qinhuang Kingdom doesn't partake in this, then the Sect of Dragon and Tiger will simply take the deposit straight from our hands." Bi Lian spoke.

"Bi Lian is right, Jian Chen. Our only guarantee to the deposit is if the Qinhuang Kingdom helps us. Our only connection to them is through you, and with how there's no time to lose, we had no other choice

but to call you back using the twin jade pieces.” You Yue gave her input with a serious voice. This matter with the Sect of Dragon and Tiger had given her a tremendous headache.

“How many days has it been since they gave us seven days?” Jian Chen asked.

“It’s been six days already, tomorrow is the very last day!” Ming Dong grimly answered.

A cold sneer appeared on Jian Chen’s face at that response, “If that’s the case, then we’ll just wait for the Sect of Dragon and Tiger to come. There’s no need for everyone to worry, I’ll handle the matter myself.”

Everyone had let out a sigh of relief when Jian Chen replied. They did not doubt in his words at all. Even those not of his inner circle knew of his other identity. He was the Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom, one of the Eight Great Empires. Just how could a person like that give his word so easily without the strength to back it up?

With the problem regarding the Sect of Dragon and Tiger resolved, everyone split up at the suggestion of Jian Chen. Soon enough, the grand halls of the palace became eerily empty with only a scant few people remaining.

Standing up from his throne, Jian Chen looked to Ming Dong and then the rest. In the months they had been apart, You Yue and Bi Lian both were the most fatigued-looking of the group. The past several days of managing the mercenaries must have taken a considerable amount of energy from them.

To apologize, Jian Chen gave a small smile, “You Yue, Lian’er, the past few days must have been hard on you. Perhaps I shouldn’t have thrown such a burdensome task to you two. I can tell that you two are far more exhausted than when I last saw you two.”

Bi Lian gave a sweet smile in response to him, “Brother, don’t worry about me. The Flame Mercenaries is just at the developing stage since it only recently was formed, so there’s lots to do. It should become easier with time.”

“I’ll be sure to find some people who are adept in management and are trustworthy. With such people around to help, that’ll alleviate some of your pressure.” Jian Chen proposed.

“Brother, I’ve already considered finding someone. There’s quite a number of people I think would be good at managing others. Zhan Tian in particular.” Bi Lian replied.

“Zhan Tian!” Jian Chen was alarmed. He remembered this man since he was the captain of the Carnage Mercenaries.

“Zhan Tian is a dependable person, let’s have him undertake this responsibility then.” Jian Chen spoke after some time to think.

“Got it!”

Afterward, Jian Chen took out a small fist-sized fruit from his Space Ring and handed it to Bi Lian with a smile. “Lian’er, this is a Geofruit, a ten-thousand-year-old heavenly resource. I bought this in an auction house in Mercenary City to help change your cultivation. Once you eat this fruit, your body will become extremely suitable for cultivation. In the future, you’ll find almost no obstacles in your path.”

“Brother, you must have spent so much money for this.” Bi Lian was deeply moved. Her eyes stared at the Geofruit in front of her with the slight hint of tears starting to form.

Unable to stop himself from smiling, Jian Chen replied, “Money is of no concern. As long as it’ll benefit Lian’er, then all the money spent is worth it.”

From the side, Nubis stared at the Geofruit in Jian Chen’s hand, “Using a ten-thousand-year-old heavenly resource to change the body of an ordinary person. What a spendthrift you are. This is a treasure even Saint Rulers use to prolong their lives. Jian Chen, let’s make another deal. If you give this Geofruit to me, I’ll follow you around for another three years.”

In the human world, the Geofruit was a treasure, but it wasn’t extinct. Every year in Mercenary City another heavenly resource of the same level would appear, but as a magical beast, Nubis couldn’t simply walk into Mercenary City. Therefore, obtaining a ten-thousand-year-old heavenly resource became a whole lot harder. It was practically impossible to gain one in the human world as a magical beast.

The Cross Mountains had plenty of ten-thousand-year-old heavenly resources, but those were carefully seized by the Gilligan clan. Hence, Nubis himself was unable to take any. While he was a Class 7 Magical Beast, obtaining a ten-thousand-year-old heavenly resource wasn’t easy for him.

Jian Chen shook his head without even a second consideration, “This Geofruit is for Lian’er. If you still need one, I’ll buy one in Mercenary City when the time comes.”

“If that is what you say let it be then” Nubis was placated. A ten-thousand-year-old heavenly resource had the ability to prolong the life of the eater, and magical beasts were no exception to that.

“Ten-thousand-year-old heavenly resources aren’t something that can be eaten by anyone without consequence. Jian Chen, if you want to change your cousin’s body composition, you may want to invite an alchemist. An alchemist can craft medicines that can make the rich spiritual might of the heavenly resource docile so that your cousin may be able to eat it.” Jiede Tai suddenly spoke.

“Have the best alchemist come to me at once!” Jian Chen commanded without delay.

Chapter 640: Dealing with the Sect of Dragon and Tiger

About ten thousand meters high in the sky above the Qinhuang Kingdom, the faint image of a person could be seen surrounded by a sea of clouds. With those clouds in the way, neither of the four Imperial Protectors had seen or sensed his existence.

The astral figure was currently staring down at the Space Gate in the center of the Qinhuang Kingdom’s palace. The figure’s fists were clenched tightly and his teeth were gritted angrily as he spat, “Blasted scoundrel! He escaped through the Space Gate. How troublesome, I didn’t even have time to place a tracer on him. Where has he gone? I’ll have to waste even more time and energy now, blast!” The figure thought to himself in anger.

But then a thought struck him, “Jian Chen is an Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom. This means that if I pay attention to what they say in the kingdom, I’ll be able to figure out where he has gone to.” With the plan set, the figure then faded away from site.

All of the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom had been transformed into the territory of the Flame Mercenaries, but with the previously hidden tungsten alloy now known throughout the area, countless of smaller kingdoms had been enticed. However, not a single one of them had been spurred into action besides the Sect of Dragon and Tiger.

The pressure that came from the threat of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger was alleviated with the return of Jian Chen. Although Jian Chen didn't fear the sect, he didn't wish to make a preemptive strike against them either. Instead, he wanted to wait two days for the sect to come. Jian Chen wanted the sect to come with large forces and war banners ready for battle. He then wanted them to return back to where they came, ashen-faced with dejection and defeat.

On the morning of the second day, Jian Chen could be seen seated on top of the throne in the grand halls. Down beneath him was an older man bent down at the waist, "He Yun pays his respects to the captain!"

Smiling at the elder, Jian Chen said, "Master He Yun, they say that you are the most accomplished alchemist within this kingdom. What kind of alchemy are you capable of?"

"Captain, as an alchemist, I've several accomplishments under my belt. As long as I possess the ingredients, I am capable of concocting many different high-leveled pills." He Yun respectfully answered. He knew that the young person in front of him was the leader of the Flame Mercenaries. The person who the seven factions of the defunct Heavenly Eagle Kingdom swore allegiance to.

"I've a single ten-thousand-year-old heavenly resource. Master He Yun, would you be able to process it into a pill?" Jian Chen calmly asked as if negotiating an everyday deal with He Yun.

Like any other person, He Yun was startled to hear of a ten-thousand-year-old heavenly resource, but he was quick to recover, "Captain, I hate to be one to disappoint, but a ten-thousand-year-old heavenly resource is beyond even my alchemical skills. I do not possess the ability to process such a treasure."

"Jian Chen, you don't have to make an alchemical pill from the ten-thousand-year-old heavenly resource. Your cousin's body can't handle the concentrated spiritual Qi inside the heavenly resource. All the alchemist has to do is make that Qi docile so that your cousin will be able to take it." Jiede Tai explained to Jian Chen.

Nodding, Jian Chen turned to look at He Yun, "Master He Yun, would you be capable of this?"

Letting out a sigh in relief, He Yun cupped his hands, "Captain, as long as I have the compatible ingredients, this is something that I can do."

"So be it then. I'll be relying on you, master He Yun. Stay within the royal palace in the meanwhile, and I will deliver whatever ingredients you need with haste." Jian Chen decreed.

"Yes, captain!"

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In the blink of an eye, the two final days had gone by. Today would be the day the deadline the Sect of Dragon and Tiger gave to relinquish the vein of tungsten alloy to them. Several dozen Heaven Saint

Masters floated anxiously waiting for the sect to arrive. Around the perimeter of the valley, even more Earth Saint Masters stood by.

This time, they were up against the experts of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, so Jian Chen and the other powerful individuals had already gathered here. There were only one hundred Earth Saint Masters to reduce the casualty count because of the fact that they would be more of a liability than helpful.

Seated not too far away at an empty clearing in the valley was Jian Chen, Ming Dong, Dugu Feng, Tie Ta, Huang Luan, You Yue, Jiede Tai, Nubis, Wang Yufeng, and Little Fatty. Chatting and eating at the table, not a single one of them looked as if they cared about the Sect of Dragon and Tiger

Stepped this was the very first time he had stepped onto the continent, Little Fatty was extremely curious about everything. Without rest, he asked for guidance on many different facets and questions, and sometimes the extremely naive words of his caused everyone else to laugh out loud. Unwilling to disappoint, Wang Yufeng relentlessly explained every single little experience he had collected while exploring the continent to everyone there. Soon enough, everyone had become friendly with one another. Jian Chen himself would interject a few times. Only Nubis and Jiede Tai kept to themselves with their eyes closed and not a word spoken.

An hour later, both Nubis and Jiede Tai opened their eyes to look off into a distant direction. Not too long later, even Jian Chen realized the change. Putting a stop to the conversation, he looked off in the same direction with a pointed stare. "They've come. Nubis, Jiede Tai, hide your auras and don't let them see you."

"The great Nubis!" Nubis muttered in dissatisfaction.

Soon enough, a dozen Heaven Saint Masters came flying over before coming to a stop above the valley an equal distance away from the Heaven Saint Masters of the Flame Mercenaries. They were the men of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger.

Jian Chen stared down these new arrivals with a glare that could freeze water. Many of them were familiar faces, three of them were the ones he had once fought in front of their sect gates.

"Flame Mercenaries, your seven days are up. I presume you've made your decision." The sectmaster, Kris, smiled.

"Sectmaster Kris, I wonder what it is that you want us to consider. Why don't you come out and say it?" Jian Chen replied to him while biting into an apple.

Kris' eyes hovered over to Jian Chen before he clasped his hands together in greeting, "Ah, so it's the captain of the Flame Mercenaries and Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom. I, the incumbent sectmaster of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, greet you." Kris paused briefly before saying, "Imperial Protector, we of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger are here for the tungsten alloy deposit. As agreed upon before, we want two-thirds of the deposit, and the remaining third will be left to you."

Sitting upright on the stool he sat on, Jian Chen stared daggers at Kris, "How audacious your sect is to dare demand two-thirds of the resources. Do you think yourself capable of making such a demand?"

Instead of being angry, Kris only laughed, "Imperial Protector, the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom was originally ours to manage and govern. Therefore, the tungsten alloy is within our territory and is our

right as well. According to logic, the entirety of the vein should be ours, but out of respect for the Qinhuang Kingdom, we shall only take two-thirds of it and leave the rest to you. That is a reasonable and fair amount.”

“What an overt excuse! Men of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, listen to me now; the Heavenly Eagle Kingdom and its territories have already been subjugated by my Flame Mercenaries. The tungsten alloy is therefore under our possession. I’ll give you all a brief moment to leave. If you don’t, then don’t blame me for being rough with you.” Jian Chen coldly responded as if unwilling to quibble with them any longer.

“How brazen, Jian Chen! This old man would like to see just how rough you’ll be then!” An elderly voice suddenly made itself known as it echoed through the sky. Right above the men from the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, a single elderly man appeared out of nowhere — he was the Saint Ruler of the sect.

Leveling a cold glare at the elder, Jian Chen gave an equally cold smile. “Saint Ruler of the Sect of Dragon and Tiger, you’ve finally made your appearance, and here I thought you’d hide for a little longer.”

Expressionless, the Saint Ruler looked at Jian Chen, “You aren’t half bad at cultivation, but you are only still a Heaven Saint Master. Without the Qinhuang Kingdom behind you, you are merely a gnat in my eyes. I only pardoned your life last time out of respect to the Qinhuang Kingdom. That’s why you can still stand here today, but if you’re still so bold to spout off such blasphemous words toward my sect, then I cannot spare your life any longer. Are you willing to bet whether or not I’ll beat your body into a thousand pieces?”

“Does your sect not fear the Qinhuang Kingdom?” Jian Chen inquisitively asked.

Laughing, the Saint Ruler answered, “The Qinhuang Kingdom barely has any time to look after itself. How could it spend extra time trying to reach here? Jian Chen, if you were hoping to look to the Qinhuang Kingdom for support, then you should give up now and obediently hand over the tungsten alloy. I won’t make things troublesome for you, but if you don’t comply, then you’ll know the consequences.” Unless he was forced to, the Saint Ruler didn’t want to kill Jian Chen in front of everyone. It was true that Jian Chen, as a Heaven Saint Master, was as weak as an ant to him, but he was still an Imperial Protector of the Qinhuang Kingdom. Even a Saint Ruler would hesitate to kill one of them so quickly.