

Emperor 3411

[Chapter 3411: Stoneshell Beetle King](#)

Some spectators' legs were trembling from the sheer number of beetles.

"Damn, I've never seen so many before." A pale one murmured.

This was the first time for Shi Wawa as well. He hid behind Li Qiye right away.

"Crack! Crack! Crack!" The beetles then used their horns to widen the hole that they were peeking out of.

It didn't take long before the entire valley was filled with larger holes, no longer looking like before.

"What are they doing?" A first-timer asked.

"Stuffing in the source stone." An older cultivator didn't find this surprising.

"They can really find or pull the source stones out?" The first-timer asked again because the beetles looked so tiny.

After all, these stones were heavy. Even a fist-sized one had some weight to it, more than enough to crush these beetles.

"Throw one and see." Someone nearby instigated.

The first-timer actually took out a source stone from his pouch, one the size of a bowl without any carving and uncut.

He briefly estimated the throw before actually tossing it towards the beetles.

"Buzz." One of them flew up right away.

People realized that they actually had wings. It's just that the wings were hidden beneath their carapace.

The beetle easily caught the heavy stone despite being one-tenth the size. The stone felt as light as a flower.

"Crack!" It cut the source stone into something smaller with a thin outer layer. One could faintly see a jade light within. Next, the beetle rolled this stone towards its hole.

"My stone!" This cultivator shouted, moved forward, and reached for it.

"Buzz." Unfortunately for him, the beetle used its wings. After a flash, blood started splattering everywhere.

"Ahh!" His hand was severed by the little creature.

"Run already!" An expert warned.

The shocked cultivator started running but the beetle didn't let him go. He couldn't scream this time because it decapitated him. His eyes were still wide open, not expecting to meet his end here.

Once people calmed down, the beetle was already back near its hole, not stained by a single drop of blood.

The newcomers couldn't believe it. These beetles were far stronger than expected.

"How are we going to get the source stones?" A young one turned pale and said.

"Not all of them are so aggressive. Be lucky and pick the right one. Plus, they're not that fast either. You just need to be quick enough to take the stone and run." An elder imparted some experience to his juniors.

Nonetheless, some started giving up. They only wanted to watch now since they didn't have a death wish.

"Click. Click. Click." The beetle finally rolled the stone into its hole. Suddenly, the gap became filled perfectly without a single crack left behind.

"What is it doing, hiding the stone?" A youth wondered.

"They eat the treasures inside the stones, whether it be refined jade or something else. It's enough to fill them for a long time." An older cultivator answered.

The young ones finally understood why the beetles would come out for stones.

More sound waves still came from the deep cave in the valley. It sounded like a flowing river of stones.

"It's about to start." The veterans stared at the cave after hearing this.

"Zzz..." Fog came out from the cave, still with a petrification power. The walls of the cave had another layer added.

"Isn't this the dangerous fog?!" Some became startled and retreated.

Fortunately, the fog only covered the cave and didn't spread any further. The crowd heaved a sigh of relief.

They also realized why there was a belief stating the power of petrification came from this cave. There seemed to be more mysteries down there.

Since the beetles could get stones out of the cave, there might be a rich mine beneath. Alas, the presence of the fog stopped anyone from trying. This was the reason why the cave remained untouched for millions of years.

"Crack!" A hole appeared on the side of a cliff. The beetle coming out was special - it had a blinding golden radiance.

"The king!" Some spectators shouted.

This one was double the size of a regular Stoneshell Beetle, also seemingly cast from gold.

"That's the beetle king?" Shi Wawa became excited.

"Such a powerful insect." A veteran knew the value of this powerful creature.

“Wouldn’t it be nice to capture it?” Another said.

“Stop dreaming, even a Heavenly Sovereign might have trouble doing so.” An expert immediately chastised.

Those nearby immediately gave up right away and kept their mouth shut.

By this point, the beetles in the valley turned towards their king. This looked like a great army greeting their ruler.

The king looked so tiny. Others felt as if they could easily crush it. However, it exuded a regal aura as if all existences here should be bowing towards it. This wondrous aura was an obvious testament to its power.

Some experts became serious. The more powerful the king, the better the stone it could get out of the cave. This made the risk worth it.

“It’s definitely mine.” Prince Wu’s eyes became bright.

“Zi-” The king gave the order.

All the beetles started crawling towards the cave. Their sheer number made it look like a rising tide moving towards the cave.

[Chapter 3412: Source Stones](#)

The waves of Stoneshell Beetles surged into the cave to the astonishment of the spectators.

“What an incredible insect army, just imagine being able to control them.” One elder shuddered.

This definitely gave people some idea. They all saw the power of these beetles and the sheer number. If someone could actually control this army, they would gain immense power.

“This group is enough to flatten an entire sect.” One expert commented.

It was apparent that controlling this army would result in an insane battle potential, enough to take on anyone. However, no one should be able to do so or someone would have done it long ago.

“Buzz.” The petrification power also invaded the beetles. Alas, it seemed ineffective and the army moved into the cave.

Everyone watched with bated breath, waiting for them to bring out the source stones.

“Get ready.” An experienced cultivator whispered to his friends.

They have made preparation to seize the source stones the moment these beetles came back out.

In fact, this was the case for the majority of groups present. The valley became strangely quiet since everyone held their breath. One could hear the drop of a needle right now.

After a while, one shadow finally showed up by the entrance. “Buzz.” The petrification force struck again to no avail.

“Click. Click.” One beetle rolled a source stone out of the cave. The shell has been cut down to a thin layer. The treasure inside was almost visible.

It emitted a ruby glow. The actual item remained unknown but it should be precious enough given the beautiful light.

“Go!” One expert instantly made his move and threw his rope forward. It instantly coiled around the source stone and he pulled it back into his grasp.

The beetle naturally flew towards this thief but the guy was ready. He fled for his life the moment he grabbed the source stone and disappeared from sight. The furious beetle had no choice but to return to the cave.

“Click. Click.” More beetles came out with source stones from the dark entrance.

They have also polished the stones, leaving behind just a thin shell with a glow within. Some even issued powerful roars, indicating the value of the innate treasures.

It didn’t take long before thousands of them came out. This meant that thousands of treasures were also made available.

Different colors, rainbows, roars, and weapon flashes could be seen. A great treasury had just opened and started rolling out of the cave.

Some spectators salivated; their eyes reddened with greed.

“Now!” They all made their moves with haste.

The treasures were simply too tempting and made their heart skip a beat. Even those who only wanted to watch for fun couldn’t keep this mindset and followed the mass.

“Ah! Ah!” Numerous died for nothing during the attempted theft since the beetles didn’t play nice and naturally retaliated.

A few managed to grab their stone but unfortunately, not all were strong enough to escape the incoming attacks.

Blood splashed everywhere as limbs and heads were torn by the beetles.

Some elders and sect masters came with sufficient preparation. They activated a powerful defensive artifact during the attempt, allowing them to escape unscathed.

The beetle victims had no choice but to go back to the cave for another stone.

“Rumble!” The old men behind Prince Wu made their move together and instantly got several stones while fending against the beetles. These stones were definitely top-notch according to their pulsing light.

“Hurry up!” A few people who got stones the first time became greedy and returned. They didn’t want to leave right away when more treasures were up for grab.

Unfortunately, they weren’t as lucky this time around and faced mightier beetles, resulting in death.

“Ah!” Limbs, heads, and blood were all over the valley in just a short time.

“The price of avarice is death, they’re courting death for being so greedy.” The youth named Qing Shi told Li Qiye.

Virtually everyone has joined the fray out of greed. This wasn’t the case for Qing Shi. He was one of the few waiting patiently just like Li Qiye. A young one like him having this strong mentality was exceptional indeed.

Meanwhile, the valley was as lively as can be. The successful cultivators couldn’t help but cheer. The ones losing died before they could utter a scream.

“Boom! Boom! Boom!” Loud noises suddenly came from the cave in a rhythmic manner. Something heavy seemed to be crushing the ground.

Rays of light shone in the dark cave, looking like the glow of the finest cornelian. It chased the fog away from the entrance.

Sure enough, people looked over and saw the beetle king pushing a massive source stone. The other beetles stopped right away; the same with other cultivators.

All eyes were on this new source stone - definitely the largest one yet, around the size of a basin. This was after a full polishment too; the unnecessary parts have been cut and discarded.

[Chapter 3413: Taking The Source Stone](#)

The large source stone of the beetle king issued resplendent rays capable of sealing space itself.

The cornelian glow came from within the thin shell in a blinding manner, akin to the sun itself. People couldn’t stare straight at it, rendering it impossible to predict the treasure within.

They could actually sense a blazing flame surrounded by the shell, on the verge of incinerating and breaking out. Everyone could sense the impressive power in there, stopping in their track and staring at the stone in awe.

“Gulp.” Swallowing and salivating noises could be heard from the crowd.

“What kind of treasure is in there?” One guy asked.

“In my opinion, it starts at least at the dao lord refined jade level.” One older cultivator focused his gaze, wanting to see through the shell.

Many were doing the same thing in order to figure it out. Unfortunately, their heavenly gazes were useless.

“Are we doing this?” The top masters nearby quietly discussed. They consisted of elders and sect masters.

One person shouldn’t be able to grab this stone because the beetle king was just too strong.

“Whoosh!” Finally, someone decisively made a move with a divine rope. It instantly coiled around the stone source of the beetle king.

Unfortunately, the guy couldn't pull it back because the king had one tiny foot on it. The thing was only around the size of a fist so its foot was tiny, to say the least.

However, the powerful cultivator had no chance of moving it an inch. It was as if he was trying to pull thousands of mountains stacked on top of each other.

"Buzz." The king flapped one wing without flying up. The wing shot out a golden slash.

"Splash!" The cultivator was instantly decapitated. Blood gushed out of his severed neck.

It was far more powerful than the other beetles. Just one wing flap was enough to kill a top expert.

"Suppress it!" Three famous old cultivators made their move in the next second.

One of them used a treasure seal with immense suppressive pressure. Another roared and spread out his hand like the claw of a true dragon. It cut through space as he tried to grab the source stone. The final old man summoned a shield to deal with the king.

The three of them planned this beforehand - one focused on offense, another defense, and the last grabbing the stone.

Unfortunately, they still underestimated the beetle king. It used its horns and easily pierced through the seal. Its wings flashed again and cut the shield in half. Finally, it slightly moved its foot and reduced the dragon claw into a bloody mist.

The three actions flowed beautifully like water. This king was as powerful as the top human cultivators.

"Ah! Ah! Ah!" Three screams came out, signaling the end of the trio.

"Don't let it get back inside its hole!" More cultivators jumped forward to stop the king.

They knew the danger but the temptation of the precious source stone was worth the fatal risk.

In just a short time, numerous employed different methods and schemes for the sake of winning the stone.

The king still had one foot on the stone and fought against the mass. Screams and blood engulfed the valley as many combatants were being killed.

At the same time, Li Qiye watched with both hands behind his back. He stared at the source stone with no intention of joining.

"That beetle is so strong." Shi Wawa couldn't believe it while watching the massacre.

Qing Shi nearby was only interested in the source stone, not the beetle king. He asked Li Qiye: "Brother, what do you think that treasure is?"

"A decent weapon." Li Qiye glanced at him.

"You can see it?" Qing Shi only asked for fun, not expecting to hear an actual answer. After all, the shell barrier prevented others from seeing it.

Li Qiye smiled and didn't answer.

“You must be a mason master.” Qing Shi stared curiously at Li Qiye. These mason masters were best at understanding source stones.

“Our Young Master is amazing like that, he can pick any stone without making a single mistake.” Wawa jumped in, having experienced Li Qiye’s ability.

Qing Shi’s curiosity grew, wondering who Li Qiye was. Alas, he couldn’t figure anything out.

“Ahh!” Ultimately, the strongest elder in the first wave fell to the beetle king.

The thing still stood in the same spot, looking like a prideful ruler. Countless corpses piled around it.

The remaining experts took a deep breath. They exchanged glances, not daring to give it a shot.

This wasn’t the case for Prince Wu’s party. Six old men behind him summoned six bronze treasures. They descended and surrounded the beetle king.

Prior to this, these men have been watching carefully to look for the king’s weak points.

“Boom!” The six pieces started shrinking towards the center. They wanted to trap the king and the source stone then take both with them.

“So ambitious, they want the king too.” The spectators became surprised.

“Well, they’re big shots from Wu.” Another said.

“Boom! Boom! Boom!” Loud blasts came from the center of the six treasures. Big indentations appeared on their other side.

“Boom!” Finally, all six were blown away, unable to contain the beetle king.

“Again!” The six worked together by combining their vitality in order to summon a different treasure.

A golden bell emerged with the aura of a Heavenly Sovereign. It was as if one was sitting up in the clouds, ready to suppress the firmaments.

“A Heavenly Sovereign treasure!” The crowd blurted out in astonishment and fear due to the invincible aura stemming from it.

“That’s Wu for you, living up to its reputation.” Another commented.

“Poof!” The bell poured down a torrent of flame, fully surrounding the beetle king. This flame could incinerate heaven and earth with its might.

[Chapter 3414: Youthful Audacity](#)

The tyrannical and endless flame surrounded the beetle king.

The cultivators present exchanged glances, impressed by the power of a Heavenly Sovereign artifact. This golden bell could easily refine any of them.

“The king will die at this rate.” One cultivator murmured.

“Not necessarily, it is quite strong.” An older cultivator raised his brows.

Of course, they had to admit that the six old men from Wu were mighty as well. They were probably the pillars of that country yet still came here with the prince. It looked like their clan truly wanted this source stone from the king beetle, perhaps the creature as well.

This was akin to getting two birds with one stone - an incredible harvest.

“Chain Seal!” The six men shouted in unison.

“Clank! Clank! Clank!” The flames turned into thick, long chains - seemingly made from thousands of dao laws twisted together. They surrounded the beetle king before anyone could react.

Though it was trapped, the flames still couldn’t refine it in the slightest.

“Even the flame of a Heavenly Sovereign treasure can’t take it down?” One spectator took a deep breath.

These six were attempting to use these fire laws to capture the beetle king alive.

“Creak. Creak. Creak.” The golden bell exuded a brilliance containing the totems of a sovereign.

This power spread across the realm and began pushing the king up into the air. It didn’t take long before it was lifted three meters up.

“They’re actually doing it?” Some gasped in response.

“Yes, it looks like it.” Others became envious and jealous. Capturing the source stone alone was insane enough. To capture the beetle king too? That could drive people crazy.

The six high-officials of Wu were ecstatic since this would be a great contribution, hence their meticulous preparation.

Unfortunately, the beetle king didn’t let this go so smoothly. It struggled, causing loud clunks from the chains. They became stretched to the limit.

“Don’t let up!” The officials became nervous and channeled all of their power and vitality into the golden bell, wanting to pull the king into the bell itself.

At this exact second, the king added more force and it instantly dropped to the ground, pulling the bell with it.

“Boom!” This created a large pit after a deafening blast. However, the bell still ended up on top and trapping the beetle king within.

“Thank heaven.” The officials heaved a sigh of relief. “Almost let it get away.”

“Rumble!” They only got to relax for a short moment before loud explosions ensued.

The beetle king inside the bell was obviously furious and smashed into the wall. The bell shook continuously and was forced off the ground, on the verge of turning over.

“Suppress it!” The officials chanted a special mantra in order to use their merit laws. A golden radiance consisting of runes emerged around the bell.

It became as large as a mountain, capable of suppressing gods and devils. Unfortunately, despite their best effort, the bell was still shaking from the king's rampage.

The six started sweating, aware that this wouldn't last much longer.

"What does it look like now?" Everyone held their breath.

"Hard to say." A master concluded.

Of course, most didn't want Wu to be successful. Alas, Wu was powerful and had a good chance of succeeding.

"They're impressive." Qing Shi praised the golden bell.

"Just a sovereign's bell, it can't trap the beetle king." Li Qiye nonchalantly said.

The prince of Wu just happened to hear him. His eyes became fierce and shouted: "Ignorant brat, watch your mouth!"

It took considerable effort for them to bring this bell here. Now, a commoner dared to run his mouth like this?

"Ignorant how? It's the truth." Li Qiye smiled.

"Such impudence! You deserve a good slapping for running your mouth in my presence." The Wu Prince threatened.

"Now's not the time to act cool, wait till you capture the beetle king and boast all you want." Qing Shi joined in with a sneer.

"Hmph, who else but us will be able to do so here?" The Wu Prince stood proudly with his hands behind his back, gazing at the crowd.

This naturally annoyed some but they didn't say anything. The six officials and that bell were definitely the strongest here.

"Maybe in your dream." Li Qiye shook his head: "You're not qualified to take this item, it's not too late to give up. You're in my way."

"You want the source stone?" The prince thought that this was the most ridiculous thing ever. He burst out in laughter: "You? Haha, a frog wanting to eat swan meat, hahahaha, fool!"

Others stared at Li Qiye; most scoffed in response.

"How naive." One expert said: "Suicidal to do so given his cultivation."

Everyone saw Li Qiye's cultivation - simply not worth mentioning. Even an ordinary beetle could kill him, let alone the king.

"A youth's first time away from home, it's better to speak less to avoid further trouble." An older cultivator said.

"Don't stop someone from wanting to die." A young one gloated.

Li Qiye ignored them and glanced at the bell: "Enough. Stand to the side, I'll be taking the stone."

"The audacity!" The crowd thought that Li Qiye was just running his mouth, not expecting him to actually do it.

"If he can get that source stone, I'll eat an entire cliff." One youth mocked him.

"Idiot, you're asking for it." The prince became murderous: "Stop interfering with our official business or I'll cut you to pie-..."

"Boom!" He was interrupted by an explosion. The golden bell was sent flying.

"Bump! Bump! Bump!" The six high-officials staggered backward from the shockwaves, paled.

"So strong!" One of them cried out.

The beetle king was free now. It looked around with a flash in its eyes. The officials were intimidated and faltered even more.

[Chapter 3415: Stone Hatchet](#)

The beetle king didn't actually pursue the six assailants and planted its foot on the source stone again. It was as if it thought that it was real only when it maintained contact with the stone.

The crowd became anxious since Wu had lost. No one else had the ability to take the source stone from this beetle king.

The six high-officials have already tried their best. Attempting again might infuriate the king, resulting in death. The Wu Prince stared at them and they responded by shaking their head.

Thus, it became apparent that no one here could take the stone from the king. They could only watch it roll the stone into its hole.

"Hah, brat, didn't you say you want this stone earlier? Go for it, it's right there." The prince calmed down and mocked Li Qiye.

In the beginning, he was confident in seizing this stone. Now, the failure made it hard for him so he wanted to take it out on Li Qiye.

All eyes were on Li Qiye. Of course, none thought that he could actually do it.

"Right, no one else is attempting, it's your opportunity." Someone else instigated, wanting to watch Li Qiye die.

"Forget it, only death awaits." A kind cultivator told Li Qiye to do otherwise.

"Hey, no one is forcing him, he's the one who said he could do it. Stop boasting if you can't back it up." Another snorted.

"Nothing is difficult in grabbing a source stone." Li Qiye smiled in response.

Everyone thought that Li Qiye would back off after he was called out for his ridiculous statement. Not doing so would result in certain death. Now, he actually took his boasting to the next level instead.

“So tired of living.” An expert criticized.

“Oh?” The prince snorted and continued: “Come get the stone and prove us wrong, otherwise, you’re...”

“As easy as pie.” Li Qiye replied before whistling. It had an inscrutable rhythm and order containing a supreme power.

At the very least, the experts here didn’t understand it.

This wasn’t the case for the beetle king. It was strong enough as the lord of insects and had plenty of intelligence.

It seemed to be struck by lightning after hearing the whistle. It calmed down and started rolling the source stone towards Li Qiye.

This sudden development stunned the crowd. Everyone became frozen.

Once the king got its stone beneath Li Qiye’s feet, it started carrying it up. Remember, the stone was far larger than the beetle but it had zero difficulties doing so.

Li Qiye spread his palm and the king placed the stone right there just like a gift.

A while ago, so many experts were killed while trying to obtain this incredible source stone. Now, Li Qiye only needed to whistle and the beetle king obediently handed it over.

No one would believe this but the crowd saw it with their own eyes. This resembled a legend or a fairy tale. Their head remained empty, still confused and speechless.

Some started pinching themselves and found that they weren’t dreaming.

“How can this be? Why did the beetle king give its source stone away? I don’t get it.” One spectator said.

Even Qing Shi standing close to Li Qiye found this astounding, nothing short of magic.

“Mmm, not bad.” Li Qiye nodded while looking at the stone in his hand.

Others salivated at its sight. Some thought about taking it from him.

Li Qiye took out a knife and removed the outer layer with incredible speed, revealing the treasure within.

A blinding light flashed, signaling the emergence of a great treasure.

Inside the radiance was a stone hatchet. It didn’t look that sharp yet everyone felt that it was perfectly made. It stole the fortunes and creations of heaven.

As Li Qiye wielded the weapon, they thought that just one swing would be enough to open the firmaments and kill anyone. It should be unbeatable.

“Damn, what a weapon!” Someone couldn’t help blurting out.

“Yes, enough to be the defining treasure of a sect.” An elder from a big sect had saliva streaming down his mouth.

Most were really tempted at this point but didn't take action due to certain qualms. After all, who wouldn't want this incredible weapon?

Li Qiye seemed pleased with the hatchet, evident by the smile on his face.

The beetle king happily cried out, seemingly excited as if earning praise from Li Qiye was an honor. It looked like a pet trying to please its master.

The story became more ridiculous. A Stoneshell Beetle King acting like a sycophant? Logics couldn't explain this.

"Young Master, is this actually your pet?" Shi Wawa stared at the beetle king with a curious glint in his eyes.

The crowd thought so too but it shouldn't be possible. Stoneshell Beetles were indigenous to this area. Moreover, how could this powerful beetle king be Li Qiye's pet?

"Strange things happen every day, but not to this level. I have no explanation for this." One knowledgeable cultivator gave up. The rest felt the same way.

Meanwhile, Qing Shi tilted his head in contemplation.

[Chapter 3416: Fox Tail](#)

The Wu Prince winked at one of the high officials. This person came over to Li Qiye and cupped his fist: "Greetings, Fellow Daoist."

The sudden conversational prompt in such a polite manner naturally interested the crowd. This was as obvious as can be. The atmosphere became different right away.

"What?" Li Qiye said flatly.

"I see that you're a man with a great ability, perhaps you can communicate with insects?" The high official seemed like he did Li Qiye a favor by addressing him as an equal despite the status disparity.

Some nodded in agreement after hearing him. Earlier, Li Qiye whistled and managed to get the beetle king to give him its source stone. Being able to communicate with insects was one plausible explanation.

"Perhaps." Li Qiye said.

The high official maintained the respectful tone and continued: "Fellow Daoist, the truth is that our kingdom always searches for talents and we truly appreciate them. Are you interested in...?"

Most have expected this recruiting process from Wu. After all, Li Qiye has shown his worth just now if he could actually communicate with insects.

"Not interested." Li Qiye didn't wait for the guy to finish.

The high official didn't become dejected at all and went on: "Don't be so hasty, Fellow Daoist. Wu is a great country in the northern region. We have a wise ruler and many capable officials. If you were to join us, you will receive the respect you deserve from our ruler. You'll be an esteemed guest..."

He was certainly being persuasive, seemingly desperate for talents.

Heart started beating faster among the audience. After all, Wu was mighty on top of being a branch of Yin Yang Gate. To be an esteemed guest there was a great honor.

“This is a case of the weasel offering a new year gift to the chicken. Nothing good will come from this.” The older generation remained clear-headed and snorted.

Those nearby immediately became startled and carefully thought about something else.

Remember, Li Qiye had just gotten the source stone of the beetle king. If he were to accept the invitation to the royal palace of Wu, he would instantly lose his advantages and value.

Leaving aside becoming an esteemed guest there, he would become a fish on the chopping board.

It became obvious that the high official was only trying to bait Li Qiye. That stone hatchet would be theirs as long as the guy accepted.

“Not interested, stop wasting my time.” Li Qiye didn’t give the guy any face.

The high official found this hard to tolerate. He coughed and continued: “I’m actually thinking for your sake, Fellow Daoist. You’re a man with a treasure now, it’s very dangerous to be alone. It’s better to come with us. It’s fine if you don’t want to go to Wu, we’ll take you to whatever destination you wish...”

“He’s revealing his fox tail.” An older cultivator murmured after hearing this.

Of course, this high official said this line for a reason. The way the crowd looked at Li Qiye instantly changed after this line.

In actuality, some have thought about robbing him but didn’t express it. Their eyes became different right away because that stone hatchet was just too tempting.

“Is that so?” Li Qiye had a smirk on his face.

Others didn’t think much about this smile, not even Shi Wawa. The youth was just too pure.

This wasn’t the case for Qing Shi. He suddenly got a chill and could smell a thick stench of blood.

“Are you selling your stone hatchet or not?!” The prince lost his patience after seeing the delay and lack of results.

They simply wanted the stone hatchet. All of this talk about visiting Wu was just an excuse.

“Not for sale.” Li Qiye refused.

“Don’t be so quick to say no, our country will give you enough to spend for more than a lifetime. Eighty chests of treasures and a prefecture for that hatchet.” The prince reiterated.

“An entire prefecture?” The crowd clamored. They naturally understood the significance of an entire prefecture in Wu.

“You will live in luxury and wealth for the rest of your life, even your descendants will enjoy this lifestyle. You’ll be the lord of this prefecture, able to do whatever you want within your domain, all the pleasures in life...” The prince elaborated.

This was a tantalizing offer. Many here always dreamed about this type of life.

“Wu is going all out, eighty treasure chests is one thing but a prefecture too?” Even some powerful experts felt their heart beating faster. They wanted to have their own domain.

“Hah, as if he can live to enjoy it.” Someone who was aware of the prince’s plan snorted: “But an entire prefecture is nothing compared to a defining treasure in that hatchet.”

Moreover, people realized that so what if this trade actually happened. What if one day Li Qiye were to die? The prefecture would return to Wu anyway.

“Still not interested.” Li Qiye didn’t let the prince finish.

The prince’s expression turned ugly after the lack of reciprocation. He scowled and coldly uttered: “You’ll die for sure without protectors.”

“So soft doesn’t work, you want to do it the hard way now? Thinking about robbing me?” Li Qiye smiled and said.

Wu’s scheme was as obvious as can be. Of course, they wouldn’t dare to blatantly do it in public. This wouldn’t be the case once they were in another location.

“We won’t take your treasure but someone else will push you to death. You’re better off selling it to us...”

“I don’t mind people trying in the slightest. Feel free to come now since it doesn’t matter. A bunch of rabbles can’t do anything anyway.” Li Qiye smiled.

“What are you trying to say?” The prince’s expression soured.

“I’m trying to do you a favor, come get this stone hatchet that you want so much. Unfortunately, your country, Wu or whatever, doesn’t have the power to take it. The same with this crowd.” Li Qiye chuckled.

“So confident, aren’t you?!” A crowd member shouted back.

They cared about face earlier and couldn’t blatantly rob him. Now, he had offended everyone here.

“You think we’re nobody?” Another shouted.

Most were livid and red, feeling tempted to jump at any opportunity shown in order to grab that stone hatchet.

[Chapter 3417: Devoured](#)

The atmosphere in the valley became quite strange, the same as the greedy eyes on Li Qiye.

Everyone could see that Li Qiye was weak. His biggest fault was having a treasure, looking just like a fat sheep among wolves and tigers.

“You’re in danger, they’re looking at you like a piece of meat.” Qing Shi quietly told Li Qiye.

Li Qiye only smiled and didn’t care.

“No mercy for those who insult Wu!” The prince shouted, ready to kill.

The rest of the crowd had a greedy expression as well. The prince needed to take the initiative now because it would be more problematic if someone else were to get the hatchet first.

“I’ll spare you if you hand it over.” He no longer needed to act like a gentleman.

“Finally show your true intention, huh?” Li Qiye chuckled: “And if I refuse?”

“You’ll be a dead man.” The prince threatened.

The crowd shuddered because they could see how much he wanted to kill Li Qiye and take that hatchet.

“Aren’t you afraid of being attacked by others after getting it?” Li Qiye playfully swung the hatchet around.

The prince glared at the crowd. Others stared back at him but most were focused on the hatchet. They were trying their best to remain patient.

“Who dares to take on Wu? Be smart and stand to the side or face the consequences.” The prince strongly declared.

Many exchanged glances. Most were still unwilling to give up on the stone hatchet.

The prince scowled and the six officials stepped forward. The golden bell floated up again and exuded the same invincible aura.

Others had no choice but to retreat before this pressure. No one among them could withstand a sovereign’s power.

“How about now? Anyone dares to take us on?” The prince said with disdain.

No one took the challenge because that artifact being controlled by six masters was too much.

Moreover, the prince had publicly made a statement. To go against him now was the same as provoking Wu. Most importantly, Yin Yang Gate was behind this country.

Some backed off and kept a distance in order to show their stance, not intending on competing for the hatchet. They were naturally annoyed to see the prince getting this great artifact. A few even gritted their teeth.

Alas, they could only blame themselves for being weaker and swallow this perceived indignation.

“This brat is done, he’s not flexible at all.” One spectator shook his head while staring at Li Qiye.

The prince felt amazing as the crowd backed off after his threat.

“Brat, hand it over. Not only will we spare you, but we’ll also even guarantee that you’ll leave this place alive.” The prince looked down at Li Qiye and laughed.

“In my opinion, you should kneel and beg for forgiveness or your death will be very, very gruesome.” Li Qiye smirked and casually commented.

"Idiot, and I actually thought about sparing you earlier. Seems like I'll have to take your hatchet and torture you too. That's what you deserve for insulting me." The prince's eyes became fierce.

"Can't wait to see you try." Li Qiye smiled.

"Go, capture him. Break his limbs and tear out his tendons." The prince told the high officials in the back.

"Junior, don't blame us for doing this since you asked for it." One of them stepped up.

"That's my line." Li Qiye smiled then whistled. The sound was inscrutable with a strange rhythm striking at the heart.

"Buzz." The Stoneshell Beetle King flew up.

"Shit!" Everyone became alarmed including the prince's group.

They were too focused on the treasure earlier and forgot about the beetles.

"Zii-" The king gave the order to all the beetles present.

The sky turned dark right away in the next second because the beetles flew up into the air. This looked like a terrible locust swarm. Nothing would be left in an area ravaged by them.

"Retreat!" The six high officials immediately ran while using the golden bell and its dao laws for protection.

"Buzz." The beetles swept over this group like a tsunami, instantly drowning them.

"An ocean of insects..." The faraway spectators trembled with fear, unable to stand straight.

"Rumble!" The beetles smashed the bell repeatedly.

One must admit that this artifact was amazing. The six officials did their best and managed to stop waves of attack.

"Keep on trying!" They shouted, completely aghast. The bell was the last line of defense, the only thing saving them from being buried by the beetles.

Unfortunately for them, the beetle king didn't join until now.

"Shit!" They saw the king in action and became pale.

"Boom!" A golden light engulfed the area before the first move of this wondrous beetle.

The bell instantly got blown away. The group became exposed.

The result was obvious. The swarm of beetles instantly drowned them.

"Ahh! Nooo!" Screams echoed across the valley; blood splashed everywhere.

The six high officials were devoured. Only their skeletons were left behind.

"..." The inexperienced cultivators vomited after seeing the horrifying event.

“Don’t, don’t!” A shriek could be heard.

They noticed that the prince was still alive. The swarm of beetles brought him before Li Qiye.

Meanwhile, the king circled around Li Qiye, wanting to curry favor.

By this point, everyone finally realized that Li Qiye had complete control of the beetles in the valley.

The prince couldn’t move at all and shouted: “Don’t, don’t come over here...” He soiled his pants from fear.

Li Qiye squashed down and stared at the prince with a smirk: “What’s going on? Not acting cool anymore?”

Now, this smirk of his frightened everyone. No one dared to provoke Li Qiye at this point after witnessing the horrific death of the six officials.

They thought that he really told the truth - that the people from Wu were the suicidal ones. Alas, it was too late for regrets.

[Chapter 3418: Too Late To Surrender](#)

“What do you want?!” The prince was scared out of his mind, as pale as can be. The swarm of beetles had made him soil his pants.

The six high officials of Wu were alive and well a moment ago. Now, nothing was left of them outside of white bones. The prince saw the entire thing since he was the closest to them.

In fact, the cultivators here didn’t know that these beetles would eat flesh. Thus, the swarm became increasingly terrifying.

“Tell me, what should I do to you?” Li Qiye smirked, causing others to see him as a smiling devil.

“Fellow-, Young Master... please forgive this insignificant one.” The prince calmed down and started smiling. Of course, this forced smile was as unsightly as can be.

He still tried to smile sincerely and continued: “I’m but an ant compared to you, a frog under the well, I have eyes but couldn’t see Mount Tai, that’s why I offended you, a crime deserving of death, please, be benevolent and forgive this dog...”

He immediately apologized and no longer looked imperious like before. He threw his face away in order to beg for forgiveness.

For a noble used to luxury and wealth like him, nothing was more important than staying alive. That’s why he threw away his reputation and honor. These things weren’t worth a coin in comparison.

A few spectators naturally snorted with disdain after seeing the quick shift in attitude.

“He brought this upon himself.” A knowledgeable cultivator saw this coming from a mile away and shook his head.

Of course, most found this to be understandable. Very few heroes would fight to the death against a mightier foe. Most would just ask for mercy and forgiveness.

“Mmm...” Li Qiye still had the same smile on.

“Young Master, Wu will handsomely pay you for sparing my insignificant life, whether it be treasures or women. Just say the words and we’ll satisfy your demands...” The prince continued begging.

“How shameless.” Qing Shi nearby commented. Others shared the same sentiment.

Of course, a few thought that he was smart and flexible for doing so.

“Unfortunately, I’m not interested in those things.” Li Qiye said.

“Then what would you like, Young master, we can definitely get you whatever you want.” The prince hurriedly said.

“I’m only interested in your dog life.” Li Qiye smirked.

“You!” The prince froze for a second but tried his best to maintain the forced smile: “You’re kidding, Young Master, my dog life means nothing, not worthy of your attention.”

Many have been in this situation with Li Qiye before but only a selected few were as shameless as this prince.

“Sorry to say that it is indeed the truth. Where should I start?” Li Qiye looked at the prince from top to bottom.

“...” The prince was furious and afraid since his shamelessness didn’t work: “Young Master, what’s the point in killing me? Spare me and all will be well.”

“You’re actually quite smart, able to change your tune at a moment’s notice. It’s too bad that this isn’t enough to save you today.” Li Qiye said.

A few in the audience actually felt bad for the prince. The guy begged like a dog yet nothing came of it, what a waste of effort.

The prince turned white then red, falling into a daze. He eventually shouted: “You can’t kill me! I, I am a prince of Wu, I’ll be in charge of it later...”

“And?” Li Qiye smiled.

“Our army consists of a million elites, then we have the ancestors of Yin Yang backing us up. My older brother is Young Lord Bai’s confidante! Kill me and suffer their wrath! There will be no place for you to go in all of Eight Desolaces...” Begging didn’t work so the prince turned to threats instead. He wanted Li Qiye to know how strong his backers were.

The crowd exchanged glances. This was definitely more effective than the subservient act earlier. He was indeed telling the truth.

Wu wouldn’t let their prince be killed without trying to exact revenge. This was akin to poking a bee’s nest.

“It’s better to be careful.” The older members of the audience thought. No one liked being threatened like this but prudence should be the top priority.

Unfortunately, the prince was threatening the wrong person.

“Really now? My interest is growing more and more.” Li Qiye said: “We’ll see how strong your country is. I wouldn’t mind a little exercise.” Having said that, he kicked the prince forward.

“Nooo!” The prince screamed after being kicked into the swarm: “You can’t do this! You can’t-”

The beetles immediately crawled all over his body. “Ah!” Only a skeleton was left behind in no time at all.

Li Qiye didn’t bother looking at him and turned towards the crowd: “Anyone else wants this stone hatchet? Feel free to come.” He started waving it back and forth.

“No, no, of course not.” Virtually everyone retreated far away from him like the receding tide.

No one dared to stay close because if he were to misunderstand their intention, that swarm of beetles would drown them. The prince was the best example.

“In that case, get the hell out of my sight.” He stopped smiling and glared at them.

They trembled in fear and ran away in droves. Their greed disappeared quickly seeing the swarm of beetles.

It didn’t take long before no one was left in the valley outside of Li Qiye, Shi Wawa, and wait - Qing Shi.

“What about you?” Li Qiye stared at him.

“I have no intention of taking your hatchet, Young Master. A good guy like me doesn’t need to run. I’m sure you don’t mind me being around.” Qing Shi smiled.

Li Qiye ignored him and handed the stone hatchet to Shi Wawa: “This will be relatively useful for you before atavism.”

[Chapter 3419: Unfathomable](#)

“Rea-really?” Shi Wawa stammered from shock while looking at the stone hatchet. Despite his inexperience, he still knew that a source stone from a beetle king was a big deal.

Qing Shi was startled as well with his mouth agape. He was knowledgeable and had seen plenty of treasures before.

This stone hatchet was still a top treasure in his eyes, definitely priceless and only a bit inferior to a dao lord weapon. This would become the defining treasure for a top country like Wu.

However, Li Qiye still tossed it away like nothing. Qing Shi didn’t think that Li Qiye was unaware of its value.

Not to mention an ordinary expert, even those from the Yin Yang Gate would never be so generous. Qing Shi has never seen someone going so big on a present before.

“Young Master, this is too valuable.” Wawa didn’t dare to accept it.

“Take it.” Li Qiye stared at him and demanded.

“Thank you, Young Master.” Wawa regained his wits and finally accepted while bowing.

Qing Shi watched the whole thing and took a deep breath in order to calm down.

“Zi, Zi-” The beetle king circled around Li Qiye and cried out.

Li Qiye glanced at it along with its kins. He gently stroked the king and said: “A fateful meeting indeed but unfortunately, I can’t take you all along. This is your home with a fortune meant for you.”

He then stared at the bottomless cave. The fog was no longer there.

The beetle king cried out again, seemingly reluctant to leave.

“You really know how to speak with insects?” Qing Shi watched how close the beetle king was to Li Qiye and thought that this was the case.

“No.” Li Qiye said.

“Then why does it understand you and listen to your orders?” Qing Shi asked, confused.

“Because it’s smart enough to know its own fortune and who it is meeting.” Li Qiye said.

Qing Shi carefully analyzed this statement. As for Wawa, he didn’t care at all and laughed while holding the stone hatchet.

The youth never questioned Li Qiye’s abilities after seeing him surviving the fog. There was nothing he couldn’t do.

Eventually, the beetle king and the others unhappily returned to the ground. The valley became peaceful once more.

No one would know that a great battle had happened here if it wasn’t for the blood and corpses.

“Okay, let’s go to Ancestral City.” Li Qiye told Shi Wawa and moved on.

They didn’t get far before Li Qiye stopped and stared at Qing Shi: “Why are you following us?”

“I’m actually heading there too, so why not travel together, hehe?” Qing Shi responded.

“Why are you going there?” Wawa became skeptical.

“What about you?” Qing Shi was craftier and wanted to get more information.

“Oh, I’m just seeing the world.” Wawa smiled and said: “I’ve never been there before so I’m following Young Master.”

Qing Shi thought about the relationship between these two. It didn’t look like a master-servant scenario despite all the signs. How strange.

“Fine.” Li Qiye ignored him and moved on.

Qing Shi tagged along with Wawa and asked: “This is your Young Master’s first time going to Ancestral City too?”

"I don't know. He knows the way though, so probably not his first time." Wawa shook his head. He actually didn't know the answer to this question.

"How long have you been following your Young Master?" Qing Shi's curiosity grew.

This was an interrogation yet Li Qiye who was walking in front didn't seem to care.

"One day." Wawa honestly said without thinking.

"One day?!" Qing Shi blurted out and realized that he had misspoken. He calmed down and said: "Really, just one day?"

"Yes, is there a problem?" Wawa responded.

Questions were popping inside Qing Shi's head. Words couldn't explain his current emotions.

Wawa followed Li Qiye for one day and had obtained a peerless hatchet. The whole story became even more ridiculous.

No one in the northern West King - no, in all of Eight Desolaces - would have done something like this, not even the richest and mightiest Heavenly Sovereigns.

Qing Shi started thinking about Li Qiye's true identity. He had met many talents and heroes before but none should be on the same level as Li Qiye.

Qing Shi kept on asking during the journey and found out how the two of them met. The more he knew, the more confused he became. Everything about Li Qiye remained a mystery.

On the other hand, Li Qiye didn't mind the prying at all.

"Young Master, why are you going to Ancestral City?" Qing Shi knew why Wawa was heading there but not Li Qiye.

"To see if there are some good treasures there." Li Qiye commented.

Qing Shi naturally didn't buy this. The guy didn't seem to care for treasures after the case of the hatchet.

Qing Shi even had a bold prediction - that he would have given away a dao lord weapon too, treating it like scrap metals.

"No, you're tricking me, Young Master." Qing Shi said bluntly.

"Tell me where you're from then." Li Qiye smiled and asked while staring at Qing Shi.

Qing Shi became afraid because Li Qiye's eyes made him feel naked. He turned red and staggered backward.

"My, my house isn't too far away, it's pretty close." He hastily answered.

Li Qiye didn't pursue this issue.

"I heard something like this, hmm, the platform of Immortal Assailant Emperor fell into the stone forest, is this true? Have you heard about this?" He stared at Li Qiye in order to read the guy's reaction.

“Randoms aren’t privy to this information.” Li Qiye said.

“Haha, I came across it randomly. I don’t know if it’s true or not.” Qing Shi laughed and tried to change the topic.

[Chapter 3420: Ancestral City](#)

Ancestral City was the center of Stone Plateau, the symbol of the golems. Some believed that this city itself was this race’s ancestral ground. This wasn’t too much of an exaggeration because it had the highest population of golems currently. [1]

However, the majority were mixed-blood golems. They weren’t as pure as the ones living in Stonewind Canyon. This made it harder for them to reach pseudo or actual atavism under normal circumstances.

Nonetheless, Ancestral City still had the highest number of pseudo-atavistic golems in the world.

In reality, the place wasn’t a city in the conventional sense despite its name. There were no walls and fences, rendering it difficult to distinguish its actual boundary line.

Mountains could be seen, some in a group while others all alone. Rivers were a common sight along with waterfalls flowing from the firmament. Plenty of lakes scattered around the land like pearls...

Thus, it was more accurate to consider Ancestral City a great continent. The majority of people in the plateau gathered here, resulting in prosperity.

One could see the palaces built next to each other on the mountain ranges or a lonely hall at the top of a peak. Some jade pavilions were floating on the lakes; more architectures could be found in the valleys too.

The noticeable absences were walls and streets. Nonetheless, this didn’t deter people from living here.

Statues stood tall among these places. They had varying height and shape - these were the pseudo-atavistic golems.

It remained difficult to get an exact count of this cultivator type. Some haven’t woken up for millions of years. This made them as big as a mountain; some were pushed lower to the ground.

Because of this, the place was considered one of the strongest areas in Eight Desolaces.

If all these pseudo-atavistic golems were to wake up, they would definitely be able to sweep through the world uncontested.

That’s why no one or any single race dared to look down on the golems. These slumbering cultivators were just too strong.

There was one special sect at Ancestral City with the same name. It served as the core of the city and the symbol of the golems.

This branch belonged to the Golem Ancestor, or Black Duck. He himself didn’t personally create it but rather, his disciple with the title of Golem Monarch Dao Lord.

Nonetheless, Golem Ancestor used to stay here to train and left behind his scriptures. This was a sect with two dao lords.

Golems from all of Eight Desolaces would make pilgrimages to this wondrous holy land.

Li Qiye's group finally made it to the outskirts of the city. They saw the amazing atmosphere permeating across the land along with the colorful and diverse landscapes.

The peaks looked cool all alone while the brilliant reflections from the lakes were beautiful, to say the least. This place was worthy of being the jewel in the eyes of the golems.

"That's Ancestral City, right in front of us!" Shi Wawa shouted excitedly.

They saw people flying in the air. Some preferred treasures; others flying beasts. All races were present - golems, demons, humans...

Shi Wawa lived all alone and rarely saw strangers. The prosperity of this place shook him to the core.

"It looks amazing! So amazing!" He shouted while entering with Li Qiye, just like a country bumpkin.

Li Qiye smiled and didn't mind at all. As for Qing Shi, this was obviously not his first time here. He had a natural expression while following Li Qiye. He actually found the guy far more interesting than Ancestral City.

The group walked through the mountains and peaks that were connected by stone bridges. Of course, cultivators preferred to simply fly over - far more convenient.

There were plenty of shops as well from merchants all over the world. Shi Wawa's eyes brimmed with curiosity and excitement. He looked left and right and couldn't keep his mouth closed.

Li Qiye sauntered through the area and left behind his marks. Remember, Qing Shi has been observing him the entire time.

In the beginning, Qing Shi didn't realize anything. As they moved forward, he found that Li Qiye was actually measuring Ancestral City. Strangely enough, this massive place seemed to be moving in accordance with Li Qiye's steps. This was a very strange feeling.

Qing Shi didn't know why or how the guy was doing it. Nonetheless, this was an unfathomable power. The massive place meant nothing to Li Qiye.

"Excellent, the gathering of spirit energies. No wonder why golems picked this place for their atavism." Li Qiye eventually concluded with a smile.

"Do you know how many pseudo golems are here?" Qing Shi suddenly asked.

This has been an ongoing question for many generations. People only knew that the place was extremely strong.

"I'm not Wawa. If you want to know, go back and look at the archive." Li Qiye stared at him.

Qing Shi smiled wryly and stopped asking.

“Young Master, I, I think I want to take a look at the dao courtyard of the golems.” Shi Wawa eventually suggested after they had walked for a while.

This dao courtyard was the place where the golem sages passed down their dao enlightenment. It had produced many more because of this.

Thus, most golems visiting for the first time would come to the courtyard to pay their respect.

“Go, I’ll find you later.” Li Qiye touched his forehead and said.

“Thank you, Young Master.” Shi Wawa bowed and ran off.

Li Qiye continued with his stroll, seemingly without a destination in mind.

“Young Master, is there a place you want to visit here? I can show you the way.” Qing Shi eventually asked, still unclear about Li Qiye’s goal.

“Sounds like you’re very familiar with Ancestral City.” Li Qiye half smirked at the guy.

“A bit, I’ve been here many times and know most places.” Qing Shi felt that it was impossible to hide anything from Li Qiye. He tried to evade it.

“Don’t make lying to me a habit, it’s not good.” Li Qiye said.

Qing Shi became awkward and opened his mouth. Alas, he didn’t know what to say.

Li Qiye ignored this and moved on. They were now at the bottom of a mountain, an entrance. There were more mountain ranges afterward with magnificent buildings.

This place certainly belonged to an influential clan. Numerous guests were visiting judging by the entrance. The majority consisted of lords and famous cultivators.

Within the clan were smokes and a deep medicinal fragrance. Anyone would realize that these came from alchemy refinement.