

Another World 361

Chapter 361 - Fire Fish Business

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "Plenty, and I also have some magic vegetables not seen before in the continent. If you are interested, I can also supply you with those vegetables along with a few recipes. This will become your unique business. Interested?"

Marriott's eyes lit up even further, he looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Really? If you have vegetables that didn't exist in the continent, then we want a lot of them."

Zhao Hai laughed, "Brother Marriott, you're being too greedy, I like it. Be relieved, when I go back, I'll immediately make an inventory on how many vegetables I could produce each day. I'll tell you after then, what do you think?"

Marriott nodded and said, "Good. then I'll wait for the news. Much better if it came sooner."

Zhao Hai nodded, then looked at Marriott, "Brother Marriott, I have another business, I don't know if ..."
Without even waiting for Zhao Hai to finish, Marriott immediately replied, "Sure."

Zhao Hai continued, "I haven't even said what business it is. This business is risky. If they're not a big family like the Shelley family, they won't be able to handle it, even afford it."

Marriott's expression sank, then he calmly asked, "Tell me the business, as long as it's your business, the Family will be willing to cooperate."

Zhao hai smiled faintly then said, "It's not that serious, this business can also be considered as a unique business. But this one will make a lot of people jealous, Fire Fishes!"

Marriott stood up, he looked at Zhao Hai and asked seriously, "Fire Fish? How much do you have?"

Zhao Hai gave a smile and said, "10,000 per month."

Marriott muttered, "Ten thousand, ten thousand." While Marriott was walking back and forth, Zhao Hai observed his appearance and couldn't help but faintly smile. Then he turned to the still surprised Might, he shook his head and said, "Hai, these two people, it seems like they went to another dimension."

After hearing Zhao Hai's words, the two people immediately recovered. They looked at Zhao Hai with eyes as bright as the sun. Marriott rushed towards Zhao Hai and said, "Brother, are you sure about what you just said? Can you really provide the family with 10,000 fire fishes per month? It's not 100 or 1,000 but 10,000?"

Zhao Hai smiled and confirmed, "Correct, it's 10,000. How about that? Would you dare take this business?"

Marriott laughed and said, "Of course! I'd be killed by the family if I decline this business. Brother, ah, you really are my lucky star! You're Shelley Family's lucky star!"

Zhao Hai smiled, "Come on, they're just fire fishes. If you have a lot of money, you can easily get tired of it. To tell you the truth, I barely eat it anymore."

Marriott didn't get angry with what Zhao Hai said, he only retorted, "Other people will beat you up if they hear what you just said. Brother, you don't understand the current situation of the Shelley Family. When we were pressured by Grand Duke Lionheart inside Rosen Empire, our businesses on other parts of the continent became affected as well. Even if we managed to deal with Lionheart, our hotel business would still be in a slump for a long time. But now that brother will supply us with fire fishes and vegetables, we could use them to promote our hotel and get good business. This is why I said that brother is really Shelley Family's lucky star. But brother, does City Lord Smith know that you have some fire fishes? How could he let go of this business?"

As a native, Marriott clearly knew the value of fire fishes to the people in the continent. The reason fire fishes were valuable was because they were very rare. If it could be seen everywhere like radishes on the street, it wouldn't be valuable.

This fire fish business was sure to be profitable. Do not underestimate 10,000 fire fishes per month. After processing, Shelley hotel could bring from at least 4,000 to at most 50,000 gold coins per day in income. For other people, seeing the amount of profit that these fire fishes could generate, how could they be willing to give it up?

Upon hearing Marriott's question, Zhao Hai shook his head and said, "This is something that brother Smith didn't know. But don't worry, when I head back I'll go and inform him. After all, these fishes are mine, so I get to choose who to sell it to. He wouldn't object as to who I partner up. Right, I can supply you with 10,000 fire fishes per month but you need to make sure to prepare somewhere the fishes could be stored. You should know that these fishes are quite fragile."

Marriott nodded, "Yes, this should be readied. Don't worry, I'll have it ready in no time."

Zhao Hai faintly smiled, "Then that's it. In two days I should have everything inventoried. You'll also have to tell me where to take the products, but I'd much prefer them delivered here. Transporting cargo to Sky Water City is very convenient."

Marriott nodded, "Ok good. Also, how would you transport the fire fishes? Will they come in a single shipment, or is it possible for you do them in batches?"

Zhao Hai smiled, "Okay then, let's do them in batches. Every batch will take ten days, the first two will have 3,000 fishes while the last one will have 4,000. What do you think?"

Marriott smiled, "That's good, hahaha, then it's settled. We'll just wait here for the news." Zhao Hai nodded then stood up, "Then I'll head back first, I still need to tell Brother Smith about the fire fishes as well as the other businesses." Then he walked out of the office with Marriott and Might escorting him.

Looking at Zhao Hai leave, Marriott and Might returned to the office. Marriott looked at Might and said, "Might, where did you say Zhao Hai was from? How did he have so many good things on his hands?"

Might replied with a still smiled, "You haven't checked with the family? Well, there's no point anyway since there's not much information about him. From what the family found out, the earliest period where Zhao Hai appeared was when he came from the Black Fortress. It's the only thing we got from his appearance, he was very low-key. His means were also very fierce, and he always had a lot of good things on his hands. It was precisely because of these products that he couldn't stay inside Aksu Empire because of Southern King Boris. Boris coveted the things on his hand and even made Zhao Hai form an enmity with the Markey Family. It was then that Laura had a falling out with the family and went with Zhao Hai; she even got engaged to him. It could be said that he had gained two good things, Laura's business experience as well as the amount of money he made. Afterwards, they went to the prairie. Nobody knew what he did at the Beastman Prairie, he just suddenly appeared again disguised as Wales and went straight to here."

Marriott nodded, "His identity is too mysterious. Moreover he came from Black Fortress, a very chaotic place. No wonder nobody could look him up. I suspect that he's from a powerful influence sent to get trained, and especially to amass a lot of money. Otherwise, how would Smith be good to him. We all know that Smith is a fairly arrogant fellow."

Might agreed, "This matter is truly strange. If he had a relationship with Smith, he should have immediately went to Rosen Empire in the beginning. Why did he have to run up to Aksu Empire, especially in a place such as Purcell Duchy? Moreover, with him being driven out of the duchy, the Calci Family actually never gave help. If the Calci Family pressured Boris, there was no way for Zhao Hai to suffer that much. This is really weird."

Marriott nodded, "Only Zhao Hai could explain this matter. But what struck me strange was also the fact that he was quite worried about meeting Smith. Also why did Smith suddenly accept him immediately?"

Might gave a forced smile and said, "Smith isn't an idiot. Zhao Hai is a Space Mage. How could he not regard him as important."

Marriott patted his head, "Oh, I actually forgot about that. We're actually really lucky for making contact with Zhao Hai. Right, did you ask whether it was possible to buy some spatial items from him?"

Might smiled and said, "I'll find an opportunity in the future to ask him. Anyway, it's already good to have a connection with a Space Mage. We might even be able to get some spatial equipments to play with later on." Then the two of them widely grinned.

At this time, Zhao Hai was sitting inside his carriage and headed towards Sweet Plum Courtyard. After he arrived at the courtyard, he immediately went to the Space and returned to Iron Mountain Fortress. He asked Green to perform an inventory on their products to see how much they could supply. After having everything finished, then they would start their business with Smith as well as the Shelley Family.

Today, Laura and Meg were out playing around with Megan. This was also what Zhao Hai wanted, he wanted to have the two women take a short vacation. The two had followed Zhao Hai for so long. They were subjected to the cold winds in the prairie as well as the tension of hurrying along because of the attacks, they didn't have any time to get relaxed.

Now that they arrived at Sky Water City, they had Megan accompany them around. With the City Lord's little princess with them, their security isn't an issue. Thus, Zhao Hai just let them enjoy their vacation.

Laura and Meg were quite happy, it was quite a long time since they were able to play around. They were different from nerd hermit Zhao Hai, they weren't used to always staying indoors. They were females, they liked window-shopping as well as buying clothes. It was just a pity that because of their situation, they couldn't do that. But today, since they had the opportunity to do so, naturally they would enjoy themselves well.

Megan was also delighted, after all the three's ages were very similar. Moreover, Laura had been a businesswoman for a long time, so she knew how to interact with people and with Meg's gentle disposition that was akin to calm water, the three women immediately bonded with each other very well.

But Megan was confused as to why such beautiful women like Meg and Laura would like Zhao Hai. She really couldn't see anything remarkable with the man.

Megan was only 17 years old, ladies at her age wanted to fantasize. In her opinion, her lover should have a high status, long hair, and a gentle temperament. With Zhao Hai, quite a few of those qualities weren't present. She couldn't understand why women like Laura and Meg took a liking to Zhao Hai.

Chapter 362 - The Restaurant Is Attacked

Yes, to Megan's eyes, Meg and Laura were very outstanding. It even extended to Nier, to Megan, she was a very good lady.

Unexpectedly these three girls were actually with Zhao Hai, Megan couldn't understand. She has seen Zhao Hai, he was not tall for Laura, and his appearance was also ordinary. Manners? In general he looked very boring. Such a man with no merit to get Meg and Laura's affection was very unreasonable.

Although this was what Megan thought deep within her heart, she didn't say it out loud. In any case, Meg and Laura didn't discuss this topic with her.

Sky Water city was a paradise for women who love window-shopping. You could see and buy everything here that was from the continent. The three went to a variety of shops accompanied with several guards. They kept going in and out of stores, their escort guards were stuffed full of things that they bought. Even more pressing was the carriage behind the guards was also full of things.

Women window-shopping was akin to men drinking. Many women do not understand why men liked to drink just as men don't understand why women loved window-shopping. Going out to stroll and buy items, even sometimes coming home with nothing, this made men confused for millenia.

Shue also followed behind Laura and Meg. Zhao Hai sent him to watch over Laura and Meg so that there would be no worries just in case they get into trouble.

For even more guarantee to their safety, Zhao Hai also gave Meg the Ghost Staff. This was so that if something happens, Zhao Hai could arrive at the fastest time possible.

They strolled until noon, when Megan saw that the weather wasn't morning anymore, she turned her head to Laura and said, "Sister Laura, let's go take a rest and eat."

Laura also watched the skies, she nodded and said, "Right, I'm also quite hungry, let's go."

Megan smiled and said, "Since we are already outside, we should head towards East District where a famous seafood restaurant is located. That place is very famous inside Sky Water City."

Naturally, Meg and Laura wouldn't oppose. It was rare for them to have chance to come out and play, so they would take every opportunity to stroll around.

Not long after the group boarded the carriage, they immediately arrived at the front of a restaurant called Ocean's Home. This restaurant was large, its building was seven stories high. It was here that one could get the best seafood inside Sky Water City, the entire building composed the entire restaurant.

Today, Laura and the others rode inside Megan's carriage. Megan's carriage was pulled by the magnificent 4th rank Magic Beast Snowflake Horse, the same as the one Laura previously used. It seems like women tend to be partial towards this beautiful white horse.

As soon as the carriage stopped at the front of the restaurant, a man walked out of the store alone. This man was dressed in a businessman's garments and looked very ordinary. However, the smile on his face was something people would get mesmerized to see.

When the person saw Megan get down from her carriage, he immediately went forward and bowed, "This one has seen Miss Megan. The restaurant is very honored to be visited by the Miss today."

Megan wore a polite smile and said, "Manager is being too polite, today I came to introduce my two friends to your seafood. I'll have to ask the Manager to prepare us a table."

The Manager immediately complied, "It has already been prepared for the Miss. The table is on the 6th floor inside the Sea's Verse room. In there, not only can you and your friends eat your meal, you could also witness the city's seascape. This is our restaurant's best room."

Megan smiled, "I really troubled Manager. Then please lead us there." Then the Manager made an inviting gesture and welcomed Megan and the others in.

The Manager personally led Megan to the lift and up to the 6th floor then into a room named Sea's Verse. The room was very nice, it was more than 40 square meters with a resting area as well as a dining area. The resting area faced the clear glass window showcasing an amazing seascape.

On the sky-blue sea, ships could be seen docked. Sometimes there would be smaller ships that passed by those larger ships, the scene looked very beautiful.

Because Sky Water City was beside the sea, it was still quite warmer here than other places even though it is winter. Today, the city's skies were very beautiful, the sun was in full bloom up above. Although there was no magic furnaces inside the room, the place was still warm, it was neither too hot nor too cold. The temperature was just right.

After asking Megan to enter the room, the manager told Megan, "Miss, please take a seat. The dishes will be served immediately."

Megan replied politely, "Thank you, Manager. The manager has taken very good care of me and my friends." The Manager nodded and smiled, then he turned to exit the room.

Laura looked at the Manager's departing back, then she smiled and said, "This manager is very interesting, he's very well-behaved. Do you know him?"

Megan smiled and said, "Not really, but he's a person from Count James' family. The relationship between Count James and our family isn't bad."

Laura understood, "So, majority of the businesses in the city are controlled by nobles. What businesses does your family have?"

Megan shook her head, "I don't know about these things nor did I care about it. But the businesses of the family should bear our family insignia, I think they should be very easy to recognize."

Laura nodded, "Right, from what you said, your family should have more than 100 businesses in the city just from what I counted today. Amazing, that's a lot."

Megan stared blankly, "Really, that many? Why didn't I notice? Hehe, why did you take count of the businesses? You want to take seize the businesses of my family?"

Laura replied, "I'm afraid I'll exhaust myself if I manage to get your family's property. I just want to see the kinds of businesses your family has. You should know that Brother Hai came here to do business and he'll also partner up with your family. I just want to understand the businesses your family depended on."

Megan looked at Laura and asked, "Why are you very attentive? Does your fiance let you handle these matters? Then what does he do?"

Laura wore a stiff smile and said, "He has way more important things to do, also his body isn't that healthy. I don't want him to over exhaust himself. Why are you asking? You seem to have an opinion on him?"

Megan, "I don't have any opinion on him. I just don't understand why a beautiful girl like Sister Laura would like such an ordinary looking man. He's not even as tall as you."

When Laura heard what Megan said, she couldn't help but laugh and answer, "Our story is quite long, but Brother Hai is a good man, he's certainly not like what you imagine. You must know that if a man is good-natured, his status and appearance won't matter. If a girl wants to marry a man, she should marry one who will be good to her, not because of their properties, or status, or ability. It doesn't matter if they are the world's richest person nor the most competent person, if they couldn't make you happy, then what's the point?"

Megan looked thoughtfully at Laura, "You say that he was very good to you, but if he really loves you, and also very good to you, then why would he also be engaged to Sister Meg?"

Laura smiled, "Brother Hai grew up together with Meg. Their feelings for each other are very deep. If Brother Hai would really give up on Sister Meg for me, then Sister Meg would get sad. For Sister Meg to be on his side for many years only to be left behind isn't something a proper man would do. If that happens, then what stops Brother Hai from leaving me behind in the future? Little Megan, sometimes, man's heavy affection isn't a bad thing, on the contrary, it is quite better for men."

Meg looked at Megan and said, "What's the matter Megan? Do you have someone you like? How about bringing us to take a look?"

Megan's face immediately reddened, she looked at Meg and retorted, "Don't talk nonsense, with such number of people in the city, how could I find someone I fancy?"

While the girls were chatting, a voice suddenly came from outside, "Young lady, Dean James seeks an audience."

Megan stared then she nodded and said, "Please come in, Dean." The door opened and then a 20-year old young man came in.

This young man looked like a well pampered son of a wealthy family. He was 1.8 meters tall and had good features. He looked like sculpture of a general. He also wore a tailor made suit, it was impossible to not describe him as handsome.

Meg stood up and bowed towards the young man, "I've seen young master Dean. How come young master Dean has any free time to come visit today?"

Dean returned the courtesy and then smiled, "I heard that the beautiful Miss Megan has arrived, so I naturally must come and give my greetings no matter what. After all, this shop is under my responsibility."

Megan faintly smiled, "Young Master Dean is too polite. I just came here to have a meal with my friends, not really a big deal. It's quite an honor for young master Dean to come."

Dean smiled, "Miss Megan to coming to dine inside my shop gives me happiness. Today's meal will be my treat, I hope Miss Megan wouldn't decline."

Megan actually shook her head and said, "There's no need for young Master Dean to do that. Today I treated my friends to eat a meal, so if the young master pays for the meal, then I'll be unfair to my friends. Also, it would seem like it was the young master who invited us to a meal."

Dean just smiled and looked at Meg and Laura, since the two of them were not wearing their veils, their appearance were clearly seen by Dean. His eyes couldn't help but light up for a moment, then he wore his charming smile and said, "I didn't know that Miss Megan's friends would be such beautiful ladies. For a group of beautiful women to visit my store is certainly a blessing. I'll immediately go to the kitchen and let the chefs prepare your dishes quicker. Then, please excuse me, young ladies." Then after talking, he turned around and left the room.

After waiting for Dean to leave the door, Laura turned to Megan and said, "Megan, that Dean seems to take a liking to you, do you know who he was?"

Megan nodded and said, "Of course I know, he is the second-in-line to the James Clan. Don't think that he is attractive, he's extremely lascivious. Although his business ability is quite good, his lust was more famous in the city. I heard that he has already more than 10 girlfriends."

Laura smiled and said, "Isn't this a common thing among nobles? It fact, that isn't a big deal."

Megan frowned and said, "It's not a big deal, but I don't like it." As she said that, the waiters already started serving their meal. All of them were made from seafood, and the dishes were beautifully made as well. It stimulated the group's appetite very much.

Women's resistance to delicious food was very low, even Laura wasn't an exception. Now that they have the opportunity, they certainly wouldn't hold back, they ate very well.

Despite this, from the many years of noble training they had, they ate gently, but they didn't eat little.

After lunch, they didn't immediately leave the restaurant. Instead, they sat at the resting area and drank some tea while chatting. Dean didn't come and bother them, it looks like Dean still had some sense in him, he clearly noticed that Megan didn't take a liking to him.

While the group chatted, there suddenly came a sound of metals colliding with each other. Both Laura and Meg's face changed. They were people very experienced with life and death battles and immediately understood that they were under attack. Laura immediately pulled Megan behind her.

Meg used Wind element magic to place and keep the tables and chairs on the room's door. At the same time, she also watched the door with extreme vigilance. The Ghost staff was also taken out to inform Zhao Hai.

Megan hadn't encountered this kind of situation before so she still didn't quite understand what was going on. When she looked at Meg and Laura's anxious expressions, as well as when the tables and chairs were pushed towards the door, she immediately asked, "Sister Laura, what's the matter? What happened?"

Laura looked at Megan's appearance and smiled as she said, "We'll be alright, it's just a small matter. We've dealt with these in the past, there's no need to fear with Meg and me right here." After saying that, she took out her rapier.

Although Laura was a 5th ranked knight, her rapier skills were still quite good. Also, in such a small and narrow room, using a rapier such as this was the best choice.

Megan became frightened by their actions, she didn't think that she'll experience this situation inside Sky Water City. From the time she was little, this was the first time that she was attacked. Although she was also a good mage, she wasn't very experienced so she didn't know what to do in this situation. She just stood behind Laura wearing a pale face.

The sounds of weapons colliding became louder and louder. At this time, even the streets outside became chaotic as the city's urban management brigade arrived. At the same time, they were also accompanied by a team of soldiers. Obviously, nobody quite knew what was happening here as well as who instigated the entire affair.

Seeing the situation, Laura's heart couldn't help but loosen. She was very clear that when the soldiers arrived, the attackers would immediately retreat. No matter what, this was Sky Water city, and Megan was the City Lord's daughter. Those who dared attack Megan inside Sky Water City surely had a lot of guts. But at the same time, they needed to act swiftly and accurately. There was no salvation for them if they miss this opportunity, the Calci Family aren't really known for being lenient.

Chapter 363 - Furious

At this time, the window of the room suddenly shattered. Strangely, there was nobody that could be seen, but the shattered window was the one closest to Megan.

Zhao Hai's voice suddenly reached Meg's ear, "Be careful, there is a doomed soldier behind Megan, their goal is her."

After Zhao Hai's words ended, the Ghost Staff on Meg's hand suddenly casted several wind blades to Megan's back.

Meg also responded, she immediately shouted loudly, "Laura, be careful, there's a doomed soldier behind Megan, she's their target!"

Laura was also experienced in battle and reacted the moment he heard Meg's voice. She immediately turned Megan around and blocked with her rapier.

The spells coming from the Ghost Staff became quicker and quicker and before long, in the space in front of Laura a person's shadow suddenly appeared. The person was obviously injured by a wind blade.

Laura didn't let go of this opportunity, she immediately attacked fiercely. For a knight like Laura, her fencing techniques were very formidable, so the rapier in her hand snaked outwards to deal a fatal blow.

For the doomed soldier in the shadows, this kind of confrontation wasn't his strong point. Not to mention Laura's rapier, Meg's spells also gave him a headache.

He didn't know that the spells that Meg casted were actually caused by Zhao Hai controlling the Ghost Staff. The spells were very fast and powerful, each of them had the power of a 7th rank mage.

Finally, the doomed soldier wasn't able to resist the constant barrage of attacks from Laura and Meg. Before long, he was slain by Laura's rapier. The doomed soldier's body was immediately wrapped by a black mist coming from the Ghost Staff before it vanished.

Laura and Meg were no strangers to this situation, they knew that this was done by Zhao Hai. Megan, on the other hand, was terrified.

Megan was a princess who was pampered since she was at a young age. So when she encountered this situation, she couldn't help but be extremely scared, especially after seeing the dead corpse wounded by wind blades. The blood that came out after Laura withdrew her rapier made Megan sick and vomit out the contents of her stomach.

When Laura saw Megan, she froze lightly, then she immediately withdrew a cup of spatial water and supported Megan to sit on a nearby chair. She comforted the young lady and said in a soft voice, "We're okay now Megan, no need to be afraid anymore. The other person was a bad one, we're only fighting those bad people. Come here and have a glass of water to make you feel better."

After Megan heard Laura comfort her, she actually cried. She was really afraid, this was the first time that she witnessed death this close.

Under Laura's comforting voice, Megan felt better, then she received the water on Laura's hand and drank it bit by bit. When the water reached her stomach, Megan's body immediately experienced a warm feeling as the uncomfortable feeling disappeared until her body became stabilized.

At this time, someone knocked on the door of their room, the three women immediately became anxious. Then they heard Shue voice, "Miss Laura, Miss Meg, are you alright? Please open the door."

Laura looked at Meg, then Meg lowered her head, she was waiting for Zhao Hai's instructions. When she heard Zhao Hai's affirmation, she looked at Laura and nodded her head. When Laura saw this, she couldn't help but feel relieved.

Meg immediately used wind element magic to move the tables and chairs out of the way. Laura opened the door and saw the anxious Shue standing there. When Shue saw Laura open the door for him, he felt relieved. However, when he saw the broken window inside the room, his expression couldn't help but worsen. He bowed and said, "I've made Miss Laura afraid, please punish me."

Laura waved her hand and said, "It's nothing, we didn't get injured anyway. Has the enemy been dealt with?"

Shue immediately nodded and said, "It's solved, the people from Calci Family are also here so the place should be very secure. But Miss, all of those who came and attack us committed suicide."

Laura showed a faint smile, "Did they think that suicide is useful? They forgot that the Calci Family is a family of Dark Mages. They have the means to interrogate dead people."

Shue nodded, at this point a group of armored soldiers walked over led by a young man. Shue looked at the man and opened the door for him. He knew that the young man was Megan's older brother, Chris.

It was very obvious that Chris felt guilt over Megan. He threw away all noble courtesy and rushed straight towards the room. When he arrived, he saw Shue holding the door and Laura who was beside it. Seeing Laura, Chris relaxed and wiped a cold sweat, then he asked, "Miss Laura, is Megan alright?"

Laura smiled and said, "She's alright, but a bit frightened, currently she's getting much better." Then Shue opened the door further and invited Chris towards their room.

Inside the room was Meg sitting beside Megan, comforting the latter with soft words. Chris quickly entered the room and inspected it. When he saw the broken window, his complexion changed. He

thought that Megan hadn't suffered an attack but it looks like it wasn't so. Someone unexpectedly broke through the window and attacked them.

When Megan saw Chris come in, she immediately stood up and rushed to his brother's chest and cried while saying, "Big Brother, I was very afraid. A bad guy jumped in from the window and wanted to kill me."

Chris held Megan and comforted her immediately, "It's alright, Big Brother is here, Megan doesn't need to be afraid anymore"

After comforting Megan for quite some time, Megan calmed down. At this time, a voice suddenly came, "Young Master, young master Dean came to ask for an audience."

Chris' complexion changed as he replied with a cold voice, "Make him come."

Before long, Dean came in, he didn't have his prior demeanor and his head was full of sweat. When he saw Megan was alright, he felt relieved, but when he saw the shattered window, his heartbeat immediately sped up.

Dean immediately arrived in front of Chris as he bowed, "Dean has seen First young master Chris. Today, it was our fault for being too lightly guarded that Miss Megan was given a fright. Please accept my apology, I'll promise to visit at another day to apologize to the City Lord."

Chris wore a cold face as he looked at Dean, "Dean, be thankful that my little sister did not have an accident, otherwise, I wouldn't be able to forgive you. You better provide an explanation for today or else I will be impolite." After he said that, Chris turned to Megan and said, "Megan, let's go, come home with big brother. Father is very worried for you."

Naturally, Chris didn't forget Laura and Meg when they left. Chris knew clearly that Megan didn't have battle experience. For her younger sister to be safe, it certainly has something to do with Laura and Meg. In addition, the two ladies were also their guests so he didn't dare to forget about them.

Seeing the group leave the room, Dean's face immediately turned ugly, then he shouted at command, "Someone come here!" A warrior immediately ran in and stood in front of Dean and said, "Young master, what are your orders?"

With a cold voice, Dean commanded, "Go and find out who are responsible for today's attack. When I find out, I will rip them to shreds." Dean didn't express dissatisfaction with Chris' attitude. He understood that in Sky Water City, Chris' status was the same as a country's crown prince. Chris' earlier actions were already considered polite, if he was replaced by Diya, then Dean wouldn't be able to move from the terror.

Dean's clan had many meetings with the Calci Family, and they even had more meetings with Smith's. So he knew Megan's position inside Smith's family. If something really happened to Megan here, what would Chris do?

Thinking about that scenario, Dean couldn't help but sweat a lot. He believed that if Megan truly had an accident here, Smith would certainly place his anger onto his clan, and the clan wouldn't have any peaceful days from then on.

Smith's power inside Sky Water City was known by all its inhabitants. When they heard that someone attacked Smith's daughter inside Sky Water city, they knew that a storm was coming. All of the powers here knew that they could only bear the brunt of Smith's anger, whether they were involved or not. This was because to them, Sky Water City belonged to Smith.

Chris and the others quickly arrived at the City Lord's Mansion. As soon as they entered the gates of the place, they immediately saw Smith waiting there. When Megan saw his father, she immediately complained tearfully, and naturally Smith comforted her.

The group immediately arrived at the living room. At this time, Zhao Hai also arrived. Zhao Hai asked Laura softly about their situation. Since he was not at the scene, he naturally worried about the ladies.

At this time Megan recovered, Smith's wife was also comforting her. Then Laura and Meg told the family about what happened when the doomed soldier came in from the window.

Then Meg released the man's corpse and didn't explain anything. Smith also didn't ask too much. He just thought that Meg had a spatial item on her.

The doomed soldier wasn't any different from when it was stored, but this one had its cover removed, revealing his face.

Smith looked at the corpse and became mad as he said with a deep voice, "Someone come and hang this person outside for the public to see. After three days, throw him into the water to feed it to the fishes."

Zhao Hai quickly interjected, "Slow down, Brother Smith. We still need to find out about some information directly from his mouth." Smith looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Do you want to...?"

Smith was also a Dark Mage, so he knew what Zhao Hai meant. Zhao Hai didn't hide any truth from him as he nodded and said, "Right, I'll turn him into an Advanced Undead then let's find out who dared to attack Megan inside Sky Water City."

Chapter 364 - As Expected

Smith never thought of using this method because it was very dangerous for a Dark Mage to turn a body into an Advanced Level undead. Smith didn't expect that Zhao Hai surprisingly wanted to do so.

Smith looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Don't bother, doing that kind of thing is too dangerous and it will have a huge impact on you. Just believe in the power of my Calci Family, we'll definitely find out who is responsible for today."

Zhao Hai shook his head, "Consider this matter finished, it'll take too long and I suspect this wouldn't be the first time that they'll attack. Moreover, I suspect that this matter has something to do with me. Otherwise, how do we explain the fact that Megan was attacked just as I arrived at Sky Water City?" He didn't wait for Smith to say anything as he waved his Ghost Staff and muttered a small incantation. A dark mist went out from the Staff and surrounded the doomed soldier's corpse.

Before long, the mist vanished and on its place was a doomed soldier standing there. His wound was gone and if not for the bloodstain you wouldn't think that he just went into battle.

Moreover, the doomed soldier didn't look like an ordinary undead with a body riddled with rotten meat. Its present appearance didn't differ from an ordinary person aside from the fact that it was not breathing and also having a blank expression on its face.

With a serious voice, Zhao Hai commanded, "Tell me your status and why you came here."

The doomed soldier immediately replied. "Yes, master. I don't have a name, I'm only called Thorn 23. I was a member of Grand Duke Lionheart's doomed soldier troop. Our only purpose in Sky Water City was so kidnap Miss Megan and force City Lord Smith to expel you from the city."

Thorn 23's words were simple, but he clearly conveyed his identity, the person behind him, and their purpose in coming to Sky Water City.

Upon hearing Thorn 23, Smith's face couldn't help but pale. He didn't think that Thorn 23 would actually be Lionheart's person. It seems like Grand Duke Lionheart really hit his head on something.

Zhao Hai could only smile bitterly and turned to Smith, "I'm sorry, brother Smith. I didn't really expect this thing to happen because of me. I gave Miss Megan a fright."

Smith waved his hand and said, "Brother, you cannot blame yourself on this matter. I just didn't think that Lionheart would actually be this overbearing, to dare run up to my Sky Water City and kidnap my daughter. He's clearly disregarding my face, he will pay for this."

Zhao Hai only forced a smile, then he asked a few more questions to the doomed soldier. Unfortunately, Thorn 23 was only a doomed soldier, he didn't know many things about Grand Duke Lionheart, so there were many questions that he couldn't answer."

Zhao Hai waved his hand as Thorn 23 vanished. He turned his head to look at Megan, "Miss Megan, I really made you frightened today. Please accept this gift as my apology." He said as he put out a Spatial Bag and gave it to Megan.

Megan already recovered at this time, she looked at the Space Bag on Zhao Hai's hand and became confused, so she asked, "Mister, what is this thing?"

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "This is a Spatial Bag, the inside of it can store three cubic meters worth of items. Using it is very simple, you just hold the bag towards the thing that you want to store and it'll take it to its special space."

After hearing what Zhao Hai said, Smith and the others were all stunned. Then didn't think that Zhao Hai would actually give Megan a Spatial Item. One must know that a spatial item is very precious in the continent, this gift was way too expensive.

Smith looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Brother, please don't. This gift is too expensive, we cannot accept it."

Zhao hai smiled and said, "It's fine. This is the gift that I'll give to Miss Megan." After leaving the Spatial Bag on Megan's hand's, Zhao Hai sat back down and turned to Smith, "Brother Smith, how do you plan on dealing with Lionheart?"

Smith snorted, "Brother doesn't need to worry about it. Leave it to me, I'll promise that he wouldn't fare any better."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "Brother Smith, I just want to inform you that you're not the only one with enmity with Grand Duke Lionheart. There is also someone who hates Lionheart more than you and they already had a plan on dealing with him. Perhaps you could cooperate with them."

When Smith heard Zhao Hai, he was slightly surprised. He immediately responded, "Brother, are you talking about Shelley Family?"

The matter of the Grand Duke suppressing Shelley Family was widely known throughout Rosen Empire. Naturally, Smith also knew about it, so when Zhao Hai proposed cooperating with someone, Smith immediately thought about them.

Zhao Hai nodded, "Yes, it's the Shelley Family. Some time ago, when Lionheart started suppressing the Shelley Family, the family already wanted to deal with him. But because of an internal matter, the family didn't have a chance to counterattack. For this reason, I was also implicated. The reason the Grand Duke wanted to deal with me is because I had a partnership with the family, moreover, I did not follow his command to not stay at their hotels. This made the Grand Duke chase me around up until here. But now

that Shelley Family's internal matter was resolved, they can now carry on and deal with Grand Duke Lionheart. I think that with your help, Lionheart would certainly have no chance to escape."

Smith nodded, "That is reasonable, for someone like Lionheart, one should finish him in one swift strike, if you fail, he will certainly take revenge. My strength isn't enough to kill Lionheart. But with Shelley Family being a big merchant family added to the mix, this matter would be easier. I agree, I must ask Brother to mediate this matter for me."

Zhao Hai smiled, "This is not an issue, I think that the Shelley Family would certainly be willing to be working with you. Brother can rest assured. Right, Brother Smith, I forgot to say one thing yesterday. It's also about business, I don't know if Brother Smith is interested in dealing with Fire Fishes?"

Upon hearing Zhao Hai, Smith's eyes couldn't help but light up, he immediately replied, "Brother, say it carefully."

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "I already expressed my intent to supply the Shelley Family with 10,000 fire fishes per month. If Brother Smith is interested, I could supply you with 20,000 fire fishes each month. I don't care what you do with it, I'll just supply you with those fire fishes."

Smith's eyes were sparkling with divine light at this moment, he looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Can Brother really guarantee a supply of 20,000 fire fishes per month?"

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "I absolutely guarantee it, moreover they will be alive."

Smith pat the table and said, "Very well, it's settled. 20,000 fire fishes per month. I don't care about the price as long as Brother can guarantee the supply every month."

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "Then we're settled. I'll go back and prepare. Tomorrow I'll go to Shelley Hotel and tell them the matter of your cooperation. I'll excuse myself."

After saying that, he stood up and gave Smith a salute before he led Laura and the others to the exit.

Seeing Zhao Hai's group go out, Chris couldn't help but turn to Smith and said, "Father, this Zhao Hai is too mysterious. Why do you place so much trust in him?"

Smith looked at Chris and said, "Nobody in this world doesn't have any secrets. Why do we fear his secrets, as long as he isn't a threat to us then we're good. He has a lot of enemies in the continent, he could only rely on us for help. So why should we not trust him? Chris, you have to remember, everyone has their own secrets, as long as someone is friendly with us, we didn't need to fear anything." Chris nodded and expressed his understanding.

At this time, Smith turned his head and looked at the Spatial Bag held by Megan. "Megan, show me the spatial bag. It's my first time seeing a bag-shaped spatial item."

Meg complied handed the spatial bag over to Smith. Smith took the spatial bag and carefully inspected it. What he saw was very well made course leather bag. It didn't have an extraordinary look to it, if it wasn't Zhao Hai who gave it, Smith would have thought that they had been duped.

He untied the rope of the spatial bag and curiously looked inside. A magic formation appeared in front of him which gave Smith a scare. But he immediately understood what the magic formation was used for. He went to a chair in the room and pointed the magic formation as he said, "Receive". Then the chair immediately vanished. He placed his consciousness inside the bag and instantly saw the chair hovering on the space inside.

Then when he thought about withdrawing it, the chair immediately appeared back on its original position. Smith couldn't help but look surprisingly at the small bag, he didn't expect this very unremarkable bag on his hand to be very extraordinary.

But he didn't take it for himself, he returned the bag to Megan and said, "Megan, this bag is a very special thing. You must take care of it well. Also, do not use it casually and expose it to other people's eyes. There are a lot of people who covet this thing, they would do everything to acquire it. Do not make others know that you possess this thing, understand?"

Megan nodded as she looked happily at the small bag. She also saw the process of Smith using the bag, she didn't think that such ordinary looking bag was very mysterious.

Looking at Megan, Chris and Diya were envious. One must know that spatial items inside the Calci Territory were very scarce, even Smith didn't have one, not to say them.

At this time, Smith's wife stood up and looked at Smith, "Dear, I'll head back with Megan. I'll be giving her a bath and then have her rest, you still need to be busy." Then she led Megan to head back.

At this time, Diya looked at Smith and said, "Father, what do you want to do to deal with that bastard Lionheart? Will the Shelley Family really cooperate with us?"

Smith sneered and said, "Our family has been too low-key these recent years that the other powers have forgotten about what happens when they offend us. This matter should be reported to the family as soon as possible. And don't ask me that stupid question, Shelley family cooperating with us will only bring them benefits and no harm, how could the Shelley Family disagree. Now, the two of you, go"

Chris and Diya bowed then turned back.

Chapter 365 - Grand Duke Lionheart and The Buda Family

When Zhao Hai's group returned to Sweet Plum Courtyard, they immediately went to the Space. Upon arriving, Laura and Meg relaxed, Zhao Hai looked at Laura's appearance and smiled, "Laura, I didn't think that you're swordsmanship has become so fierce, haha, that's great."

Laure proudly lifted her chin up, "Naturally, did you think that me being a knight is a joke? I feel that I may even break through to 6th rank soon."

Zhao Hai smiled, "It looks like we need to find you a magic beast mount the next time we go to the prairie. Laura, you could also use a Blood Hawk as a mount, what do you think? After the Ranch levelled up, the Blood Hawks became even stronger. I reckon you could already ride them safely."

Laura smiled, "Forget it, let's talk about this later. There's a lot of magic beasts in the Space anyway, I could just choose anytime I want. If I want to fly, I could use a Blood Hawk. If I want to go on ground, we have Moonlight Lions. We also have the Swordfish to travel on water. If all of them are not enough, we still have Little Wen. I could ask Little Wen to be my temporary mount, no problem."

Zhao Hai couldn't help but laugh. What Laura said was quite right, there were already quite a lot of magic beasts inside the Space. If it came to the point of choosing mounts, Laura would have a lot to choose from.

A few moments after the group talked a bit, Zhao Hai turned and asked Cai'er, "Cai'er, how many vegetables do we have stored right now?"

Cai'er immediately replied, "Presently, we have about 2 million jin of vegetables, 1 billion jin of grain, around 50 thousand jin of milk wine, and also 20 thousand jin of rations."

After hearing the report, Zhao Hai nodded, "Reduce the amount of grain planted in the Space and increase the quantity of vegetables. After a batch of Scaleless Fish matures, go and raise some fire fishes, we must make sure to have sufficient supply in both vegetables and fire fishes."

Cai'er nodded, then went towards the farm to manage it. Even though the Ranch was turned over to Mu'er, Mu'er still listens to Cai'er. This made it so that Cai'er technically managed the entire Space. Zhao Hai directly telling Cai'er about everything is fine.

Now that Zhao Hai's concerns about the farm were handed over to Cai'er, he nodded and led Laura and the others back to Iron Mountain Fort.

Iron Mountain Fort was already in full blown winter. Snow and ice filled the plains outside the fort while the temperature inside reached 10 degrees. People inside wore thick clothes.

However, the situation inside the fort was generally quite good. Because Cai'er was present, the usage of firewood reduced by a lot. So the majority of bamboo and oil trees were instead used by the slaves to make some furniture.

Although the slaves haven't done these kinds of things before, don't forget that Laura already brought in some artisans. So even though the furniture made by the slaves weren't actually good looking, they were still functional. Thus, there were already a lot of half-step carpenters present inside Iron Mountain Fort.

Zhao Hai was happy when he saw this scene. Those half-step carpenters were already absolved of their slave status. He also told them that if they could improve upon their carpentry, he would reward them with land.

This aroused the enthusiasm of the slaves. After the slaves returned from their work in the factories, they would begin and practice their craftsmanship. This made some of them reveal their talents which Green noticed. Then he made them wholeheartedly train themselves on the trade.

Of course, the other slaves weren't discouraged to practice. Green expressed that they should still try their best while not being too hasty and not make things focusing on beauty. They should instead focus on quality and functionality, learning to this point is already enough. One should not forget that come spring, a hundred thousand slaves would arrive. And each and every one of these hundred thousand slaves would need their own things to use.

This was also why Zhao Hai really wanted to purchase some artisan slaves upon arriving at Sky Water city. He specifically wanted masons, blacksmiths, as well as artisans who knew how to bake clay bricks.

At the same time, Zhao Hai also wanted to have some craftsmen who specialize in making houses. Building a house wasn't an easy thing; if the house wasn't built good enough, not only would it not provide warmth, it also wouldn't be able to survive winds and rains.

Currently, what Zhao Hai lacked weren't ordinary slaves, it was skilled slaves. Naturally, skilled slaves were not actually cheap, but money wasn't something Zhao Hai worried about.

When Zhao Hai returned to Iron Mountain Fort, he went to Green and discussed their current production. He also wanted to see if it was possible to upgrade their milk wine and ration production.

After discussing with Green, Zhao Hai got a specific figure. Currently, their daily milk wine output was 5,000 jin. At the same time, their wool product output was not bad. Every five days, they would be able to make approximately 20 wool blankets. This figure might look very low, but one should think that these blankets were hand-made, it required extreme effort.

The ration production was also going smoothly. Now that their rabbit farm was already settled, they would be able to produce 10,000 jin of rations each month. On the other hand, their mutton rations can also be produced at a rate of 5,000 jin per month.

Another important thing was their rabbit leather processing. While the beastmen tan the leather, the human women can turn these leather into fur covered garments. Since the skins of the rabbits inside Zhao Hai's Space were red, the garments and cloaks turned out to be very beautiful.

At this rate, Zhao Hai would be able to add another product to his catalogue; this was very good news. After knowing the situation here, Zhao Hai returned to the Space and discussed with Cai'er how much vegetables they could produce each month. This metric was very important, it was going to be used by Shelley Hotel, which was a stable business that provided more income than their growing business back in Purcell Duchy.

After having Cai'er calculate the vegetable output, the figures Zhao Hai got were: 500 thousand jin of vegetables per month without affecting the required grain and fruit oil output. Supplying this figure to Shelley Hotel wasn't bad at all.

After having all of these counted, Zhao Hai returned to Sweet Plum Courtyard. The current time was already not early, when dinner time came, Smith sent someone to invite Zhao Hai to the mansion's dining hall to dine.

This time, Zhao Hai put out some milk wine to drink with Smith. Presently, Smith came to like the milk wine's flavor.

After eating their meal, Zhao Hai returned to Sweet Plum Courtyard to rest. His rest for the rest of the night went very calmly. However, the entire Sky Water City wasn't.

All nobles and powers inside the city acted, not because they wanted to revolt but instead to look for the suspect. They wanted to check out exactly who actually dared to touch Smith's daughter.

These powers inside the city don't have choice but to do so, this way, the suspicions towards them would be washed out. They really feared Smith's suspicion. If by chance they get the City Lord's doubt, they wouldn't be able to keep their livelihood inside Sky Water City. And it would not only be inside Sky Water City, they were afraid that they wouldn't even be able to re-establish themselves inside the whole Rosen Empire.

In fact, the major reason why these people became so anxious was the fact that the City immediately went into martial law after Megan was attacked. There were people from the urban management bureau everywhere on the streets. Along with them, the city garrison, warriors from Calci Family, and even mercenary companies were seen inspecting everything along the blocks. On this day, the business inside Sky Water City dropped threefold. It was obvious that the effects of the matter were very huge.

Seeing Smith acted very seriously this time, the aristocrats inside Sky Water city as well as the other powers became nervous. At this time, if someone actually offended Smith, they would die a terrible death.

Compared to the others, the Shelley Hotel was very calm. Although they also worked along with the city and also sent their warriors to patrol around, their range of movement wasn't that large. The people from the hotel only covered two streets near them and made sure that there was nothing unusual going on. They acted very low-key, which was to Smith's liking.

This action was obviously not being handled by Marriott, much less Might. The two of them were inside an office and discussing the matter.

Marriott looked at Might and said, "You say that this matter is related to Zhao Hai? I heard that when Megan was attacked, Laura and Meg are also present."

Might nodded and said, "There's a very high possibility. Except for the arrogant fool Lionheart, I cannot think of anyone else who would dare to act against Megan inside Sky Water City. If Lionheart did it, then his target would be Meg and Laura."

Marriott thought for a long time and said, "There's also another group of people who would dare, the Radiant Church. The Church's influence has been steadily increasing these years. Also, they weren't dealing with Calci Family, they were going for Zhao Hai; they could also be the likely suspects for today. And if the attack was unsuccessful, they could just plant the blame on Zhao Hai since Megan was the only one implicated. This way, they could create a wedge between Smith and Zhao Hai, which would be great for the Church."

Might's complexion went down a single step, "If this really is so, then we'll be in danger. The Church would likely group us up with Zhao Hai and might deal with us as well. We have to inform the family as soon as possible so they would pay some attention."

Marriott smiled faintly, "Did you think that the higher ups in the family hadn't thought up to this point? They may have thought that the benefits Zhao Hai bring are worth it. Moreover, we don't have any previous connections with the Radiant Church, so in a business standpoint, it would be better for the family to side with Zhao Hai. Now I just hope that Smith wouldn't get angry at Zhao Hai. It would be really bad for us if Zhao Hai loses Smith as his backer."

Might nodded, "I also hope so. But I think that when Zhao Hai comes here in two days he would explain the situation to us. On the other hand, if this matter is actually caused by Lionheart, then he would actually be very stupid in offending our Shelley Family as well as the Calci Family. Did he think that he was taking too slow dying?"

Marriott faintly smiled and said, "I think that the present Grand Duke Lionheart was a bit like Aksu Empire's Buda Clan. Like Lionheart, they were also their King's sword. Their matter might be casting a shadow towards Rosen Empire's Emperor. After all, how could the Emperor know that his the sword in his hands would actually go out of control, suddenly acting too arrogant and overbearing."

Might sneered, "Grand Duke Lionheart isn't qualified to be paired with the Buda Clan. If the old King didn't die, it was impossible for the Buda Clan to perish since they acted very obedient and low-key. I heard that their successor, Adam, was a spoiled young master which I think was intentionally made to happen by the Buda Clan. This was so that nobody would suspect that they harbored deep ambition. Nobody would suspect a clan with a useless successor. Even if their family would suffer because of Adam, it would still ensure that their bloodline will carry on. The Buda Clan did a very good job since the old King never held any suspicion towards them. And after the family fell, Adam actually managed to flee. Although they were exiled, the Buda Clan still survived. On the other hand, Lionheart's son was a rarely seen before martial genius. Not to mention within their clan, he was very famous between the circles of nobility. This brought attention to their family which, regarding Grand Duke Lionheart, wasn't a great thing."

Marriott smiled faintly, "In every nation, old aristocrats are always in conflict with the Royal Family. All Royal Families are always thinking of ways of dealing with their old nobles, After all, these families held great power and influence. This was also the reason why our Shelley family didn't have to fear such actions. Because we are a merchant family and was not as overbearing as the Markey Family, nobody paid any attention to us."

Might smiled and said, "Speaking of Markey Family, they really had it bad. For Haven products, they unexpectedly had a falling out with Laura and gave her to Zhao Hai for cheap. Hahaha, I must say that Zhao Hai is quite formidable, Laura is a beautiful woman, moreover she's even taller than Zhao Hai. One could see that Zhao Hai's appearance isn't worth someone like Laura. But surprisingly he made Laura like him, she even severed her connection from her family, that guy has my full admiration."

Looking at Might's appearance, Marriott couldn't help but laugh, "What? You want Zhao Hai to teach you his moves? But I think that would be difficult, Zhao Hai is a Space Mage."

Might also laughed, "Forget it, I don't have his capabilities. But I truly believe that Grand Duke Lionheart made a grave mistake in annoying Zhao Hai. Not only did he lose a lot of men to Zhao Hai, he was also slapped in the face. I expect him to not last for long."

Marriott coldly snorted and said, "Even if he manages to stay, we wouldn't let him feel comfortable. Now that the people from the clan has arrived, our plans could be set into motion. Lionheart staying in his current position would be impossible."

Chapter 366 - The Cautious Smith

Zhao Hai quietly sat inside his carriage as it drove towards Shelley Hotel. When they arrived at the place, the attendants immediately recognized Zhao Hai. Zhao Hai's carriage was very unique, it was difficult to mistake it with something else.

A hotel attendant immediately invited Zhao Hai inside while another one went and notified Marriott. The hotel's personnel were very clear about Zhao Hai's position in Marriott's heart. They didn't dare neglect him.

When Marriott received the message, he stared blankly for a moment. He didn't expect Zhao Hai to come this soon. After all, the matter with Megan hasn't calmed down, he should not be here at this time.

But Marriott still immediately went and greeted Zhao Hai who was waiting at the hotel's lounge; Marriott also invited Might over. After the group sat down, Marriott looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Little Hai, what's the matter?" After meeting several times, they already treated each others as friends. Marriott already changed how he addressed Zhao Hai from Wales to Little Hai in order to make the other side feel more familiar with him.

Regarding how he was called, Zhao Hai didn't mind, he just smiled and said, "Did you forget what I told you yesterday? I already have the amount of vegetables that I produce calculated."

Upon hearing Zhao Hai talk business, Marriott felt relieved. He was really afraid that Zhao Hai had a falling out with Smith and came to ask them for help. Although they would still help Zhao Hai, the family's gains would become smaller since now they couldn't use Zhao Hai as a bridge to form a relationship with Smith.

Marriott smiled and replied hastily, "Good, let's talk about that. I was actually very anxious about it."

Zhao Hai faintly smiled and answered, "I can give you about 500 thousand jin of vegetables, 10,000 fire fishes, as well as grain and fruit oil every month, you tell me how much you need. Is this sufficient?"

Marriott didn't think that there would be so much, his eyes couldn't hide his excitement as he said "Very sufficient, it's absolutely good enough. Be relieved, we will certainly make the price worth it."

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "I'm not afraid that you'll disappoint me with the price, since these things are mine. If you dare slash the price, I will not supply you anymore. Hahaha"

Marriott and Might also chuckled, then Might looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Brother Hai, can I ask you details about Miss Megan's attack yesterday?" Might clearly knew that Zhao Hai likes a frank person. If you want something from him, then you should get to the point. Zhao Hai's temper was like that of a warrior, he prefers if you just ask him directly.

Zhao Hai replied, "The matter was already investigated by Brother Smith. Even if you don't ask, I'll still inform you since this is the second reason why I came here today."

Might and Marriott stared blankly, then their hearts immediately sped up as they looked at Zhao Hai excitedly. The two of them could faintly guess what Zhao Hai came here to say.

Looking at their faces, Zhao Hai could only faintly smile as he continued, "Your guess isn't wrong. This time's attack on Megan was instigated by Grand Duke Lionheart. He wanted to capture Megan to force City Lord Smith to expel me from Sky Water City. But it's a pity that he didn't succeed, now City Lord Smith is very angry and is preparing to retaliate against the Grand Duke. I told him that your family also

had a grudge with Lionheart, moreover, that you're already prepared to deal with him. So he said that he wanted to work with you, what do you think? Will you agree?"

Although Might and Marriott faintly knew what Zhao Hai was going to say, they still couldn't help but get excited. They didn't expect Zhao Hai to have a high standing inside Smith's eyes. After all, Megan got in trouble because of him; but Smith actually didn't blame Zhao Hai.

Nevertheless, this matter was absolutely a good thing for the Shelley Family. Although they were already prepared to deal with Lionheart, it was not easy to do so inside Rosen Empire. They still needed to pay a small price.

But if the Calci Family were to help them, the matter would be completely different. The Calci family was an established noble line inside Rosen Empire. With their help, dealing with the Grand Duke would be much easier.

Shelley Family and Grand Duke Lionheart's conflict exposed the family to their deficiencies. Although they were a powerful merchant family, they were not legitimate nobles. This made their influence much lesser than a noble like Grand Duke Lionheart. They don't have much power when it came to a national level. Since their business was too big and spread out in the continent, there was no sense of belonging when it came to the various nations that they operate in; they were just treated like outsiders. This made it very inconvenient when they decided to deal with local powers.

Since Rosen Empire didn't consider the family as one of them, dealing with Grand Duke Lionheart would make the family cough up a considerable amount of resources. Otherwise, if they don't pay the nobles enough, they would incur their dissatisfaction, they may even unite against the family at that time, further escalating the problem.

But with Calci Family in the equation, the situation would be different. The Calci family was a formidable power inside Rosen Empire. They were a family that even the Royal Clan would need to think twice before provoking. Fortunately, the Calci Family's style were to be low-key, so even if the Royal Clan sees them as a thorn in their eye, they didn't have much resentment for the family.

And just as what Marriott thought, Grand Duke Lionheart was a sword that the Royal Clan uses to deal with these old nobles. But now that this weapon had gone too disobedient, they were quite mad.

Now, the Royal Clan was willing to exchange this pawn. In their eyes everyone was a chess piece, and these chess pieces were divided into those useful and those useless. The useful pieces were also further divided to those who were obedient and those disobedient. Royal Clans generally would be willing to let go of these disobedient pieces, this was because these people could cause instability in the near future; not only to the enemy, but also to themselves. Nobody wanted to have someone who will cause them problems in the future right by their own side.

Marriott laughed as he patted Zhao Hai's soldier, "We agree! Why would we not agree to such good deal. Brother, you really are our Shelley Family's lucky star. Rest assured, I can promise you in behalf of the family that we would fully cooperate with the Calci Family. Please pass this message to City Lord Smith for me."

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "Good, then I'll head back and inform City Lord Smith. Right, in the next days I will have people deliver the vegetables. How does 100 thousand jin for the first delivery sound?"

Marriott nodded and said, "Good, how will you deliver it here? Do you have a ship?"

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "Be relieved, there will be no mistake." Then he stood up and got ready to leave.

Zhao Hai didn't know that at this time, Smith was also summoning a family elder to the City Lord's Mansion. Naturally that elder was also a Dark Mage.

The elder looked over 60 years old. His head was entirely white, he wore a magic robe and his face wasn't hidden, revealing his pale feature.

Smith looked at the old mage, "How is it, Elder Narro?"

Narro nodded and said, "The same as what Mister Zhao Hai said, the assailants were really sent by Grand Duke Lionheart. It was also true that they were sent to get the young lady and take her as a hostage to make you expel Zhao Hai from Sky Water City. Then they'll deal with him then."

Smith relaxed deep inside, but his expression was quite ugly. Smith was not an idiot, he was in complete control of himself and was not sentimental at all. It was impossible for him to just believe Zhao Hai's

words, so he had Elder Narro come and confirm. The elder turned a doomed soldier who attacked Megan into an advanced level undead and asked him the same questions and it turned out to be the same as what Zhao Hai said. Smith was relieved.

At the same time, the fires in his heart ignited completely. Grand Duke Lionheart actually didn't care about Calci Family's face. Although Smith was only the second in line, he was still a very important member of the family. Otherwise they wouldn't have handed Sky Water City over to him. One must know that Sky Water City was Calci Family's money bag.

Also, although Megan was Smith's daughter, she was also the family's most favoured young lady. Historically, the gender ratio between the male and female descendants of the family was mostly skewed towards the masculine side. This was especially true for Megan's generation. In the entire Calci Family, there were only two girls aside from Megan; one died, while the other was an infamous lustful woman and was treated as nonexistent by the family. In the family's eyes, Megan was the best, not only was she attractive, she was also a very gentle obedient woman with a chastity as white as paper. She was the treasure of Calci Family.

Megan's identity was actually even better than Rosen Empire's princess, she didn't need to worry about getting married off. Such a person, for Lionheart to actually dare lay his hands on, naturally incurred Smith's anger. After all, Smith heavily doted on this daughter of his.

But Smith was very calm, he didn't immediately take action against the Grand Duke. He was a person of the empire, so he knew much better than Marriott about the sensitive status of Lionheart. It was not easy to make a move on him, otherwise they might get the attention of the Royal Clan, it was not worth it. His love for his daughter against the family's interests, he had to make a few concessions.

Regarding Zhao Hai, on the other hand, Smith was completely relieved that he didn't lie about this matter. Even after Megan was attacked, he still admitted that it was likely to have been caused by him. He didn't cover it up and instead told Smith everything clearly. This made Smith feel better about Zhao Hai.

Chapter 367 - Smith's Appreciation

A person who was truly honest, and boldly shoulders his responsibility!

This was what Smith classified Zhao Hai as. But when Zhao Hai proposed collaborating with the Shelley Family, Smith's evaluation elevated by another level; he now regarded Zhao Hai as an overall great person.

Being able to use a situation to their advantage was not something that only Merchants do, even Nobles could make use of this philosophy. But in reality there were only a few people who could achieve such feat, and those people were exceptional in their own rights.

Smith greatly appreciated Zhao Hai even more. He believed that such a person was certainly a huge blessing to the League of Dark Mages.

Another point of Zhao Hai that Smith came to like was his ruthlessness. Smith already knew about Zhao Hai's feats on the road heading to Sky Water City. For the powerful Calci Family, matters inside the Rosen Empire rarely escapes their radar. Thus, Smith had someone check Zhao Hai's journey across the empire.

However after he checked, Smith became utterly surprised. This was because Zhao Hai had already killed several thousand people belonging to Grand Duke Lionheart just on the road travelling towards his city.

Several thousand people, what concept was that? Generally, large villages and small cities inside Rosen Empire wouldn't even have that number of citizens. Yet, Zhao Hai managed to eliminate that amount of Lionheart's men. Average people were usually lenient when it came to killing people, but Zhao Hai didn't have that leniency.

Then when Smith accounted for the overall people Zhao Hai killed, including his river travels inside Rosen Empire, the numbers unimaginably reached to 10 thousand!

A single person killing ten thousand? What kind of joke was that? Isn't that something a vicious and merciless person would do? But Zhao Hai exactly did that, this made Smith admire Zhao Hai.

As a leader, it was not acceptable to be merciful to your enemies. If your heart was too soft, it would be very easy for your enemies to control your actions while at the same time it would be hard for you to control your subordinates. That kind of situation was extremely unfavorable to any leader.

Smith also knew how Zhao Hai handled the bandits back in lifeline canyon, this was the reason why Smith didn't see Zhao Hai as a murderous person. He knew how to deal with things and he did it very well. He didn't kill blindly, and wasn't unreasonably ruthless.

Normally, with Zhao Hai's outstanding performance, someone like Smith would harbor some worries. This was because Zhao Hai was someone from the league, if he continues to express his talents, he may be able to wrestle control of the league from the Calci Family.

However, Smith also knew that the League of Dark Mages was a fairly loose organization, even the Calci Family struggles keeping it under control. So Smith knew that it was impossible for Zhao Hai to have complete control of the league, he also believed that Zhao Hai wouldn't bring trouble to the Calci Family.

On the other hand, Zhao Hai and the Radiant Church shared a very deep enmity with each other. People knew that the Radiant Church wishes to get rid of Zhao Hai as soon as possible, this pushed Zhao Hai to side with the League. All of these facts made it so that Smith was very happy that Zhao Hai was an outstanding member of their organization.

For the league to advance, they couldn't let go of such talented people. This was especially so for those with talent in leadership, these skills were badly needed by any organization.

The reason the Radiant Church was quickly gaining power was because they had been using religion to amass talents from all around the continent. They also have close connections with the higher ups of various nations, and these higher ups would take the task of looking for talented individuals in place of the Church. This made it so that the Radiant Church didn't lack in the personnel department, helping them accelerate their growth these past years.

But in comparison, the League of Dark Mages has fallen short in this aspect. There were only a few people who knew about the existence of the league. Moreover, the league couldn't use religion to attract the masses, after all, who would want to worship something like the Dark God'.

There was also the matter with the temperament of Dark Mages; almost all of them were very eccentric. Not only are they generally bad at leading people, they were bad in interacting with other people, period. Therefore, the league had suffered a disadvantage with their fight against the Radiant Church. Currently, the only leading role present inside the League was the Calci Family, but even they couldn't

control all of the organization's members. This was not good for the family since if all the Dark Mages were to be eliminated by the church, their family's end wouldn't be too far off.

So when Smith saw this new member of the league who had enmity with the Radiant Church, possess astonishing strength, popular with the beastmen, vicious, and most importantly, a good leader, he knew that this Zhao Hai was the talent that the league badly needed.

Smith also knew that Zhao Hai went to the hotel today, so he chose to wait. He wanted to know that kind of news Zhao Hai would bring when he returns.

Before long, Zhao Hai returned to the City Lord's Mansion and came to find Smith directly, this was what the latter told him. No matter what Smith was doing, he would always place Zhao Hai's matter in front. So when Zhao Hai came to look for Smith, Phil immediately brought him to the City Lord's office.

When Smith saw Zhao Hai come, he immediately smiled and said, "Hahaha, Brother you came, how was it?"

Zhao Hai knew that his whereabouts in the city couldn't possibly be hidden from Smith, so he didn't think of anything when the City Lord asked him that question, he immediately smiled and said, "Great, the Shelley Family agreed. They said that they'll certainly give their full cooperation on this matter. But you'll have to discuss it within yourselves, I have no interest on this stuff."

Smith quickly replied, "Little Hai, you can't do that, you're the intermediary. You must be involved. How about this, I'll have someone call over Might and Marriott so we can discuss immediately. After the discussions, then we will instantly message each other's families."

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "You must discuss those things yourselves. I don't really have a grasp of these kinds of situations. I might listen to it, but I have nothing to add to the formula. Just have someone tell me what you decided, or if you need me for anything. Is that fine?"

Smith saw that Zhao Hai really didn't like to participate in this matter, so he didn't push him any further, Smith just nodded and said, "Very well, but when it comes to dealing with Lionheart, you shouldn't help."

Zhao Hai smiled, "Be relieved, he chased me for so long and I had long wanted to deal with him. Now that there's this opportunity, as long as you deal with him, I'll just stay in the backlines and observe."

Smith nodded, the Zhao Hai turned back. Him and Smith didn't discuss anything about their business. Smith was currently busy with coping with Lionheart so Zhao Hai believed that it was not the proper time to discuss those matters.

When he returned to Sweet Plum Courtyard, Zhao hai didn't notice Laura nor Meg. They weren't inside the house but instead were at the small are near plum garden.

They were doing lady stuff there, and there was also another lady who wasn't familiar with Zhao Hai, so he naturally wouldn't bother the group. When Zhao Hai returned to his room, he immediately went to the Space to rest as well as see if Smith invited Marriott at this time.

Although the City Lord's Mansion was big, it wasn't to the degree where the monitor cannot cover the entirety of it. While he was inside the City Lord's Mansion, it was obvious that Zhao Hai could monitor what Smith and the others were doing.

The reason why Zhao Hai decided to hide and didn't accept Smith's invitation was because he didn't want Smith to be suspicious.

When Smith and Marriott discusses how to deal with Lionheart and their respective coordinations, they would inevitably speak about the strengths and capabilities of their families. Both of them understood each other and were in cooperation so there wouldn't be any problem in sharing information. But Zhao Hai was an outsider, someone completely unrelated. Under such circumstances, it would be hard to say whether or not Smith and Marriott would be on guard against him. Zhao Hai thinks that Smith's invitation was just to see whether Zhao Hai wanted to participate, if he did, Smith would have probably doubted him.

Although he didn't know exactly what Smith had in his mind, Zhao Hai still thinks that he shouldn't be involved in their discussions. After all, he could just listen to them right here, so why bother staying there?

Smith immediately sent someone to invite Marriott over, he wanted to get this matter taken care of as soon as possible. The earlier they deal with Lionheart, the lesser time the Grand Duke would have to prepare, and also the less resources they would need to spend.

This time, with Lionheart's attempt in kidnapping Megan being a failure, it was certain that he would be on guard. If he was given too much time to prepare, he would be even harder to deal with.

Marriott didn't expect Smith to invite him over to the mansion this quickly. When Smith sent someone over call him, he immediately knew what Smith wanted to discuss. It was this point that solidified Marriott's idea of Zhao Hai's position in Smith's heart. It really seems like Smith was very fond of Zhao Hai, otherwise he wouldn't call Marriott over this quickly.

Marriott and Might immediately rode their horses towards the City Lord's Mansion. Phil was already there to invite them over to the mansion's living room where Smith was waiting for them.

Marriott and Might immediately gave a salute to Smith. The City Lord was also polite and quickly asked the two to take a seat while a servant served them fresh tea. After Smith drank a bit of tea, he turned to Marriott and said, "Manager Marriott, I know that your Shelley Family and Lionheart has an enmity with each other, which resulted in Megan being attacked. Naturally, I won't blame this matter onto you, but no matter what, I cannot just let Lionheart off easily. So currently, your family and mine have a common enemy. I was told by Little Hai that you have already prepared to deal with Lionheart. Can you tell me about your plans?"

Chapter 368 - Benefits

Marriott didn't get offended by what Smith said, since it was indeed fact. The main cause of this incident was the grudge between Shelley Family and Grand Duke Lionheart.

If not because of the enmity between Lionheart and the family, Zhao Hai wouldn't have become enemies with the Grand Duke, then Zhao Hai wouldn't have been chased around the empire and becoming plotted a lot using various methods.

Therefore, Marriott approved Smith's view. The Shelley Family will have benefits with no repercussions with this time's cooperation, so Smith's accusations would have to fall on deaf ears. In the end, this was the difference between an experienced merchant versus a great noble.

Great Nobles hold their dignity dearly, anybody who dared disregard their dignity would be fought and dealt with. This was something that they needed to do because in their opinion, a Great Noble who didn't have any dignity couldn't be called a Noble. This mentality was something that was cemented onto their souls across the years, this pride wasn't something that they couldn't just erase.

But Merchants were different, there was a saying for merchants in old poetry; Profits outweigh words. This meant that, to Merchants, profits were the most important, as long as one profited, they didn't care if they were looked down or sometimes have their dignity stepped on.

Thus, Marriott just showed a faint smile and said, "It is also because of what City Lord has said that we came today bringing this small gift for Miss Megan, I hope that the City Lord wouldn't decline. We also wanted to express our full cooperation for today's discussion, after all we will have to depend on the City Lord."

Smith looked at Marriott and smiled, "Then I'll take this for Megan and then continue on with our plans. I actually wanted to invite Little Hai today to participate, but Little Hai said that he had nothing to contribute. But he also said that if he would help if something comes up, he was also hounded around by Lionheart."

Marriott smiled, "This matter had really been unfair to Mister Zhao Hai. Because of my family and Lionheart's matter, he actually got involved, this wasn't in our initial intentions."

Smith looked at Marriott profoundly, then he smiled and said, "Don't treat Zhao Hai like a fool, a person like him meeting you is a boon for your family. If you don't treat him with sincerity, then he would forever disregard you as a person on his side. Am I right?"

Looking at Smith's expression, Marriott could only smile bitterly. His power inside the family was not small, but the ones who made decisions for the family were the elders. The tests conducted on Zhao Hai were also because of the elders. Marriott wanted to disagree with that but his influence as a manager was very limited.

Although Zhao Hai was currently in a very good relationship with them, who knows what Zhao Hai actually felt deep inside. Zhao Hai doing business with them was certainly not for profit. If Zhao Hai really did rely on the Shelley Family, then he wouldn't have given the bigger slice to Smith.

Might knew that Zhao Hai's feelings towards Smith was greater. If the family didn't doubt Zhao Hai before, they should have gotten more benefits from him. For the Shelley family, these benefits would have ushered them to new heights, it was a pity that they have missed this chance.

Smith looked at Marriott's expression and understood what was going on. Actually, the Calci Family's attitude towards Zhao Hai wasn't better off, it was only because Smith appreciated Zhao Hai that he was very hospitable to him. Now it seems like Zhao Hai's gratitude gave him very great benefits.

Marriott sighed and didn't pursue this topic. Now he continued on to how the Shelley Family planned to deal with Grand Duke Lionheart,

Shelley Family's method in dealing with Lionheart was to obtain the agreements of the Royal Clan as well as some Great Nobles. After all, Lionheart's past conduct of being too rampant brought satisfaction to the Royal Clan. Shelley Family wanted to use this opportunity to make them completely remove their connection with the Grand Duke, effectively removing Lionheart's greatest backer. With Grand Duke Lionheart becoming akin to a rootless duckweed, dealing with him would become much more convenient.

After solving the Royal Clan, naturally the Shelley Family also needed to take care of those nobles who were of good relation to Lionheart. Lionheart was not a complete fool, he wouldn't turn himself into a lonely official just because he lost the favor of the Royal Clan. He still had connections to a lot of nobles of great influence. This was also another reason why the Royal Clan was unhappy with him.

But what was the most frightening thing about Shelley Family? Of course, it was money. If they have money, they could buy a lot of things, such as the support of the Nobles.

Now that the earlier preparations were done, what was very difficult was finding the right opportunity to enact the plan. Publicly making war with the Grand Duke wasn't only the difficult part, they also needed to find an excuse to do so, something that would make the Royal Clan and the Great Nobles stay back. For example, pinning Lionheart with an unforgivable crime, this would make the entire Rosen Empire abandon him, but the problem was who was going to accuse him of so?

The original plan of Shelley Family was to pay a great price to a Great Noble and accuse Lionheart, this would give the Royal Clan and the other Nobles an excuse to not make a move.

But it seems like that part of the plan wasn't needed anymore because of the Calci Family. The family was itself a Great Noble family, as long as they come forward and accuse the Grand Duke, the Royal Clan and the other Nobles wouldn't act.

Although the family was acting quite low-key recently, no one dared to underestimate this thousand-years old family, their power was very scary. Additionally, the Calci Family was a family of Dark Mages, so their temperaments were also quite like other Dark Mages, making it hard for people to guess what they were thinking. People of the empire were terrified of the family. Supporting someone like the maddened Grand Duke Lionheart right now would be like stirring up the hornet's nest.

Listening to Marriott's explanation, Smith couldn't help but nod. Looking at the arrangements, Smith could see that the Shelley Family was certainly very wary of Lionheart's threat, otherwise they wouldn't have spent all these resources right now.

At this time, Smith changed how he viewed the Shelley Family. In the end, the Shelley Family was a Merchant family who had immense wealth, however, this wealth was also extremely coveted by a lot of people. If Lionheart succeeds in suppressing the family, then it was certain that the family wouldn't be able to live comfortably in the continent. Such a big fat piece of cake, it was impossible that nobody wanted to have a part of it.

Therefore, the Shelley Family would rather pay a huge price to deal with Lionheart. This was to inform the continent; "We have money, if you offend us, we'll buy your life, not only your life, but your entire family's life, your entire clan's life."

After Smith heard Marriott's words, he nodded and said, "Good, we'll cooperate on this matter. I think we should first amass our military, as soon as we have the manpower, we'll immediately go and accuse Lionheart's clan. We have to make sure that we really kill Lionheart, otherwise he would certainly counter-attack. That situation would be troublesome and would bring huge losses to us. Take note that he has been the First Lord of the Treasury for many years, his clan should have a lot of properties."

Marriott nodded, "Right, after I head back, I'll send a word to the family and make them prepare to mobilize the needed manpower. The City Lord wouldn't need to have any worries, but I think we should assign which avenues we would place our personnel. This would make us avoid some misunderstandings, what do you think?"

Smith didn't oppose, he agreed and said, "We should, but we still need to report these propositions to our respective families, then decide to distribute the manpower later. After all, these things needed to be ruminated by the higher ups."

Marriott nodded, then he asked to be excused along with Might. After they left, Smith immediately prepared the letter to be sent to the Family, telling them exactly what they agreed on.

Smith believed that the people from the family would agree, although the Calci Family was not a merchant family, it was common sense to grasp any opportunity to minimize losses when dealing with an enemy,

Moreover, this matter would allow them to make a connection to the Shelley Family. Even though the Shelley Family was just a merchant family, the family's hotel business had been spread out across the entire continent, this was simply a hidden Intelligence Network. As long as the Calci Family forms a relationship with them, they would be able to get their intelligence from there. For the Calci Family, this was a very huge benefit to the League of Dark Mages.

This was also the reason why Smith didn't prevent Zhao Hai from partnering with the Shelley Family. In his opinion, coming in contact with the Shelley Family was a good opportunity.

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Zhao Hai who sat in the Space turned off the screen. He didn't expect the Shelley Family to pay such a huge price to deal with Lionheart. At the same time, he didn't expect that the Royal Clan and the Great Nobles of the empire would agree in the face of benefits. For people like them to let go of someone with the status of a Grand Duke in exchange for benefits, this world was too brutal.

But this also gave Zhao Hai hope in the revival of the Buda Clan. A hope that he could allow the Buda Clan to flourish in the continent once more.

In the end, everything ends up on these two characters, benefit. In the past, the Nobles have dealt with the Buda Clan because of these benefits, they didn't want the old king to use the Buda Clan to decrease their benefits. But in the present, the Buda Clan couldn't be used as a sword anymore, if the Clan could bring benefits to these Nobles, why would they keep hating on the Buda Clan?

In reality, those Nobles didn't hate the Buda Clan. What they hated was the Old King who wanted to weaken their power, the Buda Clan was just a sacrificial pawn.

Zhao Hai reconsidered whether what he was doing was right, and he has come to the conclusion that his current direction was the correct one.

Currently, the Buda Clan was weak, there was no way for them to bring benefits to these Nobles. If they don't get these benefits, there was no way for them to accept the Buda Clan back.

Moreover, from Marriott and Might's words, he understood that this world was a world of benefits. If he was not capable of helping the League of Mages, if he was not capable of helping the Shelley Family, would Smith and Marriott be polite with him? Definitely not.

It was more apparent to great families like the Calci Family and the Shelley Family, since they were all looking out for their own benefits. If Zhao Hai couldn't provide them with benefits anymore, then they may not hesitate to give up on him.

This was the rule of survival for the aristocracy, but this was also Zhao Hai's most hated rule. If the entire world turns into bare, naked world of clamoring for benefits, what point was there for a person to live in it? Perhaps when that time came, humans wouldn't be called humans anymore, it was more appropriate to address them as wild beasts.

While Zhao Hai was thinking about these things, Cai'er suddenly told Zhao Hai that Laura was outside and that Smith was calling him over to eat.

Zhao Hai's body immediately came out of the Space. He opened his door to walk out and saw Shun approaching his door to call him.

When Shun saw Zhao Hai come out, he immediately gave a bow and said, "Young Master, City Lord Smith asks you to dine with him."

Zhao Hai nodded and looked at Shun, "Shun, have you been well these days? Are you eating your meal? Did they neglect you?"

Shun quickly bowed to reply, "There are no problems, young master, we are eating well. Because of your status, we had been treated with importance, there was no point of neglect. Even the people of Calci Family were very kind and polite to us."

Zhao Hai nodded, "That's good, remember, if there's something wrong, don't hesitate to tell me. There's no need for us to really live here, don't let yourself be made into a scapegoat. If I couldn't protect you, then I wouldn't need to mention the revival of my Clan anymore. That would just be empty talk."

Shun's heart was moved, when he first became Zhao Hai's servant, he didn't expect anything. However, after coming under Zhao Hai's retinue, his life became incomparable to before. Now, he wasn't worried about his family, moreover he didn't need to do a lot of dangerous tasks. Compared to his past situation, his present life could already be considered as heaven.

Because of this, Shun was very grateful to Zhao Hai from the depths of his heart. The doubts deep inside had long since disappeared. He took a deep breath and stabilized his emotions as he replied, "I thank young master for his care, if there's any problems then rest assured that I will certainly inform the young master. "

Zhao Hai didn't say anything as he patted Shun's shoulder and walked forward.

Chapter 369 - Mantis

When Zhao Hai arrived at the dining hall, Smith was already waiting for him. Upon arriving, Smith asked him to sit down.

After Zhao Hai sat down, a waiter immediately placed new tableware in front of him. At this time, Smith turned to Zhao Hai and said, "Things have been settled. After we prepare everything, we'll immediately begin to deal with Lionheart."

Zhao Hai nodded, "That's good, do you need me to do anything?"

Smith smiled and replied, "Not at this time, as long as everything goes as planned, Lionheart shouldn't be able to escape. The Shelley Family had already prepared to break his link with the Royal Clan, as long as the Royal Clan don't interfere, he's done for."

Zhao Hai gave a nod, "That's great as well, but will the Royal Clan really agree? He is a Grand Duke after all."

Smith smiled faintly, "What about a Grand Duke? As long as you have enough money, the Royal Clan would even agree if you want to get rid of ten of them. Moreover, Lionheart has been very unruly recently, the Royal Clan has long been seeing him as unpleasant. Even if the Shelley Family didn't move, the Royal Clan would still deal with him given some time. And now that someone wanted to pay just for a mere word from them? Of course they would undoubtedly agree."

Zhao Hai actually just asked this question deliberately. He already heard Smith and Marriott's discussion, he just didn't want Smith to get any ideas that he had been listening.

Zhao Hai still frowned and said, "Lionheart is still a Grand Duke, after all. He still has his Duchy, if he returns back to his territory, he could organize his army, that would be troublesome."

Smith showed a faint smile and said, "The Shelley Family's money has been spread out, so long as someone appears and accuses Lionheart, he would be stripped of his title of Grand Duke before the Emperor and his Council. When he isn't a Grand Duke anymore, dealing with him would be much smoother."

Zhao Hai understood what Smith wanted to do, it was very ruthless. They would make the Rosen Empire strip Lionheart off his title, making him unable to mobilize the soldiers in his territory. When that time came, they could do anything they want to him.

Zhao Hai nodded, "Still, Lionheart's Clan is also a Great Noble Clan, even if they cannot ask the empire for soldiers, they should still have their own private army. Also, the fighting strength of these soldiers shouldn't be weak."

Smith just showed Zhao Hai a faint smile and said, "Little Hai, did you forget what we are? We are Dark Mages, when did the opponent's numbers matter to us? Aren't you underestimating us a little?"

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, "I actually forgot, that's good. If there's anything I need to do, just let me know."

Smith nodded, for this matter, he didn't plan anything for Zhao Hai to do. He wished to show Zhao Hai the might of the Calci Family.

In the following days, the entire Rosen Empire was calm. But they heard that Grand Duke Lionheart has returned to his own duchy to handle some matters. This was also what Zhao Hai expected, Grand Duke Lionheart wasn't totally stupid, he knew that if his plans for Megan were to fail, the Calci Family would certainly know that he did it. Now he did what Zhao Hai just expected, heading back to his territory and stubbornly resist .

Zhao Hai didn't know that when Lionheart received the news that his plan had failed, he immediately sought the help of the Rosen Emperor. He wanted the Emperor to come forward and talk with the Calci Family and say that Lionheart was willing to pay any price to resolve this matter.

But Lionheart didn't expect that the Emperor would actually decline while also giving him the cold shoulder. This made Lionheart know that the Emperor had already given up on him. So as soon as he could, he rode his horse and left Carson City for his own territory.

His response was very quick. If he was any slower, there would be no chance for him to escape since the Calci and Shelley Family's troops have already been gathered to deal with him.

Every person of status in the Empire knew of this matter, but they didn't make a move since they already received the bribes from the Shelley Family. All of them kept mum and just watched Lionheart with a look of schadenfreude. They just waited for Lionheart to fall, then they would take all of his belongings.

If Lionheart falls, his fief would become ownerless. When that time comes, it would be divided up by the Nobles. In addition to the bribes that Shelley Family provided them, the Grand Duke had also offended the Calci Family, thus, no Noble Family came to help Lionheart.

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Zhao Hai observed the entire situation with cold eyes. He knew that he couldn't openly participate in this matter. All Nobles' eyes were red from waiting for the benefits they'll get. At this time, if he were to participate, the profits would still be divided, and he was sure that he wouldn't get anything great.

But Zhao Hai didn't shut himself in, three days after he met with Marriot, he sent them the 100 thousand jin of vegetables he promised to supply. Now that the vegetables were sent to the Shelley Hotel, it was up to them as to how to divide it among themselves.

However, Zhao Hai didn't supply Marriott with fire fishes this time, those fishes were too delicate. He wanted to wait until this storm has passed before he gets a boat to send the fire fishes here. This action isn't strange, one must know that spatial items present on the continent couldn't hold living beings. If Marriott saw Zhao Hai bring out some fire fishes, he would certainly be surprised.

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The movements of Shelley Family and Calci Family were very quick, they only took seven days to prepare everything. Then Calci family began to accuse Grand Duke Lionheart of sending an assassin to the Calci Family, this violated the Empire's law.

Hearing the accusation of the Calci Family, all of the Nobles smiled, it was not because there wasn't such law inside Rosen Empire. On the contrary, the Empire did have such a law, it was just that it wasn't honored. If there were two nobles who had enmity with each other, what would be the most optimal thing to do? Of course it was assassination, because of this aspect, nobody actually respected that law.

Now that the Calci Family came out to enact this law, it was very clear that it was just an excuse. However, these Nobles also understood that this meant that the Calci Family would begin suppressing Grand Duke Lionheart.

Everyone was just watching the fun from the sideline, not speaking a word. Moreover, the Emperor received the accusation given by the Calci Family and immediately moved to convene the Council. Right then and there, Grand Duke Lionheart has been declared guilty and was stripped off of his position and title. From the date of today's verdict, he was not a nobleman anymore. It also made it possible for Lionheart to mobilize the troops of the empire.

At the same time as the verdict came down, the Shelley Family and the Calci Family began their operations. In just three days, all of the Lionheart's outside influence were removed very easily. What was strange was the fact the the Calci and Shelley Family did so with little to no resistance.

This made the two families feel strange. They didn't know what Lionheart was doing, did he give up resisting? Absolutely not. According to his previous actions, he would definitely fight back, it was impossible for him to just give up.

Nevertheless, the two families didn't think much of it and immediately rushed to Lionheart's territory. They encircled the Grand Duke's Palace, but when they were about to rush in, the palace suddenly burst into flames! After the fire was extinguished, a troop division immediately rushed into the palace. The entire place was burnt down, moreover, they couldn't find the secret passage of the place. And most of all, Grand Duke Lionheart's family had mysteriously vanished!

The disappearance of Grand Duke Lionheart threw the entire Rosen Empire into turmoil. They didn't expect the Grand Duke to play such an excellent hand. He played both the Calci and Shelley family. And more importantly, nobody in the continent knew where he went.

Nobody knew, save for a single person, and that person was exactly Zhao Hai. Zhao Hai sent a Blood Hawk beforehand to observe the territory as soon as Lionheart went back. Zhao Hai didn't want to participate in such a thing nor did he want to gain any benefits. But he was clear about his enmity with Lionheart. If Lionheart manages to escape, Zhao Hai wouldn't be able to sleep well in the future. So he carefully observed Lionheart and made sure that he wouldn't be able to escape.

And just as he observed Lionheart, one thing came to surface. Grand Duke Lionheart actually had a connection with the Radiant Church! And this time's escape was exactly orchestrated by them.

Although their teachings were very weak inside the empire, one shouldn't forget that they were currently the largest organization in the continent. The Rosen Empire didn't permit the Radiant Church to proselytize inside their territory, which gave the impression that the Church's influence inside the empire was very weak. They didn't think that the Church would actually pull such enormous wool over their own eyes.

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This time, a total of six 8th rank Mages were sent to aid Lionheart. Simultaneously, they also made their secret hideouts inside the empire to participate in their action. It was the help of the members within these hideouts that Lionheart could manage to leave his territory without alerting anyone.

Zhao Hai didn't stop Lionheart and the Church's actions but instead kept watching the entire time. He didn't disrupt their operations since he wanted to see the true strength of the Church inside the Rosen Empire.

It didn't take another glance to see that the Church had a massive following inside the empire. There were at least tens of thousands of people scattered among these hideouts, and these people belonged to all walks of life. There were even some of them who were small nobles who hardly revealed their true identity.

What Zhao Hai didn't understand was the motive of the Radiant Church to spend this much resources just to help Lionheart. Was it because of his properties?

Chapter 370 - Radiant Church, Good People

It was undeniable that the number of properties that Lionheart possessed were a lot. From what Zhao Hai calculated, his total net worth should have reached several tens of millions of gold coins. But this amount of money shouldn't be enough for the Radiant Church to employ such a number of people to save Lionheart. One should know that the Radiant Church was risking the destruction of all of its forces inside Rosen Empire with this operation.

But upon further deliberation, Zhao Hai came to understand why the Radiant Church did so. It was to please the members of their Knight's Congregation! This group had members among the nobles all across the continent's various nations. Although their positions weren't that high in their respective countries, there were still those who had the same level of standing as Grand Duke Lionheart.

Now, if Lionheart fell without receiving the Church's help, what effect would this situation bring to the Congregation? Will they still continue to help the Radiant Church? So in order to appease the hearts of these people, the Church had no other choice but to rescue Lionheart.

From this conclusion, the Radiant Church decided to use all of their manpower inside the Rosen Empire to rescue the Grand Duke while also sending out six 8th rank Mages. This mobilization of manpower was nothing less of excessive. If the Church didn't fear Rosen Empire's 9th rank experts, they would've also sent in a 9th rank of their own.

Zhao Hai didn't immediately move to crush these believers of the Radiant Church. He knew that the Radiant Church wanted Lionheart out of the Rosen Empire, and the best way was to leave the continent and go to a faraway place. But the Rosen Empire was sandwiched by two empires to the north and south, and the route towards both empires were bottlenecked. If they pass through those paths, it would be extremely easy for them to be detected.

On the other hand, the Rosen Empire's coastline was very long, with sections fully uninhabited. As long as they know the patrolling schedule of Rosen Empire's navy, they could leave undetected.

Therefore, Zhao Hai only followed them while also taking note of the identities of those who provided help to the Grand Duke. After he deals with Lionheart, he would then give the list to the Calci Family.

Zhao Hai knew that the Calci Family didn't want him to participate in this matter. They wanted to show Zhao Hai the strength of their family. Naturally, Zhao Hai also wanted to show off his capabilities. He wanted to make it known to the Family that his strength wasn't that small.

At the same time, aside from tracking Lionheart, Zhao Hai also did another thing, it was taking away everything that Lionheart didn't manage to bring.

Actually, the fire on Lionheart's palace was caused by Zhao Hai. When the Grand Duke departed, he left behind his spacious palace to the Shelley and Calci Family. Lionheart wasn't able to bring much with him due to the urgency of the matter. There were a lot of good things that weren't taken, such as those furnitures and the like. Since he wasn't able to leave with all of his belongings, Lionheart didn't think of burning his house. He wanted to mock the two families by leaving behind an empty palace for them to find.

But how could Zhao Hai possibly leave such good things behind? So he received all of them inside the Space. And when the Calci Family arrived at the palace, he decided to burn it to the ground.

In the hands of Lionheart was a spatial item, a spatial ring. He placed all of his family's valuables inside and then immediately departed.

Those who aided him were small nobles, which were aplenty inside the Rosen Empire. They live day by day doing their businesses, they were one of the most unnoticed people in the empire.

This made Lionheart's escape from his territory extremely smooth. Time after time, he was sheltered by these people as he headed towards a small noble's territory which was by the sea.

This noble's territory was not suitable for establishing a proper harbor. Nevertheless, the territory had made itself a small port which was not enough for large ships to dock in. This made it so that the noble could only trade salt that he produced in his territory, becoming one of the forgotten nobles inside Rosen Empire.

While on the road, Grand Duke Lionheart was extremely careful. He completely adopted the identity of a merchant, he stayed at ordinary hotels, travelled normally and didn't hurry along, avoiding suspicion.

It was just unfortunate for him that Zhao Hai was present, Zhao Hai found out that all of the places they stayed in were in fact hideouts of the Radiant Church. Since these places were used for cover, it was natural that there were no flaws in their operations. Of course, Zhao Hai also noted these places down.

As Lionheart was moving forward, Zhao Hai was more and more surprised, the route arranged by the Radiant Church went without a hitch. They didn't receive even a little questioning, they just passed smoothly.

When Lionheart's group arrived at the small noble's territory, Lionheart became relieved. The only thing for them to do was board a small boat here and transfer to a bigger boat out at sea. If they manage to board the ship, then they would be safe.

The small noble family was called the Eugene Clan, they had a wave as a family insignia. Inside the Rosen Empire, their family was as insignificant as their emblem.

Zhao Hai just looked at the Eugene Clan quietly. He didn't want to take action at this time since nobody was supposed to know that Lionheart was here. If he were to attack right now, he will certainly attract attention and he might even be pegged as being the bad guy.

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The most concerned about Lionheart's fate were naturally the Calci and the Shelley Families. The other nobles were indifferent whether Lionheart lives or dies. After all, Lionheart was currently on the run, his territory has been left empty, it was their turn to scramble and grab some land for themselves.

Because of this, the Calci Family's efforts in finding Lionheart didn't go smoothly as planned. It can be said that they didn't have any progress at all.

But Zhao Hai was already carefully following the Grand Duke's footsteps these past several days. He didn't go out, he didn't go see Smith, he just stayed inside Sweet Plum Courtyard observing Lionheart's every move.

Laura and Meg naturally knew what Zhao Hai was doing, so they didn't disturb Zhao Hai. Instead, they continued to follow Megan around Sky Water City to play around. At this time, they were already very close friends with the City Lord's daughter.

Megan saw that Zhao Hai wasn't going outside lately, she felt curious and asked Laura what happened. Laura just smiled and said the Zhao Hai had been busy, but as to what Zhao Hai was doing, she didn't say.

Megan looked at Laura and didn't ask anymore, she knew that it was not good to be overly inquisitive. But this made her even more curious of Zhao Hai, she thought that Zhao Hai's state of being indoors all this time should be extremely uncomfortable. She couldn't imagine herself not going outside for several consecutive days.

But Zhao Hai didn't need to wait so much anymore, Lionheart was finally about to head towards the sea. For Zhao Hai, this meant that his battle was about to start.

Grand Duke Lionheart's group didn't stay for long in the Eugene Clan's territory. This was because the longer they left Rosen Empire, the more they would be in danger. They saw the influence that the Calci Family was capable of, so naturally they would want to leave the Rosen Empire as soon as possible.

Lionheart only took a day to rest with the Eugene Clan. The next day, they rode a small boat out towards the sea. In Lionheart's family, there was only 32 people who came, the less who came the better, otherwise, their travels would be more inconvenient.

The boat sailed slowly, and before long Zhao Hai was able to see a huge ship with five masts in the distance. Compared to the Swordfish that Zhao Hai acquired before, this one was a lot larger.

Another thing to point out was that the ship was wrapped in armor, it looked like an ocean faring attack cargo ship. Apart from being able to transport cargo, this ship looked like it could defend itself as well.

Zhao Hai carefully looked at the ship, the vessel had hoisted the Ocean Waves Dynasty's flag. And on the hull of the ship were three large characters that read, Poseidon!

The ship's armor was more than ten inches thick, it had magic cannons as well as ballistas. The crew of more than a thousand inside the ship looked very busy.

Naturally this ship was mostly equipped to transport cargo. From what Zhao Hai could see, this vessel could be considered as a thousand ton freighter.

This was a good ship, this was exactly the ship that Zhao Hai needed right now and it was very fortunate that the Radiant Church had sent it to him. Zhao Hai couldn't help but sigh when thinking about how good of an organization the Radiant Church was, they were truly the servants of the Radiant God, they surprisingly provided for your every need.

At this time, Grand Duke Lionheart and his family embarked on the ship. And as the ship was starting to sail, Zhao Hai knew that this was the signal for him to begin, his figure immediately appeared on the ship.

Naturally he didn't just instantly appear on the ship. He first used the dark mist to surround the deck before he appeared. When his silhouette was seen, he was already holding his Ghost Staff. He didn't change the appearance of the staff, it retained its skeletal appearance along with the skull on top.

A man appearing on the Poseidon holding a skull-headed staff and wearing black robes, those who couldn't see that Zhao Hai was a Dark Mage were idiots.

Obviously they weren't, so the people onboard began to form reactions to Zhao Hai, especially Lionheart. Once he saw what Zhao Hai wore, he couldn't help but change his expression.

This was not because the Grand Duke was afraid of Dark Mages, what he thought was something else, the Calci Family.

Calci Family was a family of Dark Mages, and this time he has forced their hand, now a Dark Mage appeared on board, what did that represent? No matter what the other people thought, the first thing that came to Lionheart's mind was that the Calci Family had managed to catch up.

Who differed from Lionheart's idea were the mages from the Radiant Church. They weren't Light element Mages, in fact, Light element Mages were unpopular inside Rosen Empire. If the Church sent a Light element Mage to rescue Lionheart, then it was probable that the Grand Duke would end up dead, after all, Light element Mages were quite conspicuous inside the empire.

These six 8th rank Mages composed of three Water element Mages, two Wind element Mages, and one Earth element Mage, moreover they had hidden their strength.