

Another World 401

Chapter 401 - Methods

Zhao Hai stared, he didn't think that he actually practiced for a full day and night. Upon hearing Green's question, he smiled and said, "Grandpa Green, my Battle Qi has reached 8th rank."

When Zhao Hai said his answer, everybody present were shocked. Each and every one of them stared blankly at Zhao Hai. After quite some time, Green's two eyes lit up as he said, "Young Master, did your Battle Qi really reach 8th rank? Operate it for me, let me take a look."

Zhao Hai nodded, as an 8th rank Warrior, he was able to achieve Battle Qi manifestation. With a thought, Zhao Hai made his golden Battle Qi go out of from within his body, lighting the room up with a golden light. Zhao Hai looked like a small sun, but without the extreme heat.

Since he didn't have much experience, Zhao Hai took quite some time before withdrawing his Battle Qi. Nevertheless, Green was still grinning from ear to ear. With Zhao Hai achieving 8th rank, he could already be considered as an expert in the continent.

An 8th rank Warrior that can also use 8th rank Magic of multiple elements. Everytime Green thought about Zhao Hai's enemies, he couldn't help but feel pity.

After Zhao Hai retrieved his battle Qi, Green laughed and said, "It's really 8th rank, 8th rank! Fantastic! Young Master, I propose that 2 hours every evening, me and Kun will come to the Space and teach you about fighting with Battle Qi."

When Zhao Hai heard what Green just proposed, he couldn't help but complain inside. But he also knew that Green was doing this for his own good. The Space can turn him from nothing to 8th rank in an instant but it couldn't help him with fighting skills. If Zhao Hai only had Battle Qi but didn't have any fighting skills, then he will never become a true expert. In a battle between Warriors, Zhao Hai would get easily defeated by a 5th rank.

Zhao Hai nodded, "Alright, Granpa Green can feel relieved, I'll go call you and Grandpa Kun every evening. Right, Laura, did you give an explanation to Charlie?"

Laura who was sitting nearby smiled, "Be relieved, that matter is already solved. But Brother Hai, do you notice something different in the living room?"

Zhao Hai stared, then he looked around the living room. However, he didn't seem to notice something strange. He looked at Laura with a confused expression.

Laura smiled and said, "Didn't you notice that there aren't any metallic things here?"

Zhao Hai observed carefully, and indeed, there weren't any items made of metal in the living room. Still with a puzzled look, he turned to Laura, "What happened? Why aren't there any metallic objects in the room? Did they affect my cultivation?"

Laura responded, "We were afraid that you'll get battered to death by those metallic objects. You didn't notice but when you practiced your Battle Qi, all the metallic things in the room came flying towards you as though are a huge human shaped magnet. Brother Hai, I think you should also train this new ability along with your Battle Qi. I suspect that you had acquired a Divergent Ability, one that can manipulate metals."

Upon hearing Laura's description, Zhao Hai's mind couldn't help but think of a certain white haired old man wearing a cloak on his whole body along with a strange helmet, a man that was named Magneto.

Back on Earth, Zhao Hai was enamoured with the X-men series. The main villain Magneto had left a deep impression on Zhao Hai. It was no wonder why Magneto was the first thing to pop into his mind when Laura told him that he may have developed a metal manipulation Divergent Ability,

Magneto's ability had always been envied by Zhao Hai, so when he found that he had the Marvel villain's power, he was very excited.

At this time, Green said, "Young Master, I think you should head outside the Space and see the situation. Laura said that you were cultivating yesterday, if you don't go out today, Charlie may find it suspicious."

Zhao Hai immediately turned on the monitor and looked at outside. Seeing that it was already time for breakfast, Zhao Hai nodded and said, "Alright, I'll return to the Space this evening for Fighting Practice and training for Metal Manipulation."

Green smiled, "Don't worry too much, you're now 8th rank, an expert in the continent. As long as you train diligently in your fighting techniques, you won't need to be anxious. I'm also hoping that the young master will practice his metal manipulation well, and don't use it in front of people too much. Make that ability a secret weapon."

Zhao Hai nodded, "I already have a lot of methods right now, keeping one hidden won't be a problem. Grandpa Green, you should also go back to Iron Mountain Fort. That place won't function well without you people there."

Green nodded, then Zhao Hai delivered the group back to Iron Mountain Fort. After doing so, he lead Laura and the others back to their room in the Haven, before heading towards the living room.

At this time, Charlie was also there. When he saw Zhao Hai, he immediately expressed his greetings, "How was mister's practice? Did you gain some improvements?"

Zhao Hai showed a faint smile, "A little bit. I have unknowingly neglected your highness yesterday, I hope you'll accept my forgiveness."

Charlie smiled and said, "It's normal for a Mage to train closed-door for a day or two, mister doesn't need to apologize. In a few days we will arrive at Jade Water City, mister coming out this time made me quite glad."

Zhao Hai smiled, "I just felt something, so I went for a short one day retreat. Your highness also knows that we're currently at sea, so it wouldn't be practical to close-up for a long time. Right, your highness, we should have breakfast together. How about we do some fishing after our meal?"

Charlie laughed, "Good, there should be quite a few fish at this part of the sea. I haven't fished for a while, I wonder what mister's fishing level is?"

Zhao Hai showed a faint smile, "I can't really fish. I just do it to kill some time. Hehe." Afterwards, him and Charlie went to the dining room.

After having their breakfast, Zhao Hai and Charlie sat down by the ship's stern to fish. Laura and the others were chatting at the side, while Shue and Shun were quietly serving them.

Now that the ship was continuously moving, it was naturally impossible for the group to catch anything. However, they were able to kill some time while doing so.

Looking at the blue sky, Zhao Hai couldn't help but let out a long breath as he leaned on the chair and said, "Sometimes, I really feel tired when going around like this, not knowing where the future will take me. Your highness, do you think that this is how people should live?"

Charlie looked at Zhao Hai and faintly smiled, "You can live how you want to live. But if you want to live a better life than others, then you need to work very hard for it. This is a truth of life."

Zhao Hai smiled and didn't add anything. Then suddenly, Zhao Hai saw something on the distance. It seems like there were several ships approaching, originally Zhao Hai didn't worry for even a bit. They were currently sailing near the coastlines, seeing these number of ships were quite normal. However, Zhao Hai felt that something wasn't right about these ships, they were heading directly towards the Haven without even slowing down.

Zhao Hai stared at the ships, constantly feeling that those ships weren't up to something good. At this time, a sound came, warning the group that they have become the target of those ships.

Zhao Hai turned his head towards Charlie and said helplessly, "Your highness, it seems like our travel itinerary has become quite eventful. Let's head to the cabin's living room, let's see who we're dealing with here."

Charlie didn't object, he just faintly smiled and followed Zhao Hai towards the cabin. A moment later, a shot from a magic cannon was heard, then a ballista shot. Good thing that Zhao Hai's ship was ironclad, quite strong against attacks, it should be quite fine for a few moments.

Before long, Jinan walked in from the outside and reported to Zhao Hai, "Young Master, the boats had hit us. What do we do?"

Zhao Hai's complexion sank, "Hit us? And it also seems like we lost some undead. Your Highness, you sit here for a moment, I'll go take a look."

Charlie smiled, "I'll go as well. This area is quite close to my Jade Water City's domain, I want to take a look at the people who dared be so rampant."

Zhao Hai didn't object, both him and Charlie went to the deck outside. What met them was a scene where ships were surrounding and approaching Zhao Hai's vessel. One of them were even heading towards their ship at a faster rate, intending to ram the Haven. On the opponent ship's bow was a sharp conical point. One could see a glint of light upon the object, it was clearly made from metal.

On the ship was a Wind Mage, giving the ship added velocity. This made the ship move quickly.

Zhao Hai looked at the situation and wielded his staff. Immediately, their ship was surrounded by strong winds as it shifted its position. This made Charlie stare, he didn't think that Zhao Hai was also able to use Wind element Magic, and it seemed like it wasn't a weak spell either.

The exhibition didn't end, after using Wind element Magic, Zhao Hai changed to using Water element Magic as he froze a big area of the sea's surface. This gave the opponent's ship difficulty in moving forward.

The other ship wasn't that far from Zhao Hai's Haven. Since they were at this distance, it was impossible for Zhao Hai to stop it. Zhao Hai's magic only delayed its approach.

At this time, the opposing ship attacked with two water dragons. The dragons collided with the frozen sea, scattering frozen sludge all over the place.

Zhao Hai's brows couldn't help but wrinkle. It seems like the opponent came prepared, there was actually a Water Mage along with the Wind Mage.

When it seems like the other party saw Zhao Hai's group, they immediately directed the magic cannons and ballistas to his direction. Zhao Hai immediately waved his wand as it produced a blue-colored water shield. The other party's cannons and ballistas were useless in the face of this protective shield.

The shield was made through the Space's 8th rank magic. Shields made on this level weren't that easily broken through.

After releasing the blue shield, Zhao Hai followed through by releasing his composite magic. Composite spells made by two elements were quite handy. For example, combining Wind element and Water element magic would create a tornado with icy blades inside it, this made the spell's lethality increase.

Composite magics were very formidable. If two 4th rank spells were combined, then it wouldn't be worse than a 6th rank spell. However, the difficulty of achieving such feat was very high. The user needs to be compatible with at least two elements of magic. Moreover, he also needed to have a high rank in both departments.

Obviously, these requirements were useless for Zhao Hai. It was the Space who provided the magic, so doing a composite spell was quite easy.

But one must know that Zhao Hai had been quite diligent in his study of magic. He tried out a lot of magics and even had them written down. All of Zhao Hai's notes were compiled to the point that the contents could fit into a book.

Zhao Hai knew that magic was his main method of battle. Therefore, he was very meticulous in studying magic, he carefully recorded the effects and names of each spell. Then he came up with various composite magics using his findings.

This time, Zhao Hai released a Wind-Water composite magic. The tornado, along with its sharp icy blades, soared up into the skies and directly headed towards the opponent ships.

Zhao Hai didn't use this spell in order to kill the people onboard the ships, but to deal with the ships' sails. Once their sails were dealt with, then it would be impossible for the other party to outmaneuver them, much less hit them.

Naturally, the opponent hadn't noticed Zhao Hai's composite magic, they expected it to be just any ordinary tornado spell; used for stopping the advancement of their ships. But when the spell reached them, they realized how strong the spell actually was.

Crewmen who weren't prepared to defend themselves were either injured or worse, killed, by the icy blades. The most annoying thing for these people was the fact that their sails were shredded by the composite spell.

Charlie had been watching Zhao Hai's battle. Even without his undead, Zhao Hai was still a formidable figure. Without using his undead, he was still able to decommission the opponent ships.

But Zhao Hai didn't plan on letting those people off. He wanted to know which power the other party belonged to and why they attacked him. After all, they damaged the Haven, it would cost a fortune to repair it.

After the sails of the ships were rendered useless, Zhao Hai immediately used his Water element magic in order to freeze the surface of the sea. Charlie didn't understand what Zhao Hai wanted to do. At this time, Zhao Hai waved his staff as large quantities of undead appeared on the icy surface before they proceeded to overrun the opponents. Even though the ships were already close enough to place the undead there directly, Zhao Hai still deliberately did so since he didn't want to show Charlie the full extent of his capabilities.

Seeing the present scene, Charlie couldn't help but feel a cold sweat coming down his back. Zhao Hai's method made him very startled. The method that Zhao Hai used was very effective in sea battles.

At the same time, Charlie thought that if Zhao Hai was this formidable at sea, then what would he be on land? It would be a nightmare to face Zhao Hai as an enemy. Now, Charlie was praising his intuition. He had already become a friend to Zhao Hai, assistance from such a person would certainly be very valuable.

Chapter 402 - Markey Family

Naturally, the other party also saw Zhao Hai's actions, they didn't think that Zhao Hai would have this much methods in combat. The only information that they obtained about him before was that he was a Dark Mage. Today, they were made aware that he was surprisingly able to use spells of other departments.

However, Zhao Hai's opponents were also experienced in battles. As soon as they saw Zhao Hai's undead army, they immediately acted accordingly. The two water dragons that were previously used to break the ice once again emerged and began to crash towards the approaching undead army,

Unfortunately for them, Zhao Hai's undead were surprisingly high-level, these kinds of attacks were not able to affect them.

When the undead saw the magic attack heading their direction, two of them went forward, cyan light flashed from their bodies as they wielded their weapons. When the two dragons went in contact with the two undead, two Sword Qi met them, slicing them into halves before the water splashed back to the sea.

Charlie who was standing on the Haven had his eyes turn blank upon seeing the scene. He was speechless. An undead using Battle Qi, this was the first time he saw such a thing. This was an eye opening experience.

The opponent was also unprepared for such an outcome that they forgot to make a move. The undead used this opportunity to quickly board their ships.

When the undead came onboard, the crew was unable to fight them off. This was because the Undead were very strong right now, they were not inferior to 8th rank Warriors.

An 8th rank warrior, when placed on any ordinary clan, would immediately become its ancestor, supporting the family singlehandedly. But Zhao Hai just released a lot of those experts casually, making those not part of his group quite startled.

His attack didn't end here, after releasing waves of undeads warriors, he also added a lot of Jackal Race Cavalry to the mix.

The Jackals were quite small, but they were very fast. Before the people on the ships came to notice them, they were already on their boats.

Zhao Hai considered the matter finished. The enemy had six five-master ironclad battleships overall, he released 12 thousand undead just now, 2 thousand undead per ship should be able to deal with the opposite party.

Zhao Hai stopped his actions and just stared at the several ships. Although those who were on the ships continued to resist, they weren't able to do so for longer since they were a lot weaker.

Seeing the situation, Zhao Hai relaxed and turned to smile at Charlie, "Your highness, it seems like my fleet of ships has increased. How about it, do you want two ships to play around with? With a boat like mine, you would be able to fish whenever you want at sea."

Charlie recovered from his daze, he made a complex expression when he looked at the ships that came to attack them. He shook his head and said, "Forget it, I don't have that much free time to wander about in the sea. Mister should keep these ships. However, I think that those who wanted to deal with us aren't simple people. Sending six five-masted ironclad ships isn't something ordinary powers could do."

Zhao Hai nodded, "I think these people didn't come for your highness, but instead for me. Your Highness, I'm afraid that I had unexpectedly implicated you."

Charlie smiled and said, "What implicated? Since you decided to lend me a hand, naturally your enemies are now also my enemies. Thus, their attacks on you should also mean an attack on me, no need to say that you implicated me."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and didn't add anything. He knows that Charlie was saying this in order to win him over. However, seeing someone want to win him over was also something he enjoyed a lot.

He wielded his staff as six clumps of black gas flew and encircled the six ships. Before long, people inside the ship became quite busy. Charlie noticed that there were some undead that proceeded to change the sails on the ships.

It was common for ships to have spare sails. They sail the seas all year round, what would they do if a storm suddenly hits them? If the storms blow the sails away or just rip them apart, what would they do? Since they couldn't just wait for their deaths or until some other ship saved them, they naturally would carry along spare sails.

At this time, the undead that Zhao Hai released came back while walking along the icy surface. Zhao Hai stored them, leaving only three Mages behind.

Charlie looked at the three Mages and knew that were the Mages on board the enemy ships. Moreover, looking from their appearances, it seems like they were turned into undead by Zhao Hai.

At this point, Charlie's mind went numb. Although he wasn't a Dark Mage, he knew that it wasn't easy for a Dark Mage to turn people into Advanced level undead. But it seems like this law didn't apply to Zhao Hai, so long as he waved his staff, he can turn anyone into an undead, an Advanced Level undead.

Zhao Hai observed his new undead Mages, one was a Wind Mage, one was a Water Mage, while the last one was unexpectedly a Light Mage.

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, it seems like those who wanted to deal with him had been quite thoughtful. They sent a Wind Mage to deal with his ship, a Water Mage to combat better at sea, and a Light Mage to counter him being a Dark Mage. It was clear that the opponent specifically sent them to deal with Zhao Hai.

What made Zhao Hai surprised was the fact that the Mages didn't bring any sort of emblem on their bodies. Obviously to make their identities unknown.

Zhao Hai looked at the Light Mage and said, "Are you a person of the Radiant Church?"

The Light Mage bowed and said, "Yes, Young Master. I am indeed a Radiant Church person, current assignment is a Priest."

Zhao Hai nodded, then he asked again, "Did the Radiant Church send you this time to deal with me?" Zhao Hai knew that a Priest is a level lower than a Radiant Church's White-clothed Bishop.

The Priest shook his head and said, "They didn't, this time I had received an invitation from the Markey Family to deal with Young Master. This isn't an assignment given by the Church."

Zhao Hai stared, then he frowned, "It surprisingly the Markey Family, I didn't expect that. You two as well?"

The other Mages nodded, "Yes, Young Master, we are Markey family's foreign elders. We received the order to deal with you."

Zhao Hai nodded, "Except for dealing with me, did the Markey Family have any other plans?"

The two mages shook their heads as one of them answered, "We don't know, the family only told us about this assignment, they didn't tell us about any other actions."

Zhao Hai looked at the two mages and said, "Aside from the two of you, who else was on the ship?"

The mages immediately said, "We have Captain Gauter, he is a trusted aide of the family. Everything on the fleet is under his control, we listen to him."

Zhao Hai nodded, then with an intention, a person ran towards them from one of the attacking ships. This man was quite good, although the ice was starting to melt, making it quite slippery, he was still able to run on it without much issue. Before long, the man arrived in front of Zhao Hai and bowed, "Gauter meets Young Master Zhao Hai, what does the young master need?"

Zhao Hai looks at this person, he looked about 40 years old, very ordinary looking and had a thick brown skin; obviously from the constant sea travel. Zhao Hai immediately responded, "Did the Markey Family have any other moves other than sending you to deal with me?"

Gauter shook his head, "Nothing else, young master. In order to deal with you, the family had spend quite a bit of money. Along with the six five-masted ironclad ships, they also invited two 8th rank mages, a priest, and five 8th rank warriors. The family told me that losing the six ships didn't matter as long as young master is dealt with."

Zhao Hai nodded, "Good, you go back and fix the sails as soon as possible. Follow us afterwards." Gauter complied and turned to head back to his ship. Zhao Hai waved his staff and received the three Mages into the Space.

Charlie stood still at the side, observing. He was now made aware of the best way to interrogate someone, it was to turn them into an Advanced Level undead. This way, even if you ask the person when he stopped wetting his bed, he will immediately tell you.

Zhao Hai turned to Charlie and said, "Your highness, we should continue on. No need to manage them, they will catch up soon."

Charlie nodded, then along with Zhao Hai and the others, they returned to the ship's living room. After sitting down, Zhao Hai turned to Laura and said, "Laura, it seems like the Markey Family had gone quite restless. What do you think we should do?"

Laura smiled faintly and said, "No need to be anxious. This time, they dispatched six five-masted ships along with a few experts, which we just wiped out. Now, their ships and people belong to us. I believe that this is quite a huge blow to the Markey Family, they should be staying their hand for quite some time. If they did plan to deal with us again, then we wouldn't be polite, let's just deal with them directly, ending everything. There should be a lot of people who also wants to deal with them, let's see if they could handle that."

Zhao Hai and Charlie laughed. Charlie knew about Laura, he just didn't expect that she would be treating the Markey Family this way, it was not what he thought about.

Zhao Hai was not surprised. He already knew Laura's view of the Markey Family, so it was normal for her reaction to be like this. In fact, if he also asked Karen about his input, he would without a doubt say the same thing. This pair of father and daughter had long lost their sense of belonging towards the Markey Family.

At this time, Jinan walked in and bowed to Zhao Hai, "Young master, after examining the ship, we have lost five magic cannons, 20 ballistas, and the ship's hull became slightly damaged. However, this wouldn't affect our navigation, we can immediately head out."

Zhao Hai nodded and said, "Good, then we'll let Gauter change his sails by himself, let's head out." Jinan nodded, then turned away.

Chapter 403 - Method of Improving Strength

After eating supper, Zhao Hai entered the space, and at the same time he also called Green and Kun. The two were to teach Zhao Hai fighting skills today.

When Zhao Hai told the two about what just happened earlier this day, the old men didn't worry at all. Although the Markey Family was a strong power, they were still a merchant family, just like the Shelley Family. If they wanted to deal with a person, they needed to make a deal with the nation where that person was residing in, and they also need to spend a lot of resources to do so.

This time, the Markey family had overreached their boundaries. They didn't do a good job at investigating. They weren't even aware that Charlie was present inside Zhao Hai's ship.

It didn't matter if they were determined or just plain careless, their actions today had already been noted. As the third prince of the continent's most powerful nation, there weren't a lot of people who would dare take action against him, let alone a Merchant Family.

Merchant Families were rich, but for Rosen Empire, the continent's most powerful nation, they were nothing. If the Rosen Empire wanted to deal with the Markey family, then it would be easy. As long as the family had its business spread out among a lot of nations, Rosen Empire could just form an alliance with them and they would certainly be willing to eat the businesses of the family.

The reason the Markey Family was feared was because of its vast resources, but these resources could also be the reason for their demise.

When Zhao Hai saw that the two elders weren't very worried, he let go of the topic. He now began to train his fighting techniques with Green and Kun. The first thing he studied was naturally Sword techniques.

Zhao Hai's Battle Qi has reached 8th rank, and with his body being strengthened by the Detoxification potion and the Goldmetal fruit, his strength had reached an absurd degree. The moment he learns how to use Battle Qi along with fighting techniques properly, his power would increase exponentially.

The first part of Zhao Hai's Sword technique practice were the fundamental moves; the stab, cut, point, wipe, lock, stagger, and stick. These moves were the basic stances of any Sword technique. No matter how fierce a technique was, they would still be made up of these moves.

After practicing for two hours, Green made Zhao Hai take a rest. At this time, Zhao Hai thought that if the Detoxification and Goldmetal fruit could increase his capabilities, then wouldn't that work for Laura and the others as well? If the group could use the Goldmetal fruit to increase their strength, then that would be a good thing for them overall.

Thinking of this, Zhao Hai immediately said, "Cai'er, come here." Cai'er complied, she flew over to Zhao Hai and stared at him.

Zhao Hai smiled at her and said, "Cai'er, please go inspect whether Laura and the others could use the Detoxification potion as well as the Goldmetal fruit to improve their strengths."

Cai'er nodded, then waved her hand as lights surrounded Green, Kun, Laura, Meg, Nier, Shue, Shun, Blockhead, and Rockhead. Before long, the light vanished.

Cai'er turned her head to Zhao Hai and said, "Young Master, Grandpa Green and Grandpa Kun couldn't be scanned, the Space didn't have enough levels to do so. Miss Laura may take the Goldmetal fruit, but it needs to be halved, taken in 10 day intervals. 10 days after the second round, she would have the same rank as the young master. Miss Meg's aptitude is very good, but she isn't suitable for the Goldmetal Fruit, she needs a special potion. However, since the Space doesn't have enough levels, young master cannot purchase the components yet. The same condition applies to Shue and Shun. Blockhead and Rockhead can directly take in a Goldmetal fruit to reach the same level as young master, but since they aren't the Space's host, they wouldn't get an ability."

Zhao Hai stared for a moment, then he made a happy expression, "Good! Fantastic! Immediately buy three Goldmetal Fruits and give one of them to Laura. We'll worry about Meg's situation when the time comes. Right, you didn't say anything about Nier, what's her situation?"

Cai'er said, "Nier's situation is special. She isn't suitable for any current potions in the Space. She needs a special fruit to eat in order to enhance her skill in communicating with animals. This is her special ability."

Zhao Hai knit his brows, "What fruit? Do you know?"

Cai'er shook her head, "I don't know. There is no information about the fruit in the space currently. But from the materials that the Space had absorbed so far, there's a 90% probability that the fruit exists."

Zhao Hai nodded, "That's good. Let's first buy a Goldmetal Fruit then."

Cai'er responded, "Young Master, Cai'er proposes to buy a single Goldmetal fruit and plant it. Even though we need to wait for a few days, we can save 20 thousand gold coins."

Zhao Hai patted his head and smiled, "Alright, good. Let's go according to what you say. In any case, you have a strong computing power right now, you can see things more than me."

After he said that, he turned to Laura, Blockhead, and Rockhead, "It looks like you need to wait for a few more days."

Laura smiled faintly and said, "We're not in a hurry. We've already been at our ranks for a long time, waiting for a few more days wouldn't be an issue. However, Brother Hai, I think we should upgrade the Space as soon as possible to help Meg and the others. The Space may even find ways to upgrade Grandpa Green and the others."

Zhao Hai nodded and then sighed, "That's easy to say. Now that the Farm has reached level 30, upgrading 1 level will be extremely difficult. It seems like it will take a long time. Meg, you shouldn't get discouraged, continue training and maybe you may even rise to 8th rank by yourself."

Meg looked at Zhao Hai and gave a sweet smile, "It's alright, young master, don't worry. Make Elder Sister Laura rank up first, her present level is too low."

Laura made an offended expression and said, "Little girl, you dare tease me?" Then she ran off to chase Meg, who also ran while laughing. The two became quite jolly while teasing each other.

Looking at the two, Green smiled, then he turned to Zhao Hai and said, "Young Master, let's practice for a little bit more, then we'll rest." Zhao Hai nodded, then stood up and continued to do his boring exercises.

At this time, Zhao Hai didn't know that Ruyen's escorts were currently very nervous. This was because behind their vessel, a three-masted battleship was closely following. It was just there, leisurely sailing not far from their ship, it didn't attack them nor did it try to contact them. They didn't know if this ship was an enemy or a friend.

Hart, who was the ship captain that the Purcell Family had sent this time, was also quite anxious about this ship. He didn't know what this ship intends to do, and why it followed them. If he were to say that it was a pirate ship, it wouldn't fit either. Pirates would never attack their ship, this was because of nothing else than the fact that an experienced pirate would instantly know that their ship had nothing valuable in it.

Someone who sailed the seas all year round would see from water displaced by the ship that it didn't have anything in its cargo. Attacking their ship wouldn't be worth it.

In order to ensure Ruyen's safety, Hart even chose to sail along the coastlines, opting to pay taxes in order to increase their security. Pirates wouldn't generally raid along the coastlines in fear of being surrounded by a nation's navy.

However, the other ship followed them closely that it made them uncomfortable. In the end, there was no other way for Hart to do but inform Ruyen about the situation.

Ruyen frowned as she listened to Hart's report, "You mean there's a three-master battleship following not far from us? It didn't attack us nor got in touch with us? Is that right?"

Hart replied, "Yes, Miss. We don't know what the other party wanted to do, it just followed us. I'm really worried because there's going to be an area between Rosen Empire and Aksu Empire that is under nobody's jurisdiction. Pirates are present there, I'm afraid that the ship would act against us in that place."

Ruyen nodded, "Come, let's go out. I want to look at that ship with my own eyes." She said as she went out of the cabin first.

After inspecting the boat closely, Ruyen suddenly smiled and turned to Hart, "Hart, you don't have to worry, just leave them be and continue on. That boat holds no malice towards us, if I guessed it right,

they might even be here to protect us.” Then she turned and went back to the cabin, leaving a very confused Hart behind.

Hart really couldn’t understand why Ruyen was so sure that the other party was protecting them, But if Ruyen said so, then he wouldn’t have any say in the matter. He just instructed his crew to be alert.

Ruyen can relax, but Hart can’t. So the only thing he could do was raise the alertness of the crew. No matter what, he couldn’t make Ruyen suffer an accident.

When Ruyen returned to her own room, Jill asked her, “Your highness, why did you tell Hart to not worry? Do you recognize that ship?”

Ruyen shook her head, “i don’t know that boat, but I know of its style. Couldn’t you see that the ship doesn’t look like a standard ship of the Rosen Empire? Its appearance had been changed a little. Think about that ship that we met on Law River.”

Jill stared at Ruyen for a moment before his eyes lit up, “Your highness, you think that ship was sent by Mister Zhao Hai to protect us?”

Ruyen smiled faintly and said, “It’s possible. But forget it, Hart would still be alert no matter what I say. This is also good, it would be best if the ship is our friend, but if it is an enemy, we wouldn’t be caught off guard.”

Chapter 404 - Ruyen is Attacked

Taking the sea route, travelling from Rosen Empire to Aksu empire would take seven days. Upon arriving at Aksu Empire, it would need about three more days of travel before they can reach Buding City, the nearest port from Purcell Duchy. Ruyen would disembark there and transfer into a carriage. Then it would take 7 days or so for them to arrive at Casa City.

But Hart was aware that on the fifth day of their travel, they would be sailing inside non-governed waters. They would travel for two days inside this area.

In this place, both Rosen Empire and Aksu Empire ships were rarely seen. This was because this area is considered to be the buffer zone between the two empires. If either fleet comes inside, the other would feel anxious, thinking that they might get attacked. So for a long time, there were no empire ships sailing these waters. Unfortunately, this also made this area a pirate's heaven.

Anybody sailing this area knew that they might get attacked at any time. So most sailors would be very alert while being here, preparing for a fight at all times.

After sailing for several days, they were finally about to enter the buffer zone along with the unknown ship. Hart became even more nervous since the ship was still following them.

In order to let the crew rest well and prepare them for the possible battles, Hart made the ship stop first and get a good rest before proceeding. Hart also wanted to know if the ship was really following or was just on the same path as them.

In the end, Hart finally found out that the other party was indeed following them. When they stopped to rest, the other ship also stopped. It just kept a safe distance from their ship.

After reporting to Ruyen, Hart understood that there was no use in further expressing his concerns. Thus, he just ordered his crew to always be prepared for battle.

After resting for a day, Hart officially entered the unregulated part of their route. All of the ships sailing here were keeping a safe distance between each other, mainly to avoid misunderstandings, another reason was to keep alert since any merchant ship could turn out to be a pirate ship.

Hart was also paying special attention to the ship that was constantly tailing them. Seeing the ship still keeping a safe distance away from them and didn't express any intentions to attack, Hart started to believe Ruyen's words.

The first day passed safely. When evening came, Hart released the anchor and after appointing some sentries, retreated to take some rest. Naturally, all of them had their own weapons placed in a convenient place.

The next day, Hart's ship sailed early. Everyone's nerves were tight, they were afraid of battles. Perhaps it was the heavens that helped them since they didn't meet any attacks. This made Hart loosen up, and finally when they entered Aksu Empire waters in the evening, he finally breathed a sigh of relief.

However, what Hart didn't think of was that they would actually suffer an attack the second day they entered the Aksu Empire's territory. Moreover, this attack didn't come from the ship behind them, but was actually from an Aksu Empire warship.

There was a three-master Aksu empire warship sailing on the waters. Hart originally thought that it was only a patrolling warship so he didn't care. But he didn't expect that when their ship reached the ship's firing range, they were immediately met with a fierce attack. Hart's ship suffered a huge loss, a lot of people in the ship were killed, a lot of ballistas were also destroyed.

Fortunately, Hart was well-experienced and immediately reacted. It didn't matter why the other party attacked, but they immediately retaliated.

But in the end, their ship was only a Merchant ship while the other was a three-masted warship. Their firepower was inferior to the enemy, nor was their maneuverability. They were always in the state being defeated all the time.

At this time, the ship that had been following them came over and attacked the three-masted ship. The attack of the ship was also very fierce, its attacks weren't something that a merchant ship like theirs were capable of doing. The main thing about the ship was that they seem to be unafraid of death, it just rushed towards the three-master ship as though it was willing to ram their ships together.

Seeing this, Hart fully believed that the other ship was escorting them. But Hart felt strange, if the ship was sent by the family to escort them, then why didn't it contact Hart? If it wasn't sent by the family, then who did?

The three-masted ship didn't expect to face such a ship, it had been caught off guard. They also saw that the ship seemed to not care about life and death, it looks like it was willing to perish together.

The three-masted ship became afraid and immediately retreated. The escort ship didn't go for pursuit, it returned to Hart's ship and stayed at a safe distance away.

Hart performed some flag signals to get in contact, but the other ship didn't respond. In the end, Hart could only continue on sailing. Three days later, they finally arrived at Buding City. The ship that followed them silently vanished.

That ship was obviously the Swordfish which was sent by Zhao Hai to escort Ruyen. The Swordfish was crewed by undead so of course they weren't afraid of death. If they weren't sent to escort Ruyen, they would've chased the three-masted ship and steal it away.

And when Ruyen's ship was attacked, Zhao Hai was naturally informed. When he heard that Ruyen's ship was attacked by a battleship, Zhao Hai had no idea who was responsible.

Upon further consideration, Zhao Hai reckoned that it must have been Southern King Boris... Boris had suffered a great loss under Zhao Hai, so he must have hated the Purcell Family as well. Thus, when Hart entered Aksu Empire waters, which was Boris' domain, he immediately had a warship attack Ruyen.

However, Zhao Hai wasn't in the mood to deal with Boris right now since they had already arrived at Jade Water City. The size of the city was quite similar with Rising Water City. Almost everything was similar except for the larger and much cleaner port.

Obviously, it was impossible for Zhao Hai to dock their ship at the public pier. After all, Charlie was on board, he also had his own private pier.

Under the guidance of Charlie, Zhao Hai's ship arrived at the Third Prince's private port. Naturally, the people on the pier were already informed that Charlie was inside the ship, so they didn't block the Haven from entering. On the contrary, the pier was full of people.

When the Haven stopped at the pier, it immediately lowered its boarding plank. Charlie led Zhao Hai down the ship and handed the Haven over to Luri to perform some repairs. After all, the ship needed some good repairs since it suffered quite some damage from the previous battle.

Zhao Hai didn't reject Charlie's good intentions, so he ordered Jinan to go along with Liru's instructions. Then he sat inside a carriage with Charlie as the two of them were escorted by Jade Water City's Lord towards the mansion.

Jade Water City's City Lord is named Trezebo, Charlie's hardcore supporter. He helped Charlie take charge of his money purse. Trezebo looked very thin with a dry skin but Zhao Hai didn't underestimate this man. Although this man didn't have a single bit of Battle Qi fluctuation, Zhao Hai felt something in this person that he only felt with Shun.

What is Shun? He was an assassin. For this man to have the same temperament as Shun, then it meant that he was also an assassin himself. This made Zhao Hai surprised, he didn't think that Charlie would actually leave Jade Water City in the hands of someone with that profession.

The carriage's curtains were open while they were travelling inside the city. Charlie was pointing and introducing various famous buildings to Zhao Hai.

What made Zhao Hai surprised about Jade Water City was its difference from Rising Water City in managing businesses. In Jade Water City, selling of products were centralized in a certain section of the city. For example, if you are selling grain, they you'll have to sell it in a specific area along with the other grain sellers; the same goes for other products such as commodities and etc.

Zhao Hai didn't expect that Charlie would govern the city like this. But it was actually a good idea, this made managing the city much easier.

Looking at Zhao Hai's expression of approval with regards to his administration, Charlie felt proud since this method was suggested by himself.

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The carriage quickly arrived at the City Lord's Mansion. The mansion was very stylish, but compared to Smith's mansion, it lacked a few things here and there.

Upon arriving at the mansion, the three immediately went inside. Trezebo lead Charlie and Zhao Hai to the Purple Bamboo Courtyard that was already been prepared. This courtyard was the largest, most attractive, and most refined courtyard of the mansion. It was a courtyard meant specifically for Charlie's use.

Originally, Zhao Hai didn't want to stay here. However, he couldn't just decline Charlie's hospitality. The third prince wanted him to reside in Purple Bamboo Courtyard, so Zhao Hai had no choice but to stay.

To be honest, Zhao Hai actually liked the atmosphere inside the courtyard. Zhao Hai found Purple Bamboos to be beautiful, so naturally he would be extremely fond of the place.

One could say that Bamboo rice is also a type of bamboo. But since it was too long and is used mainly for grain production, its ornamental use was very unpopular.

At the same time, Purple Bamboo was also not mainly used for decoration. Purple Bamboo was actually a very good material for weapons. This fine bamboo can be used as a shaft for spears as well as a body for a bow. The bamboo was very tough, making it one of the most popular material for weapons in the Continent.

However, the Purple Bamboo was also like the Bread Tree, it was very picky about where it could grow. It had very strict requirements about temperature, humidity and climate. If these special conditions weren't meant then they wouldn't be able to survive. This made its output quite scarce in the continent.

Fortunately for Jade Water City, its location was the Purple Bamboo's largest habitat. The mountains around the city were full of these bamboos, making them the most popular export of the area.

Upon arriving at the Purple Bamboo Courtyard, Trezebo asked to be excused in order to prepare the banquet. He didn't leave behind a lot of servants in the courtyard since he knew that Charlie dislikes it. Therefore, he only had the place cleaned and left behind four maids. This arrangement was just right for Charlie's preferences, and it coincidentally matched with Zhao Hai's as well.

Since everything here is complete, Zhao Hai didn't need to do a lot, so he quickly finished his unpacking.

The Purple Bamboo courtyard had a total of 27 rooms. Naturally, Charlie resided in the main room. Zhao Hai, on the other hand, stayed at an independent building.

After Zhao Hai's group was settled in, Trezebo came in and expressed Charlie's invitation for a meal. While he left Charlie earlier, Trezebo took that time as a chance to investigate Zhao Hai further. He already had some information about Zhao Hai, but he didn't put any emphasis on it. But now that he

was going to help Charlie, he needed to be screened carefully by Trezebo, after all, the assassin cared a lot about his lord.

After the group arrived at the dining room and sat down, a maid immediately provided the meals. The dishes were very good, the things that Trezebo had prepared weren't that luxurious, however, they had some special characteristics, they were also made using seasonal ingredients, they were fresh.

Charlie was surely satisfied with his subordinate's meal. While they were eating, Charlie introduced Trezebo and Zhao Hai with each other.

After eating, the group sat inside the living room. Charlie drank some tea and turned to Trezebo and said, "Trezebo, go give mister Zhao Hai my badge tomorrow. Make sure to exempt him from taxes later as well. Also, allow his ship to use my own personal pier. Right, also look for a good store location for mister Zhao Hai, after tidying it up, hand it over to mister as a gift."

Trezebo gave a nod. Zhao Hai wasn't polite and smiled to Charlie, "I give my thanks to your highness. When my people gets settled down, we'll immediately send you the things we agreed on. Right, I also need a bunch of daily necessities as well as some iron, I'll have to ask for your highness' help in this."

Charlie replied, "Iron? What does mister need iron for? Weapons? That wouldn't be good. Even if I want to produce a large number of weapons, I still need to report it to the capital. You know that my situations is quite complex, I think mister should hand this over to someone else."

Zhao Hai nodded, "I understand. Don't worry, I don't need a lot of iron. On the other hand, I need a ton of necessities, include ceramic products as well. I'll need your highness' assistance with this. I want a lot, enough to fully stock one ship."

Hearing Zhao Hai, Charlie nodded, "If that is so, then it wouldn't be a problem, mister can rest assured. Trezebo, prepare those things from mister as soon as possible. Also, go prepare means to store and transport 50 thousand fire fishes. How many days would you need?"

Trezebo thought for a moment then replied, "Your highness, the things can be prepared tomorrow. But the equipment for the fire fishes would take at least ten days."

Chapter 405 - Unexpected Benefit

Charlie nodded, "Good, prepare the things that mister wanted first. You can slowly prepare for the fire fishes later. Also, make some preparations, Mister Zhao Hai might bring back some aquatic magic beasts and marine products, be sure to receive them properly."

Trezebo stared at Charlie, then his eyes lit up as he turned to Zhao Hai. He understood what merfolk products represented in the continent, they represent money, gold coins!

If Zhao Hai can get a large quantity of marine products from the merfolk, not making money off of it would be difficult. For them, this is very good information.

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "I don't know how it will turn out, it depends on the heavens. If they give me something good, then that would be for the better."

Charlie smiles and said, "Mister will certainly succeed, I have confidence in mister." Not to say that Charlie had trust in Zhao Hai, per se, but in his undead. Through the battle previously, Charlie was made known of the formidability of Zhao Hai's undead. Those undead were unbelievably strong.

Zhao Hai smiles and replies, "Your highness over praises me. But I still have to wait before Haven finishes its repairs. The ship only suffered a few damages during the attack, it shouldn't take that long for it to be repaired. I also have a few more ships, they can act as the advance party, I'll just follow them in the Haven."

Charlie said, "Mister's undead can be separated from you that far?"

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "Your highness had forgotten that they are Advanced level undead, naturally they can be separated from me for quite some distance. Your Highness, I just remembered a matter, I had a three-masted ship sent to escort a friend, but I didn't expect that it would be attacked so it is quite damaged. After a period of time I'll have to ask your highness for help regarding its repairs, what does your highness think?"

Charlie waved his hand and said, "This is a small matter, you don't have to worry about it. Just let your ship come. Alright, mister should take a rest first. I'll have them repair your ship as soon as possible so that it can be returned to you."

Zhao Hai nodded, then after giving Charlie a bow he returned to his room. One could say that his cooperation with Charlie went successfully, Zhao Hai was glad.

After returning to their building in Purple Bamboo Courtyard, Zhao Hai didn't immediately take a rest. He first explored the courtyard's bamboo grove along with Laura and others.

Zhao Hai didn't just go around the grove to sightsee, naturally he also wanted to get a couple of bamboo shoots. If those shoots were planted on the ground, they would grow and eventually turn into their own bamboo forest.

The Purple Bamboo had very strict requirements as to its habitat, but it wouldn't need that inside the Space. Zhao Hai was very confident in raising some Purple Bamboo there.

Every since he was little, Zhao Hai always wanted to have a house with a big patch of bamboo around it. He sees that scenario to be quite beautiful.

The Chinese people loved bamboo. There were many ancient poems that were written about bamboo. Zhao Hai was a writer and even though writers can do almost anything, Zhao Hai had a particular preference for Ancient Chinese. Therefore, he also liked poems about the tall grass. He always imagined himself living in a house covered by bamboo. Unfortunately, he lived in the north, a place not suitable for growing the plant. In the end, he never was able to grow his own.

In addition to his preference for bamboo, the Purple Bamboo was also able to save Zhao Hai's worries about the future. First, the Purple Bamboo is a unique plant that can give the Space some experience. When Zhao Hai establishes his nation in the Black Wasteland in the future, he would inevitably need some soldiers for protection. With the Purple Bamboo's characteristics, the need for massive amounts of weapon materials should get fulfilled.

After collecting some shoots about three feet long, Zhao Hai threw them into the Space. Sure enough, a prompt was transmitted. It stated that the Purple Bamboo had been evaluated with a Level of 35, however, it was unable to upgrade the Space.

This was what Zhao Hai expected, it was normal for the Space to not level up. After all, the Purple Bamboo's level was only so-so, how would it be able to upgrade the Space?

Zhao Hai made Cai'er plant those bamboo shoots at the back of the villa and instructed her to take care of them carefully. Then the group continued exploring the grove to see whether this place had any other things of note.

For a bamboo grove that had not been cut for a long time, there should be some good things present here. No matter plant or animal, Zhao Hai would have a need for it. Currently, he had a lot of ecosystems present inside the Space, both marine and terrestrial. Zhao Hai wanted to find out if something on this grove would help those ecosystems.

Zhao Hai's initial purpose of upgrading the Space was to cure his toxin. But even though he had already solved that problem and was now able to practice Battle Qi, there were still benefits in the Space just waiting for him to take. After upgrading the Space further, he may be able to help Meg and the others upgrade their ranks. This also applied to Grandpa Green's group, they might even reach 9th rank. For Zhao Hai, this temptation is too great.

If Green and the others can become 9th rank experts, then that would be extremely fantastic. When the Buda Clan acquires a few 9th ranks in their pockets, nobody would say a word when they decide to resurface in the future.

Upon exploring, in addition to finding some mushrooms, Zhao Hai and the others also found a bamboo rat.

Zhao Hai had heard that this Bamboo Rat was quite the delicacy back on Earth. In Ark Continent, he wasn't sure if the rodent had changed its flavor.

Zhao Hai was dumbfounded when the Space received the mushrooms, their evaluation were unexpectedly higher than the Purple Bamboo, it said that the mushroom was a special treasure, had a nice taste and were full of nutrition. Its level was also above level 40, this surprised Zhao Hai.

His surprise was even more so for the Bamboo Rat, when it entered the space, it was unexpectedly evaluated to be level 50. It was a mouse variation that is affected by some plant genes. Not only was it

delicious, it could also help in growing some plants and eliminate pests in the soil. Also, its attack power wasn't weak, a fully grown adult would reach 7th or 8th rank in strength. Apparently, the one Zhao Hai just seized was a young rat.

A pleasant surprise, a pleasant surprise indeed. Zhao Hai didn't think that he would come across such valuable things. To be able to get some highly valued stuff just by taking a casual stroll in a bamboo grove was an extremely lucky situation.

Laura and the others were even more surprised than Zhao Hai. This was because there was no custom in the Ark Continent of eating mushrooms. Thus, when they saw Zhao Hai absorb the fungi into the Space, they were puzzled. And when they saw that it had a high evaluation, they were dumbfounded.

Hearing Laura talk about not eating mushrooms, Zhao Hai couldn't help but pat his head. When Green went to forage some food in the forest before, he probably didn't look for some mushrooms. No wonder he felt that there were a lack of fungi inside the Space, it turned out to be this.

But it was not too late, they could correct that thought afterwards. After strolling for a few more minutes in the bamboo grove, Zhao Hai didn't find any notable things to absorb aside from some insects, naturally he absorbed those too.

Although insects were common, they were also crucial to ecosystems. Thus, Zhao Hai wasn't polite and absorbed a bunch of those directly. But since the insects were very common, it didn't make the Space level up, the Space didn't even give any evaluations for them, it just ignored them. However, the Ranch was already a small world, so those insects were still placed there.

After walking around the grove, Zhao Hai's group returned to their small building. Laura was interested in today's harvest, although it wasn't very big, they had gotten quite some interesting things.

Zhao Hai smiled at the group and immediately brought them to the Space. At this time, the Space had allocated a space of ten mu where the Goldmetal Fruit was planted. The Goldmetal tree had already grown quite a bit, but it still didn't bear any fruit.

Ten mu of ground for such a little tree seemed very strange. But Laura and the others looked at the Goldmetal Fruit with a look full of hope. They knew that as soon as this tree bears fruit, they would be able to increase their rank.

After taking a rest inside the Space, they came out of the villa. Zhao Hai didn't call Green, it was still daytime, his grandpa was still busy.

Zhao Hai also didn't practice fighting techniques, he already learned the basic sword stances. Moreover, he also had a few spars with Blockhead and Rockhead, giving him adequate experience in battle. With his present strength, he wouldn't be able to be defeated by a 6th rank.

Since he didn't have anything else to do in the Space, there was only one thing left. He held an iron ball in his hand and felt its characteristics.

Zhao Hai understood that he really had the same ability as Magneto, metal manipulation. However, his present ability was much less than the Marvel villain. Magneto can control airplanes and even make a metal bridge fly into the sky while Zhao Hai can only control a small piece of iron ball.

But Zhao Hai was still satisfied, with such a piece of metal, he can change its form and control it within the Space monitor's range. He can make this metal both attack and defend, this is already enough.

Chapter 406 - Charlie's Delight

Through this matter, Zhao Hai understood the massive benefits of being the Space's host. The current range of the Space's monitor is 10 thousand meters, 10 thousand! Even if this iron ball isn't large, when it becomes a small sword its lethality would increase. This way, wouldn't it be just like a flying sword?

Thinking about this made Zhao Hai excited. However, even if he wanted to play with this iron ball, he could only do so inside the Space, he wouldn't be able to do so outside.

Chinese baoding balls aren't known in the Ark Continent, if people saw Zhao Hai playing with iron balls, then they would definitely find him very strange.

When Zhao Hai went out of the space in the afternoon, he didn't see Charlie. But he knew that Jade Water City is Charlie's domain, so he should have a lot of work to do upon arriving here. Thus, Zhao Hai

didn't think much of it and just stayed inside Purple Bamboo courtyard, drinking tea and chatting with Laura and the others.

When evening came, Charlie invited Zhao Hai for dinner. He apologized to Zhao Hai for neglecting him for the rest of the day. For a prince to apologize to him for such a minor matter was already giving him a lot of face, so Zhao Hai naturally couldn't get offended. He just drank a few cups of wine with Charlie, while talking about the past.

Charlie acting like he just did made Trezebo startled. One must know that Charlie is a Prince, and because of this, he is full of pride. Normally he shows a good natured attitude towards people, but being Charlie's confidant, Trezebo clearly knew Charlie.

The Third Prince's arrogance is very high, he wouldn't even pay attention to the commoners. He's only be polite to someone because he knew that you have been educated, and not because he thinks highly of him.

However, Trezebo could feel that this politeness that Charlie showed to Zhao Hai wasn't fake. The prince actually thought highly of Zhao Hai. This made Trezebo quite surprised.

If one would say that Zhao Hai makes a lot of money, but that is just business in the end. Compared to the tax revenue brought by Jade Water City, it was inferior. Charlie shouldn't think highly of Zhao Hai because of this.

If one would say that Zhao Hai is strong, having 8th rank in strength, but he isn't a 9th rank expert. His current strength isn't enough to merit Charlie's respect. This made Trezebo even more confused about Charlie's attitude.

After having dinner, Zhao Hai's group returned to the Space to rest. But at this time, Trezebo was with Charlie in the living room.

In the afternoon, they didn't have much time for idle talk since they were busy with official matters. Trezebo just talked to Charlie to report the income of the city as well as some things that he handled for Charlie when he was gone.

After serving Charlie a cup of tea, Trezebo looked at Charlie with a puzzled expression, “Your Highness, why do you look so highly on Zhao Hai? Is it because he is very strong?”

Charlie looked at Trezebo and smiled faintly, “Why? You’re not convinced?”

Trezebo shook his head and said, “That’s not it. I’ve been with your highness for so many years. How could I be unconvinced about this kind of thing? I just don’t know if mister Zhao Hai has enough capability for your highness to be so respectful.”

Charlie smiled and said, “His business, his strength, his connections, all of these I fancy. Liru, go tell Trezebo about Zhao Hai.” Liru nodded, then told Trezebo about things they experienced with Zhao Hai.

Trezebo didn’t think that this would be the case. He knew that Zhao Hai had a connection with the Cali and Shelley Families. He also knew that Zhao Hai had some sort of conflict with the Calci Family. What he didn’t expect was the fact that Zhao Hai was the one who actually dealt with Grand Duke Lionheart. He also didn’t expect Zhao Hai to be an Advanced multi-element Mage.

It is difficult for Multi-element Mages to reach a high level, this is because mastering each department wasn’t very easy. For Zhao Hai to be an advanced level Multi-element magician is very astonishing. Such identity is indeed worth Charlie’s admiration.

9th ranks would rarely join battles in the continent, it was generally 8th ranks who do. This made Advanced Multi-element mages priceless. A lot of powers wanted to get in touch with one.

Advanced Multi-element mages can use a lot of spells as well as Composite Magic. The attack power of Composite Magics were very terrifying. The combination between two spells of different departments can bring forth unique reactions, increasing its magical attacking power exponentially.

If Charlie can have a Multi-element Mage like Zhao Hai under his retinue, his strength would surely increase by several folds. Moreover, this was a Mage that could bring wealth, he had a lot of valuable products on hand.

After knowing these things about Zhao Hai, Trezebo understood why Charlie gave him full respects, he gave a nod and said, “Your highness is doing the right thing. Someone like Zhao Hai is truly worthy of

respect. But why is the Calci Family in conflict with him? Do they want him to go to another person? Are they crazy?"

Charlie smiled faintly and said, "Trezebo, you forget. The one who currently wields the power within the Calci Family are still those elders. And the person who was mostly favored by the elders is the fifth child Juwan. Seeing Zhao Hai making a lot of money, it wouldn't be strange for Juwan to feel envious. Moreover, Zhao Hai offended Souther King, driving him out of Aksu Empire. At the same time, he also offended the Radiant Church, so he went to Sky Water City. Looking at these facts, Juwan thought that he would be able to pressure Zhao Hai. There's no other person responsible other than Juwan."

Trezebo nodded, "Your highness is right, it would be impossible for Smith and the other brothers to do such a thing, only Juwan. I always thought that the patriarch of the Calci Family is an astute person, to actually favor Juwan is a wrong decision. Allowing his fifth son to actually drive a person like Zhao Hai away, he will surely regret it."

Charlie smiled, "That wouldn't be so easy, Zhao Hai is a smart and wise person. He wouldn't just cut ties with the Calci Family about such a matter. Although the one who holds the power in the family are those elders, Smith and his brothers have also grown up, they also held some sort of influence of their own. For the brothers, they couldn't just let go of Zhao Hai. If I guessed correctly, Smith should have given Zhao Hai some sort of assurance that he would be able to reverse this action of the Calci Family."

Trezebo nodded, "That is quite possible. It seems like Zhao Hai is really not that simple. Is your highness confident in getting him?"

Trezebo naturally had full confidence in his lord, but he asked Charlie if he was able to control Zhao Hai.

Charlie shook his head and smiled, "For a person like Zhao Hai, I wouldn't dare exert my control. Just maintaining our present relationship is enough. When we have some problems in the future, he surely wouldn't just look the other way. Remember what he said earlier? That he had a ship that was quite damaged after escorting a friend?"

Trezebo nodded and said, "Of course, I remember that he wants us to repair it. What's the issue with that?"

Charlie smiled, "You really didn't recognize the issue? This is because of Zhao Hai and Purcell Family's relationship. Zhao Hai had received some help from Purcell Family's Grand Duke, thus Zhao Hai had been protecting Evan's daughter all this time, I think she's called Ruyen? I heard that this Ruyen had brought some trouble for Zhao Hai, but Zhao Hai still didn't leave her to fend for herself. I received some information that Ruyen recently embarked on a sea route to return home. So along the way, they should've passed the ungoverned region, I believe Zhao Hai sent his other ship to escort her. For Zhao Hai to do this, it showed what kind of person he is. This kind of person isn't someone that you would want to control, otherwise they would get offended, understood?"

Trezebo immediately nodded, "Your highness can feel relieved, I understand what must be done. I have already prepare a shop location for mister Zhao Hai. It is not very far from the east gate, the shop is quite big. Although its position isn't that great, it has a huge warehouse, as well as two additional storages underground. It's a good store. The things that mister Zhao Hai wanted has also been transported to the warehouse, he only needs pick them up."

Charlie looked at Trezebo with a praising look, "Good work, Trezebo. You being here in Jade Water City these few years really made me feel relieved. If not for the family's rules that Jade Water City couldn't be owned permanently, I really would like to give this place to you. But rest assured, if I sit on a throne, I will certainly give you a good territory."

Trezebo quickly responded, "I won't dare, your highness. I've been following you since you are young, this Trezebo has also served you for quite long time. Your highness need not give me any territories, I can just serve by your side for my entire life."

Charlie smiles, "Of course I know that, but with all that you've done for me, I cannot just let you go on unrewarded. It will make the others who follow me doubt whether I would reward them or not, so just accept my gift. As for your territory, I already have some idea. Grand Duke Lionheart's Duchy still didn't have an official owner, so father decided to just divide them to his successors. I plan to give my share to you."

Trezebo's heart couldn't help but feel excited. He knew how good Lionheart's territory was. A lot of people were lining up to get a piece of that land. So now that Charlie was giving him a piece, this was a very good reward.

Looking at Trezebo's appearance, Charlie couldn't help but smile, "This is the only thing that I can give you right now. If I get the imperial throne, I will give you Lionheart's entire territory, when that time comes, you will be a Grand Duke."

Chapter 407 - Gift

The next morning, Zhao Hai was asked by Charlie to have some breakfast. After eating, the two of them went to the living room to drink some tea. At this point, Trezebo walked in and reported to Charlie, "Your Highness, the shop and the requested good are already prepared. Should we go check it out?"

Charlie turned to Zhao Hai and said, "Mister, what do you think?"

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "In any case, we don't have anything else to do. Let's go."

Charlie smiled, "Good, let's go and take a look. Your ships are almost repaired, they can start sailing tomorrow. The Haven has a bit of a problem so it may have to wait for a couple days more."

Zhai Hai nodded, "This is already within my expectations. Let's see the shop first." Then the group went out of the living room and went to the already prepared carriage outside. The group sat in the carriage and immediately went straight to the shop under Trezebo's guidance.

Today, they were riding inside Trezebo's carriage. Riding his carriage was very useful when inside the city. As soon as people see it, they would immediately move out of the way, after all, this carriage belonged to the City Lord.

Before long, they stopped at a place near Jade Water City's east gate. But there's something strange, for a business area there were a few people here. Nevertheless, the shop is very large. Looking at its front, one could see that it has three stories, one could also see that its front design is beautiful. Behind the shop is a large courtyard, with a door at the side that could fit three carriages in parallel. The door looked very sturdy since it is made of thick wood.

At this time, there were two guards standing by the courtyard's front door. When they saw Trezebo's carriage, they immediately opened the door allowing the carriage to enter inside.

The courtyard was big, but there were no plants inside. At first sight, one could see that this place was used as a stockpile area for goods since the floor is covered with flat stone. There was also a stable and a warehouse inside. An owner's room and servant's quarters were present as well, all very simple in design, clearly specially designed for practical use.

After the group got down from the carriage, Zhao Hai and Charlie immediately inspected the place. After surveying the area, Zhao Hai nodded and said, "It is very good, although the living section is ordinary, it has a very huge warehouse. This is very good, I give my thanks to City Lord Trezebo."

Trezebo smiled and replied, "Mister Zhao Hai is too polite, come with me to see the warehouse, there's a surprise in there." Then he led Zhao Hai and Charlie towards the warehouse.

There were also people guarding the warehouse. When they saw Trezebo, they immediately gave a salute. Trezebo waved his hand and the guards quickly opened the door to the warehouse.

Zhao Hai looked at saw that the warehouse had been filled with all the things that he requested. The ceramics were carefully packed in wooden boxes, there were also living necessities inside. What's more important was that this warehouse had a staircase heading downwards.

Trezebo took Zhao Hai to the basement of the warehouse. The basement was divided into two floors also filled with the things that Zhao Hai wanted.

The stairs in this basement are very wide, it could allow two carriages to go side by side. In fact, the stairs weren't actually stairs, but instead an inclined surface that could allow carriages to run through, making transporting goods much more convenient. Moreover, the steepness of the stairs were very low, this made most carriages able to use it.

When Zhao Hai saw how large this basement warehouse was, he was afraid that the entire underground of the courtyard might have been hollowed out. Fortunately, the construction of this space was very sturdy. There were pillars here and there and they were made of full compact stone, a very strong material.

Zhao Hai was very satisfied with this, although he didn't have much use of such a large warehouse, it was better than nothing, also, it might provide them with a cover-up story in the future.

Looking at Zhao Hai satisfied expression, Trezebo felt relief, he turned to Zhao Hai and said, "Mister, are you satisfied with this? His highness has ordered me to gift you this yard as well as the things inside. I hope mister will not decline."

Zhao Hai stared for a moment, then nodded, "Them I won't be polite. In exchange, I shall also give Your highness as well as the City lord a gift." He turned his hand as two small bags appeared.

The two bags were naturally Spatial Bags. Charlie treated him well, so Zhao Hai couldn't be stingy and decided to return the Third prince's kindness, this Spatial Bag is one.

Charlie and Trezebo looked at Zhao Hai with confused expressions, they didn't know what these two bags were. Zhao Hai handed the bags to them and said, "These two bags are Spatial Bags, inside is about ten cubic meters of space where you can store some things in. With Your highness' power, naturally this thing wouldn't be very valuable, just take it as a toy."

Charlie and Trezebo were stunned, although Spatial equipment weren't popular in the continent, they were very precious; even Charlie only had one such item. But Zhao Hai was just casually giving those away like they were worthless.

Charlie, still in shock, turned to Zhao Hai, "I didn't think that Mister has such good things in his hands. I think that I owe mister now."

Zhao Hai laughed and said, "Your Highness is too polite, this is just an exchange of gifts. Your Highness doesn't need to mind it too much."

Hearing Zhao Hai, Charlie also laughed, "Very well, then we'll receive mister's gift. So are you satisfied with the place? When will you send people to take the goods?"

Zhao Hai smiled, "My people will come with the ship that I used to escort my friend. They're heading here quickly, in about two days."

Charlie nodded, "That is good, I'll have Trezebo help you guard the place for two days, he'll hand the place over when your people arrive." Zhao Hai smiled and nodded.

The group returned to the City Lord's Mansion, then Zhao Hai went to take a rest since he currently can't take the goods from the warehouse yet. He plans to stock up those ships he stole from the Markey Family tomorrow, then make them sail towards Ape Island where they'll wait for Zhao Hai. After the Haven gets fully repaired, then they'll continue on to trade with the Shrimp Tribe.

He also wants to take advantage of this downtime to receive Laura's people and settle them down. He'll need to assign someone to manage the shop as well, after all, it was already ready to use.

Zhao Hai planned that he would just sell some daily groceries in this shop to not be too eye-catching. When the situation at the store gets more stabilized, then he'll think about improving the products sold there.

Laura's subordinates were all people who were talented managers. Their addition would surely help Iron Mountain Fort. They will also make it more convenient for Zhao Hai to open more stores in the continent.

Fortunately for Zhao Hai, the time of their arrival was approaching. At that time, they will be taken to the Space and then delivered to Iron Mountain Fort. For those who'll be sent to Jade Water City, Zhao Hai would place them in the Swordfish.

The next day, the five-masted ships that Zhao Hai took from the Markey Family were now ready to set sail. Zhao Hai asked Charlie to help him store the goods onto the ships which the latter agreed and had sent people to place the cargo on the vessels. Even if the goods inside the warehouse were numerous, they weren't enough to fill five of those ships. The ships were all half full when they set sail. Zhao Hai couldn't tell Charlie that he wanted to trade with the merfolk this time, he only told the third prince that he'll supply it to other people.

Charlie didn't think too much about it. After all, those goods were all common in the continent, they weren't treasures.

After releasing the five ships, Zhao Hai awaited the arrival of the Swordfish. Two days after the five ships left, Laura's subordinates were all gathered and ready. All in all, there were 400 of them of which 80 were the Managers. The other people were their family members, all of which were also loyal to Laura.

Zhao Hai and Laura immediately entered the Space and took those people in and sent them to Iron Mountain Fort. One group was left behind and was sent to Jade Water City,.

When the Managers saw Laura, they were very glad. All of them had received some sort of grace from her, so they were all her devout followers; there were no problems in trusting them.

Zhao Hai also believed in them, so when they arrived at Iron Mountain Fort, they were handed over to Kun who was given the task of familiarizing them with the environment.

These people all had previous contact with Kun and were once directly managed by him. Now that they saw Kun receive them, they felt excited, it was better to be with those you were acquainted with after all.

The one who was chosen to stay in Jade Water City was one of Laura's most talented subordinate. He is called Mu'en, over 40 years old and was a small merchant before he met Laura. Later on into his past career, he suffered bankruptcy and was forced to sell himself as a slave in order to save his family. In the end, Laura saved him and eventually became a Manager under Laura's leadership. Him and his family were very grateful for Laura's benevolence. Because of his previous experience as well as his tenacious attitude, he became a valued Manager in the eyes of Laura.

Although he was 40 years old, he was still very energetic and was still quite attractive. His wife was also smart. Besides him and his wife, he had two kids who were already in their 20s, also learning how to handle business from their parents.

Having such family be in charge of Jade Water City made Zhao Hai rest assured. He was very confident in Laura's eye for people.

After settling the family inside the Swordfish, Zhao Hai returned to the City Lord's Mansion. The Swordfish would arrive in two days which was also the time frame where the Haven would get fully repaired. After the Haven gets repaired, Zhao Hai can continue on and trade with the Shrimp Tribesmen.

Upon returning to the Mansion, Zhao Hai didn't have anything to do. Because of this, he only stayed inside and continued to practice his fighting techniques and his control over metal. The more he practiced the better his control became. Right now, Zhao Hai can already control two fist-sized iron balls, with attacking force much stronger than before.

Zhao Hai didn't want to meddle in Charlie's matters. Even if he wanted to help Charlie, the Prince would still need to approach him first. After all, the two haven't known each other for a long time. If Zhao Hai was too anxious in providing help, Charlie might misunderstand. So he didn't inquire too much, he just lived his days leisurely, living a good life.

Zhao Hai's actions actually brought relief to Charlie. For the Prince, Zhao Hai's origins were too mysterious. If Zhao Hai wanted to intervene in his matters, then Charlie would've felt suspicion.

Two days went by fast and the Swordfish had arrived at Jade Water City. Zhao Hai already gave Charlie a heads up, so along with Laura and the others, they went to the pier to meet the vessel.

Naturally, Charlie didn't go with them. Even if he fancied Zhao Hai, he couldn't go, after all, he is a prince. For him to meet Zhao Hai's people on the pier would be too excessive.

After receiving Mu'en's family into the City Lord's Mansion, the Swordfish was immediately sent to Charlie's shipyard for repairs. At the same time, Zhao Hai also introduced Mu'en and Trezebo with each other. He wanted Mu'en to know Trezebo directly, so if he was given the opportunity, he could establish a close relationship with the Lord of the city.

One could praise Mu'en's skills, he was truly born to be a Merchant. His way of speaking was very smooth, although it could be said that you wouldn't instantly see him as a friend, it was impossible to dislike him.

Trezebo's attitude towards Mu'en was also very good. The city lord knew how Charlie regarded Zhao Hai. For Zhao Hai to leave Mu'en in Jade Water City showed how Zhao Hai trusted this guy. Thus, Trezebo decided to form a good relationship with the manager.

When it was time for the evening meal, Charlie officially met Mu'en. This made Mu'en startled, he didn't even see a Purcell Duchy prince before, much less a Prince of an empire. From his point of view, he could see that Charlie valued Zhao Hai a lot.

Mu'en wasn't a fool, when he saw Zhao Hai and Charlie's merry interactions, he knew that Zhao Hai's position in Charlie's heart wasn't low. This made the Manager quite glad, this meant that Laura didn't choose the wrong person.

The next morning, Zhao Hai brought Mu'en to the shop that Charlie gifted him. After seeing the shop, Zhao Hai handed its care over to Mu'en. Zhao Hai gave the store a name just like how he wanted to brand his goods, Haven.

Besides the shop, Zhao Hai also gave Mu'en a Spatial Bag as well as 100 thousand gold coins. At the same time, he also left behind some goods and vegetables, which would later be the shop's main products.

Zhao Hai was honest with Mu'en, he told the Manager that he didn't expect to make some profits from the shop. He just wanted someone to stay here and stay in contact with Trezebo, so Mu'en didn't need to work too hard. Naturally, if the shop could do well, then that would be the best.

Chapter 408 - Heading off to the Sea Once Again

Zhai Hai's initial purpose in opening a shop in a major city was to get contacts for new businesses and establishing relationships with Nobles, essentially increasing his own web of connections.

However, that purpose was now made redundant because of Charlie. Who was Charlie? He is a prince with a possibility of becoming an emperor. It was much better to be connected with him rather than going for any other person.

Even if Charlie didn't become the Emperor, he was still a prince, a influential one. Even if the new Emperor wanted to deal with him, Charlie already had a strong network of connections. If the Emperor wanted to make a move, he needs to think about it carefully.

The situation was like Aksu Empire's Southern King. Although he was only a prince, his influence in the southern part of the Empire isn't less than that of the ruling monarch. The Aksu Emperor couldn't even enact his own decrees in the south, since all of the citizens there obey the Southern King.

And the reason why the Southern King has such influence was because of his connections to a lot of Nobles. The benefits that those people enjoy were closely interwoven with Southern King. Therefore,

even if Boris didn't become the Emperor, those Nobles would still protect his authority, or else their benefits would get affected.

However, Southern King's situation was a special case in the continent. While Boris was competing with the current Emperor for the throne, the old king unexpectedly died. Although the current Emperor ascended the throne, there wasn't enough damage to Southern King in order to remove his authority. He had no choice but to let Boris continue on ruling the south.

So if we look at the situation in Rosen Empire where Charlie was competing for the throne, when the current Emperor already decided on a successor, what he needs to do was suppress the other candidates while increasing the successor's power. This way, fully establishing the successor's influence across the empire, making it impossible for a second Southern King to appear.

On the other hand, established Nobles in the Ark Continent were also very formidable. There were times where an Emperor couldn't make his moves easily. But the Emperor also had his own connections and interwoven benefits with them, so as long as the emperor don't encroach on that, he can only damage a candidate minimally.

Zhao Hai also knew that he was only leaning on Charlie's tree. Cooperating with old nobles was very difficult. He knew that established Nobles would refrain from taking a side in a succession battle as much as possible. This was because if their candidate failed to take the throne, they would get suppressed by the new Ruler. Although the nobles hold deep reserves, if they were continually suppressed, then they would slowly lose their power, this isn't something that they would want.

If they didn't participate in the battle, they could still keep their courtesies to whoever becomes the new Emperor. With this, why would they need to participate? Therefore, even if there were constant struggles between princes in all nations, only a few of those established nobles would be involved.

Zhao Hai was now connected with Charlie, this meant that he was essentially one of Charlie's people. In this case, most established nobles wouldn't get in contact with him. They were afraid that if they form a connections with Zhao Hai, then they would get grouped up with Charlie. This wasn't in line with an established noble's usual stance on the situation.

Since Zhao Hai was already clear about this, he didn't make Mu'er make contacts with those Nobles. He just tasked the Manager to carefully look over the shop.

Zhao Hai also believed that having this shop wasn't a bad idea. Even if those established Nobles didn't want to get involved, this didn't mean that nobody wanted to. In fact, general Noble participating was a common occurrence in these battles, especially Mid and Low rank Nobles. They wanted to increase their rank and influence, so as long as they see a possibility of succeeding, they would take a gamble.

So even though Zhao Hai didn't have any reputation at the moment, Charlie would still introduce him to nobles belonging to his side. Those people would then go and inquire to Trezebo, and eventually approaching Zhao Hai for cooperation.

Zhao Hai was very confident about this, Charlie's attitude towards him already provided enough proof. If those nobles in the Third Prince's side knew how Charlie treated Zhao Hai, they will definitely approach Zhao Hai for a partnership. Zhao Hai also believed that Trezebo would spread Zhao Hai and Charlie's relationship, after all, the man was one of Charlie's closest confidants.

Trezebo would do everything to benefit Charlie, so he would naturally do his best to unite all of those under Charlie's circle. After all, being united is the only way for their strength to stay strong. Trezebo promoting Zhao Hai to those Nobles would make them form a sense of respect for the new addition to the group.

With the matters in Jade Water City being completed, it was time for Zhao Hai's group to leave. Aside from the Spatial Bag and essentials, Zhao Hai also left Mu'er with a Blood Hawk as well as 100 undead stored in the underground warehouse. Those undead were there to assist Mu'er if any situation comes up.

Now that he didn't need to worry about Jade Water City, and along with the repairs on the Haven being finished, Zhao Hai was now hurrying along to trade with the Shrimp Tribe. He was worried that if he took too long, the Shrimp people might forget him.

He went to say goodbye to Charlie but didn't expect the prince to actually deliver him to the Haven personally. This moved Zhao Hai, while at the same time startling Charlie's subordinates.

Charlie was a prince, for him to be acting very close with Zhao Hai was a surprise. What's most important was the fact that he wasn't only intimate with Zhao Hai, he was also being respectful, which made them even more dumbfounded.

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On the other hand, Zhao Hai didn't know was that his situation with the Calci Family was currently going downhill. Smith wrote about his thoughts about the matter to his brothers so that they may support him. He wanted to convey that they musn't offend Zhao Hai. He wanted the family to just partner up with Zhao Hai and not force him.

However, Smith didn't expect that his brothers actually didn't support him. Smith also understood why, his brothers didn't get to meet Zhao Hai, moreover, Zhao Hai's interaction with the family was very short. His brothers wanted more understanding of Zhao Hai to support Smith in this matter.

But while the brothers were taking their time in observing Zhao Hai, Juwan was not. Juwan hadn't suffered such a huge loss of face since he was born. Zhao Hai snatching his ship, throwing him on a boat, and having Smith save him was the most humiliating thing that he experienced. Because of this, the only thing in his mind recently was revenge.

After returning to the clan, he immediately reported his interaction with Zhao Hai, of course with a few additions here and there. He expressed that Zhao Hai didn't respect the family. Juwan was painting himself to be the good guy who was being bullied by an evil character.

As a result of this, the Calci Family's view of Zhao Hai became worse and worse. Although Smith had written good reviews for Zhao Hai, the effect of a grieving man in comparison to some letters on a paper was very far.

Adding on to the fact that the family had massive interest for the products on Zhao Hai's hands, they wanted to pressure Zhao Hai and see whether he would fold.

At this time, information came to the family that Zhao Hai had arrived at Jade Water City and was staying at the City Lord's Mansion. They also found out about his relationship with Charlie and how the Third Prince was placing importance to him. He even got into conflict with the Second Prince.

When this news came to the family, Smith became regretful, he wrote another letter to the family that Zhao Hai cannot become their enemy. If Zhao Hai forms an enmity with the family, they would certainly suffer huge setbacks.

But the family didn't listen, for them Zhao Hai was being ungrateful. Not only did they not listen to Smith and restore their relationship with Zhao Hai, they instead decided to teach Zhao Hai a lesson. Therefore, these past few days, they mobilized their spies inside Jade Water City to gather information.

Unfortunately for them, Zhao Hai was very low-key inside Jade Water City. He rarely went out, just like how he was back in Sky Water City.

Zhao Hai's actions left the Calci Family not knowing what to do. Even if the family was an established Noble family, they wouldn't dare attack the City Lord's Mansion, a place where the Third Prince Charlie resides in.

But when they found out about Zhao Hai's shop inside the city, they were happy. They wanted to destroy Zhao Hai's shop to teach him a lesson.

But again, they were disappointed. Upon further inquiries, they found out that the shop was a gift from Charlie to Zhao Hai. If the place was bought was Zhao Hai, they were free to destroy it, but with Charlie in the mix, it became another matter.

Even if Great Families didn't care about Zhao Hai, they didn't have a choice but give Charlie some face. Otherwise, not only would Charlie get offended, the Rosen Imperial clan would also get involved.

Don't think that it was only Nobles who pay attention to their face, the Imperial Clan was also extremely protective of theirs, even more than those of established Nobles. No matter what, the Calci Family was residing inside Rosen Empire. If the family did decide to push things too far, then the Imperial Family wouldn't be polite. If an established Noble and an Imperial Clan goes head to head, the one who would suffer more losses would certainly be the established Noble family.

Since the Calci Family was unable to make a move inside Jade Water City, they shifted their focus on Zhao Hai. They believed that Zhao Hai wouldn't stay inside the city forever.

And at last, Zhao Hai was leaving Jade Water City. What the family didn't expect was that Charlie would personally come and bade Zhao Hai farewell. This gesture was naturally understood by the family.

Regarding this scenario, the family was unprepared. They were hesitant in taking action against Zhao Hai. In the end, the man in charge of their operations in Jade Water City could only send word back to the headquarters and wait for their instruction.

Chapter 409 - Rank Promotion

Zhao Hai didn't know too much about the actions of the Calci Family. He thought that Smith already had the situation under control. He didn't expect that Smith had yet to get the support of his other brothers. Being alone, Smith wasn't able to deal with the problem

But it didn't take too long before he was informed about the situation. The second day after he left Jade Water City, Zhao Hai received a letter from Smith sent via a Blood Hawk. In the letter were the recent and future actions that the Calci Family had planned. Smith didn't urge Zhao Hai to be patient this time, instead he wanted Zhao Hai to teach the family a lesson.

This didn't mean that Smith wanted to cut ties with the family. He just wanted to make Zhao Hai teach the stubborn elders of the family a lesson they wouldn't forget. He wanted to make them understand that there were people in this world that cannot be touched. He wanted Zhao Hai to show the family how capable he is.

Zhao Hai didn't think that Smith would actually urge him to do this. He handed Smith's letter to Laura and smiled, "Look at this. I didn't think that Big Brother Smith is actually a very radical person."

Laura received the letter and looked at it, then she snorted and said, "This is nothing special, I can understand why Brother Smith did this. If the Markey family had people like Brother Smith, then we wouldn't have experienced what we did. How about you, Brother Hai, what do you think?"

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, "Why wouldn't we agree? After all, we only have a good relationship with Brother Smith. It's better if we teach them a lesson now in order to make them understand Brother Smith's words. Right, in two days, the Goldmetal fruit will be ready. At that time, your rank will be improved. With what is going to occur, we happen to have a place to practice our skills."

When Laura heard what Zhao Hai said, she smiled. It was indeed like what Zhao Hai said, now that the Goldmetal Tree is already mature, it was only a matter of time before it could bear some fruits. For the entire tree's lifetime, Zhao Hai could get 80 Goldmetal Fruits.

The Goldmetal tree is a level 60 plant, it has 8 batches of its fruit period, it could produce 10 fruits each time, making it very precious. Even though the fruit had already been producing fruits, Laura and the others chose not to eat it immediately. Everyday they would drink the Fluid of Life inside the Space before practicing, making their body in top shape for the time they will eat the Goldmetal Fruit.

Because of this preparation period, Zhao Hai spent a lot of gold coins letting the Multipurpose Processing Machine produce some low-level supplementary potions for Laura and the others to take in. Although it couldn't improve their strengths directly, those potions could increase their body's quality. When the last batch of fruits gets produced tomorrow, Zhao Hai decided to make Laura and the others eat the Goldmetal Fruit.

Zhao Hai turned his head to Laura, "Laura, what mount do you think is good to use? Now that Grandpa Kun has started teaching me how to ride, I think we should consider what mount we need to use in the future."

Laura shook her head and said, "I think we shouldn't be hasty in selecting a mount. I've seen that there are a lot of strange animals that is available in the Space's store. When the time comes, we can just buy them and use them as our mounts."

Zhao Hai didn't oppose, inside the Space, there were even some mythological Chinese beasts recorded. These beasts included some with a dragon's bloodline, all of them equal to a 9th rank expert in strength. Having 9th rank beasts as mounts would certainly be very domineering.

Now that Zhao Hai had started to learn riding skills, he could now ride horses casually. But if he were to fight on horseback, he will fall behind. However, because of his rapid increase in strength, he could still contend against a 6th rank warrior.

A day quickly passed by. On the second day, Zhao Hai entered the Space early and waited for the last batch of Goldmetal Fruits to be matured.

Before long, Cai'er collected the last batch of fruits before using the land to plant another tree. Zhao Hai withdrew three Goldmetal Fruits and prepared to give one of them to Laura while the other two to Blockhead and Rockhead.

Although the strengths of Blockhead and Rockhead weren't bad, their progress was too slow. This made the two very worried. But now that they finally found something that could aid them in improving their strengths, the two were naturally very happy.

According to Cai'er, Laura can only eat half of the fruit while Blockhead and Rockhead can eat them whole. Zhao Hai divided one fruit into two before handing the two halves to Laura. For Blockhead and Rockhead, he gave two full fruits.

The three people looked excitedly at the Goldmetal Fruit. In all honesty, Meg and the others were somewhat envious, but they knew that they weren't compatible with the Goldmetal Fruit, it was quite a pity.

Zhao Hai looked at the three people and smiled faintly, "Go and eat it. After doing so, go stabilize your bodies, don't forget that we may get into some battles in the next few days."

The three nodded, then with their hearts beating fast, they ate the Goldmetal Fruit. Blockhead and Rockhead were the first to feel something, their stomachs rumbled as energy filled their bodies to the point of explosion. The two immediately sat down and circulated their Battle Qi.

Laura's situation was also similar, but her reaction was much more mild since she only ate half of the fruit. But she also sat down and started to cultivate.

Zhao Hai looked anxiously at the three, he knew that this moment was very important to them. Although the Space said that they could tolerate the Goldmetal Fruit, it didn't stop Zhao Hai and the others from worrying.

The trio took eight hours before they woke up one after the other. At this time, Kun and Green were also inside the Space. The two were also looking anxiously at the three.

The first one to wake up was Laura, she looked at the surrounding people and smiled faintly, "I've made everyone worry."

Zhao Hai immediately replied, "Don't worry about that, how are you? Did you rank up?" Looking at the nervous face of ZHao Hai, Laura's heart warmed as she said, "I feel great, Now my strength has reached the peak of 6th rank. I believe that I'll reach 8th rank when I eat the next half of the fruit."

Zhao Hai relaxed and became happy. At this point, Kun happily laughed and said, "Fantastic! Young Lady, you have finally ranked up."

All the people who were trying their best to cultivate didn't only do so for their own safety, but also for their longevity. An ordinary person's life could only reach 100 years old. But an 8th rank expert can reach 200. In order to live longer, everybody cultivated hard, this was especially true for Nobles.

This was because they didn't need to worry about their livelihood, they had all the time to practice.

At this time, Blockhead and Rockhead also woke up. Both of them wore relieved expressions because they didn't have any accidents. The duo's level had also reached 8th rank.

Two more 8th ranks had been added to the group, this was good for them. Green took the two for a spar to see their new strengths.

Perhaps because they were still not accustomed to their new strength, Blockhead and Rockhead's moves in the beginning were very stiff. But the two started to slowly adapt and began to block Green's attacks. One must know that Green was a pinnacle expert among 8th ranks, ordinary 8th rank warriors could only survive for a few seconds under Green's assault. For Blockhead and Rockhead to block his attacks at this point showed the innate strengths that the two possessed.

After some time, Green laughed and retrieved his Spirit Wind sword. He looked at the two happily and said, "Good, good! You boys have become strong. With the two of you working together, you already have the strength of the pinnacle of 8th rank. If an ordinary 8th rank meets the two of you, then he will certainly have a bad day. Hahaha. I can finally rest assured. You two listen to me, from now on you must wholeheartedly protect the young master. If even a single hair of the Young Master gets missing, I will have to scold the two of you myself."

Blockhead and Rockhead were both orphans since their childhood. Although it was the Buda Clan who took them in, it was Green who took care of them. This made the two treat Green with the respect and admiration that a son might have for his father. Therefore, they would obey every instruction coming out of Green's mouth.

Zhao Hai gave a faint smile and said, "Grandpa Green, it's fine. Just make them assist you, there's currently no need for them to protect me right now."

Green laughed and said, "That's true, but there's nothing in Iron Mountain Fort that these two can help with. The school teachers back there are also undead, they didn't need help. Young Master, just let them go with you to accumulate experience."

Zhao Hai looked at Blockhead and Rockhead then nodded, "Alright, it's good for them to come with me and get some experience. They might assume an important position in the future."

Green and the others laughed. At this time, Zhao Hai remembered that they hadn't been out of the Space for a day so he immediately went back to the Haven. Fortunately, there was nothing wrong on the ship, Zhao Hai felt relief.

When Zhao Hai went back to the Space, Laura was having a spar with Kun. It seems like Kun also wanted to see how strong Laura had become.

Zhao Hai didn't disturb them and just did his own training. Since Zhao Hai didn't train in fighting before, even if he has 8th rank strength, his stances were still full of unnecessary movements. Compared to Laura who trained since childhood, Zhao Hai's moves were very poor. This made him put in more effort in the hopes of bridging the gap between his and Laura's strengths.

Chapter 410 - Devilish Idea

The group trained rigorously inside the Space while the Haven peacefully sailed the seas. Although the ship was alone, other ships wouldn't attack it as long as there wasn't enmity between them. After all, it was not easy to attack an armored ship.

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Smith's situation was quite different from Zhao Hai's idle life. The hair on Smith's head had almost turned white, he couldn't help but worry. Although he promised Zhao Hai that the matter with the family would get taken care of, Smith wasn't sure whether Zhao Hai would still cooperate with the family. If Zhao Hai drops their partnership, the family would be losing big.

But no matter how hard he urged the family, nobody listened to him. Smith was almost convinced that the elders of the family had stones for their brains, seeing how stubborn they were regarding the situation.

He already knew that the family had sent some people to deal with Zhao Hai. Moreover, there were experts among them, 10 8th ranks, along with 20 armed cargo ships.

Such a force was quite formidable, but Smith was sure that this group wouldn't be able to deal with Zhao Hai. Smith was clear that Zhao Hai was someone who didn't show mountains nor seas. Nobody should look down on his strength.

But Smith's sentiments were useless, the family wouldn't listen to him. Smith was afraid that they still wouldn't stop even if the family suffers losses in dealing with Zhao Hai.

Smith knew that he and Zhao Hai would still be friends after these two conflicts. But Smith wasn't sure how Zhao Hai would retaliate, would he go head to head against the family?

The more he thought about this, the more painful his head became. Smith just sat there, staring at the ceiling not knowing what to do.

At this time, a gentle voice can be heard, "Father, what's wrong? Why are you unhappy?"

Smith looked up and saw Megan. Even if he was unhappy, he couldn't stop himself from smiling upon seeing his lovable daughter, "Megan, aren't you going outside to play? Don't worry about me, just go and see your friends."

Megan actually shook her head and said, "I don't want to go with them. I like Sister Laura and Sister Meg. If I play around with them, I get to learn a lot of things. My friends look like they don't have any goals aside from eating and chatting about marriage. There's nothing else that they want to do, it's too boring."

Smith looked at Megan in shock. He didn't expect Megan to say such a thing. Ever since she was young, Megan was the family's princess. Everybody spoiled her and didn't allow her to suffer some problems. All of the dark influences were also driven away from Smith. In the eyes of the people, Megan's life was full of rainbows and sunshine.

Because of this, the Calci Family became too protective when Megan got attacked.

Moreover, Smith already prepared Megan's right of inheritance. This way, when she marries, her dowry would be rich. Then she wouldn't worry about her future, she can do what she wants, whether it be eating or playing, she can do everything.

But now, Megan told Smith that playing around became boring. This made Smith's head dizzy, he didn't know what to do.

Smith looked at Megan with a puzzled expression, "Megan, why did you suddenly think of that? Did someone tell you? You don't need to worry about money, our Calci Family isn't like those ordinary families. With the strength of our family, you don't need to worry about anything."

Megan shook her head and said, "I don't mean money, I want to contribute to the family. I don't want to be my friends who just live idly, eating and waiting for death. Look at Sister Laura and Sister Meg, they are travelling around with Mister Zhao Hai, that would be good."

Smith stared blankly at Megan, he didn't think that Megan would have these thoughts in her mind. Smith sighed as he looked at Megan, he knew that his darling daughter had finally grown up.

Smith looked at Megan and said, "Megan, why would you have such thoughts? You know that Laura didn't do that because they chose to, it is because they have to. What they are doing should be very tiring."

Megan grunted, "I know that such matters are tiring, but I find that kind of woman to be attractive, otherwise I think one could only be useless."

Smith shook his head and sighed, he really didn't know what to say. Looking at the slim and graceful Megan, Smith sighed again. In a blink of an eye, his daughter had finally arrived at the age of getting married. But on this continent, who was worthy of getting Megan?

For a doting father like Smith, he always thought that Megan was the best. In his mind, no man deserves her. Because of this, he didn't have any marriage candidates in mind.

A Great Family like the Calcis didn't need to marry for political reasons. Moreover, the proportion between male and female in the clan is very skewed. This made it so that males didn't receive that much attention while Megan did.

Up until now, there had been no engagements that came to Megan. But when Smith thought about Laura, Zhao Hai's face came up. This made Smith startled, he hurriedly shook his head to get rid of this sudden idle thought.

But thoughts were sometimes akin to devils. It kept hovering around Smith's mind, he couldn't go for a time without considering Zhao Hai. He had to agree that Zhao Hai was a good man. He regarded sentiments heavily, knew when to advance or retreat, and was also quite formidable. Even if he had two fiances, it was common for a noble in the continent to have more than one wife. Moreover, there was a harmonious relationship between Laura and Meg.

Megan stood there and watched as Smith didn't talk for quite some time. She asked, "Dad, Dad, what's wrong? What are you thinking about?" Smith recovered and smiled at Megan, "Oh, it's nothing. You go now. I'll go ask Uncle Phil to arrange something for you tomorrow. Go see your mother, or else she would scold me."

Megan nodded with an excited face, then she turned around and went off. Looking at Megan's departing back, Smith sighed and muttered, "Maybe having her marry Zhao Hai wouldn't be a bad idea."

Naturally, Zhao Hai didn't have any thought that Smith would have any idea of marrying Megan to him. In all honesty, Zhao Hai didn't have much contact with Megan, he didn't even know what he would do

when interacting with her. He was now currently satisfied with his life, he was also satisfied with having Laura and Meg as his fiancées.

Zhao Hai was someone who gets easily contented. When he was back on Earth, even if he only had a few earnings from his royalties, he was still very happy. As long as he has food to eat, a place to live, and can do all the things he liked, then he was satisfied.

When he arrived at Ark Continent, he was also quite contented. He had the Space to plant in, two beautiful fiancées, quite a number of loyal subordinates, and a ton of undead. His current life was good.

But he also felt that he shouldn't get satisfied with his current situation. He knew that he could still do more. Just as what the famous Chinese Surgeon Qiu Fazu said: Cultivate the need to know what is not known, study hard, or just be content.

This famous saying was Zhao Hai's motto, even if he was a contented person, he would still do his best in handling matters. He always wanted to find out about his own deficiencies, and continue to improve himself, hoping that he can reach a higher level than he was before.

This was the same at the current time, he was satisfied with his life, but he knows that he wasn't a writer anymore. He was a landed Noble, he needs to do business to improve his territory. Although he also thought that the territory is already doing good, he knew that it could do better. This was why he's currently unsatisfied.

For his goals, he needed to overcome all obstacles, therefore he didn't become afraid of challenges. He knew that difficulties are your enemies. If you turn away and flee from your problems, it will be like showing your back to the enemy. Your life and death will no longer be in your hands. So instead of running away, you should do your best to overcome your enemies. Even if you fail, at least you were the one who decided your fate and not others.

So Zhao Hai chose to confront Southern King, he chose to confront the Radiant Church. Although he hid in the Prairie, it was because he was pursued by the church, repelling him and making him leave. Choosing to leave is not equal to running away.

At this moment, Zhao Hai was training his martial arts in the Space. He wanted to improve his strength. Also, he actually enjoyed doing martial arts. As a Chinese man, he always had the martial dream, and for

a novelist like Zhao Hai, even more so. Now that it was possible for him to do cultivate, he naturally would jump on the chance of being a master.

At the same time, Zhao Hai was also waiting for the Calci Family. Smith told him to teach the family a lesson, so Zhao Hai had to comply. Even if Smith didn't say so, he would still do it. Zhao Hai believes that Smith knew this, this was why he sent the letter, to maintain the two's relationship and leave a path of retreat for the future.

Zhao Hai didn't object to this, after all, he was disgusted with the Calci Family. But he also has good feelings about Smith, he also wanted to keep their relationship. Thus, Zhao Hai sent a reply letter to Smith, though the content was ordinary, he knew that Smith will understand what it meant.

Regarding the coming attack from the Calci Family, Zhao Hai didn't care. He knew that the Calci Family wouldn't send a 9th rank after him. Otherwise, Smith wouldn't tell him to teach the family a lesson, instead he would tell Zhao Hai to run away.

Zhao Hai attention was more inclined towards the Merfolk. This was his first time trading with the sea dwellers, in fact, this was the first for the continent. He didn't know how the Merfolk would act.

He knew that the Humans and the Merfolk had been at odds for years. But haven't they really traded with each other? For Zhao Hai, this was inconceivable.

But Zhao Hai also knew that the ships present around these parts are almost all Pirate ships. And on these pirate ships were people who weren't that strong. If they go far into the deep sea, their ships would definitely suffer some accidents. So it wouldn't be possible for them to trade with the sea-dwellers.

If Zhao Hai's strength wasn't enough, then he might've become food for the Shrimp Tribe. Moreover, the general outlook of the people from the continent regarding the Merfolk were mostly negative. Adding on to the mysterious nature of the Merfolk's life at sea, Humans wouldn't like to get in contact with them. Because of this, Human merchants cannot just do business like what they did with the Beastmen.

The reason why Zhao Hai was able to be welcomed by the Beastmen as well as the Merfolk was because he considered them as equals. Not aliens that were looked down upon.

But if an expert with the same strength as Zhao Hai meets those Shrimp Tribesmen, they would immediately kill them, much less talk about business.

Zhao Hai's worry was how the Merfold would act during their trade. He didn't know whether they would treat him as a normal partner would, or just take him as a fool and undervalue his goods.

Although this was a risky move, Zhao Hai still wanted to do it. This was because he was clear that if this business goes through successfully, his Buda Clan would get another ace up their sleeves.

The fifth day after leaving Jade Water City, Zhao Hai's ship had left the waters governed by the Rosen Empire's navy and officially entered international waters. However, Zhao Hai also knew that troubles would arrive, the Calci Family's attack would arrive soon.

And just like what Zhao Hai expected, on the second day that he entered international waters, the Calci Family's people came. All in all, they had 20 armed ships, 15 were three-masted ships, while 5 were five-masted ironclad ships. Such scene was domineering, only a Great Family like the Calci Family could afford to do such a thing.

Zhao Hai calmly observed from the monitor as he awaited the arrival of the other party. While doing so, he noticed a familiar person in the monitor, and that person was none other than Juwan!