

Black Iron 341

Chapter 341: Family Life

After supper, Zhang Tie stayed at home to chat with his family. Meanwhile, he played with that little guy who was trying to climb up everything. The atmosphere was very warm.

For Zhang Yang's abduction, Zhang Tie's parents still didn't know that it was related to Zhang Tie. Neither did they know that Zhang Tie had encountered an even greater danger than Zhang Yang on that day. As Zhang Tie didn't want them to worry about him, he just briefly described parts of the event.

At present, the Zhang family employed a servant introduced by Zhang Tie's eldest uncle. She was called Aunt Jen. She was honest, diligent, and had a clear background. Besides 56 silver coins a month, she would also be tipped for holidays and festivals. Seeing the Zhang family sitting in the parlor, Aunt Jen made sliced fruits for them.

At the beginning, Zhang Tie's mom was the last one who wanted to employ a servant. When she thought that it would cost them dozens of silver coins a month, Zhang Tie's mom was very reluctant about it.

Having been very diligent in Blackhot City for so many years, Zhang Tie's mom was not accustomed to being served by others. However, Zhang Tie's elder sister's stomach was growing larger while Zhang Tie's elder brother and dad had their own work and had little time to stay at home. Zhang Tie's mom could not take care of Zhang Tie's elder sister-in-law while preparing the whole family's food; therefore, she agreed to employ a servant.

Kids at the age of half year were the most torturing. Over the past half year, Zhang Cheng'an was looked after by Zhang Tie's elder sister-in-law and Zhang Tie's mom. He was quiet in the daytime; at night, when everybody fell asleep, this kid would be full of energy and he would need to pee or poop. Whereas, it could only be taken care by Zhang Tie's elder sister-in-law at night. Due to long-term poor sleep, Zhang Tie thought that his elder sister-in-law looked a bit haggard.

These were the usual, trivial things in their daily lives.

Before Zhang Tie came back, Zhang Tie's elder sister-in-law and Zhang Yang had been talking about employing a babysitter. They always tried to persuade Zhang Tie's mom in a roundabout way.

When Zhang Tie came back today, seeing Zhang Tie's mom being very happy, Zhang Tie's elder sister-in-law mentioned the babysitter thing once again. Surprisingly, this time, Zhang Tie's mom agreed at once. The whole family then became very joyful.

"We need to choose the babysitter very carefully. She should be careful and patient. Coincidentally, your dad and I had found your uncle's home in Xince City several days ago. Your uncle has many children and your aunt lies in bed all year round due to sickness. They have severe financial problems!" Zhang Tie's mom stared at Zhang Yang and explained, "You and Zhang Tie have an elder female cousin. She is good-looking, over 30 years old and is working as a nursery governess in a kindergarten on street. Although working very hard, she could only make over 40 silver coins a month there. If you want to employ a babysitter, you'd better employ your cousin as we are of the same family!"

"Good idea!" Zhang Yang agreed at once, "When I am free, I will go to the Xince City to invite my uncle's family for a reunion!"

When Zhang Tie intended to ask about his grandparents' health situation, he saw a wisp of grief in his mom's eyes; therefore, he knew the answer.

After leaving Huaiyuan Prefecture 30 years, Zhang Tie knew that his grandparents must have passed away, one after another, before they came back. If not, his mom would not look that sorrowful.

"Mom, what about uncle's family members?" Zhang Tie asked then.

"Your uncle has 4 sons and 3 daughters. 2 of his daughters and 3 of his sons have married, leaving your elder female cousin and your elder male cousin at home. Your elder female cousin is a nursery governess in a kindergarten while your elder male cousin has no official job. Your aunt lies on bed all the year round. Your uncle is a postman. He has to look after his family! If you and your elder brother can, you should help them a lot!"

"Don't worry, mom, I believe my uncle's family will be well off. How could my elder brother and I not help mom's relatives when they're in trouble? After figuring out the situation over there, we will help them!" Zhang Tie comforted his mom, "Oh, what disease does aunt suffer?"

"Your aunt was working in an ice plant; due to her long exposure to cold conditions, she suffers from severe rheumatism and arthritis. She can't even walk easily now!" Zhang Tie's mom sighed.

'Rheumatism and arthritis?' Hearing this answer, Zhang Tie smiled. Although he was not sure about dealing with other diseases, he was sure that the two diseases could definitely be cured with only a few vials of all-purpose medicament. 'I will send a batch of all-purpose medicament to them for both my uncle's family and my own family.'

During the talk, Zhang Tie came to understand the details of what his dad and elder brother had been up to over the past half year.

After staying at home for a while, Zhang Tie's dad couldn't stand doing nothing anymore; so, he got a job as a material engineer of an airship manufacturing company. As he was very familiar with this job, he became passionate once again. In the latter part of the talk, Zhang Tie's dad started to talk about manufacturing airships of high spirits. In his words, this work was far more interesting than his previous job. Additionally, there were many young men in the company, who made him very energetic.

Zhang Tie then joked, "Dad, now that you like manufacturing airships so much, how about buying that company for you and let you be the boss?"

Hearing Zhang Tie's words, his dad almost flicked his forehead once again, "Although that company produces small airships, it employs over 700 workers. Its total assets amount to more than 300,000 gold coins. That's 300,000 gold coins! How could you buy it so easily? Let's not say empty words!"

Zhang Tie just responded with a smile.

Zhang Yang had registered a business group and started to get involved in the food and pharmaceutical trades. After half a year's practice, he had gradually stabilized his business.

The name of Zhang Tie's business group was Jinwu (金乌) Business Group. Jinwu meant Sun, which was also a magical beast that lived on the sun in Chinese myths. In this age, Chinese always liked to name their organizations or group from allusions or stories in myths, such as Golden Roc Bank.

Additionally, "金" referred to the radical "钅" of "铁", which indicated Zhang Tie (张铁), while "金乌" referred to "阳", which indicated "Zhang Yang (张阳)". This name included the brothers' names and represented the brothers' position in the business group.

Zhang Yang racked his mind over 2 weeks before he thought this name. He was very pleased with the name. Over the past half year, he also spent a lot of time and energy in the business group. The main scope of the company was food and drug trading. He chose the 2 areas because Zhang Tie told him that the 3rd holy war between humans and demons was nigh!

Looking back at the two previous holy wars between the human race and demons, the three most important materials were food, medicine, and weapons. In each holy war, companies or business groups in the above three industries would earn uncountable profits.

Zhang Yang bet that food and drug industries would grow increasingly important in the future and all the food and drugs would be scarce and expensive.

As would the weapons and munitions industry. However, Jinwu Business Group was not qualified to enter this industry which it required large assets and an established foundation. Therefore, he could only start from food and drugs trading.

The fish processing industry and marine creatures medicine industry were both very developed in Huaiyuan Prefecture which was located in coastal areas. This created great convenience for Jinwu Business Group to involve itself in the food and pharmaceutical industries.

Now, Jinwu Business Group was mainly trading canned fish, which had an extremely long shelf life, and a medicament made of a special actinaria's biotoxin. The latter one could be widely applied in weapon processing to make weapons more lethal to both demons and human race.

Jinwu Business Group had already opened the market and established relations with some clients. The next step, according to Zhang Yang's plan, was for Jinwu Business Group to extend to the upper level of the industrial chain of food and drug processing. When the holy war broke out, the most powerful ones would not purely trade the goods, but also control the resources' sources.

Zhang Yang firstly decided to purchase a cannery; then, he would organize a small fishing team. He planned to control each important link of the production of canned fish from fishing, processing, production to sales.

Time flew, everyone was enjoying the talk with their family members. It was soon 11:00 pm. Considering that Zhang Tie's dad had to go to work tomorrow, they then went back to their own bedrooms to sleep.

Before going back to his own bedroom, Zhang Tie asked his mom, "Mom, do we have any liquor?"

"Yes, it's in kitchen. Your dad bought it for making medicinal liquor. What do you want that for?"

"I want a bit!"

"Are you drinking it now?" Zhang Tie's mom looked him with a dubious expression.

"No, I am practicing a fighting skill. Before I start, I have to clean my body with liquor. It's used to lower the temperature of my body! Although I will stay at home for several days. I won't drop my cultivation!" Zhang Tie fabricated as he believed that nobody would doubt his words. As for why he would use liquor instead of alcohol, who cared; perhaps liquor was more nutritious than alcohol.

Hearing that Zhang Tie would stay at home several days, Zhang Tie's mom revealed a smile of satisfaction at once, "The wine is in the wine cabinet, if there's not enough, I will buy some for you tomorrow!"

"1 or 2 bottles are enough!" Zhang Tie smirked. After saying good night to his family members, he went to the kitchen and got 2 average bottles of liquor which were marked 61 degrees from the wine cabinet before heading back to his own bedroom...

Chapter 342: Sowing Lotus Seeds (I)

After dying out the lamps in the bedroom, Zhang Tie stood before his window on the 3rd floor. He slightly exposed a corner of the curtain and looked at the courtyard. It was already past midnight and the lamps in the courtyard were still on. One bodyguard was sitting quietly in the corridor of the courtyard with his eyes widely opened.

On the other side of the house was another person who was also on duty. 2 other people were sleeping in the room beside the parlor on 1st floor. The above 4 people were left by Zhang Haitian, the grandpa of Zhang Tie, when he came here for Zhang Yang yesterday. They had worked for Zhang Family for over 10 years.

As Zhang Yang had experienced the abduction, with these people at home, Zhang family would feel safe.

Zhang Tie then put down the corner of the curtain and started to consider finding some bodyguards and sentries for his family members. Now that his elder brother had been abducted, it was hard to say whether similar events would happen on other family members. As the world was becoming increasingly chaotic, Zhang Tie thought that he had to pay attention to this issue.

At this moment, now that his grandpa had assigned bodyguards and sentries here, he didn't need to find others for the time being. If he went for other bodyguards and sentries at this moment, he would face two problems, namely, the loyalty of the new bodyguards and sentries that he found, and his grandpa would think that Zhang Tie's family didn't believe in him, which would raise many doubts and misunderstandings.

Additionally, according to his elder brother, when Zhang Yang was in hospital, the intelligence department of Huaiyuan Prefecture found him and recorded the details of the abduction. Combining Zhang Yang's statement and other clues, it would not be difficult for some smart guys to conclude that Zhang Tie was the only person who had mastered the secret knowledge of producing all-purpose medicament.

Therefore, it would almost be impossible for those people to gain the secret knowledge of producing all-purpose medicament from his family members. Of course, there might be chances that someone would

force him to submit the secret knowledge on producing all-purpose medicament by abducting his family members. However, unless Huaiyuan Palace had declined to the worst scenario and lost its ability to protect the Zhang Clan's posterity, this would not happen in a short period. Even though it truly happened, those people would definitely suffer a great punishment.

Therefore, whether they wanted to master the method to produce all-purpose medicament or to directly destroy this method, their main target was still Zhang Tie. After the recent events, they should be clearer about this point.

Zhang Tie realized that his number one priority should be to improve his fighting strength as soon as possible. He needed to find a way to gain seven-strength fruits so as to turn his precise throwing skill into his trump card.

After all his family members had gone to bed and he ensured that nobody would disturb him, Zhang Tie entered Castle of Black Iron.

Since he left Dragon Cave, it was Zhang Tie's first time entering the Castle of Black Iron.

Before Zhang Tie entered the Castle of Black Iron, he held 2 bottles of liquor as he expected the new fruits on the small tree.

Although the fight in Dragon Cave 3 days ago was very fierce, Zhang Tie knew that it was time for him to reap the fruits.

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After unlocking that marvelous arch door in his mind, Zhang Tie disappeared in the bedroom at once and entered Castle of Black Iron.

After Zhang Tie requested that Heller kept the time in the Castle of Black Iron synchronized with outside, it was also night in the Castle of Black Iron now.

It was very tranquil in the Castle of Black Iron. Without clamor of the daytime, everything was like a sweet dream. What covered this space now was not a colorful, brilliant rainbow any more, but colorful clouds that covered the bright moon. With the tender light, the whole space became a fairly visible.

In the dark, each leaf of the small tree was shining. With different shapes, those leaves were radiating lights of many different colors. As a result, hundreds of colors were shining on the small tree.

Watching that mysterious, small tree, Zhang Tie felt like he was enjoying a fabulous scene. He watched it for one minute before stopping himself from picking off fruits. With the two bottles of liquor, he entered his lab.

After turning on the lamp, the whole lab became bright.

On the table was lying that lotus seedpod of the fiery-flame lotus gifted from Zhao Yuan, Zhang Tie's master. Zhang Tie put down the bottles and found an empty glass flask from a cabinet which could hold over 1 liter of liquid.

Since he bought these flasks from Blackhot City, Zhang Tie had not used them till now. After checking the flask, Zhang Tie found its inside was even a bit dirty, which might have been like that since it left the factory.

The air in the Castle of Black Iron was refreshing, natural, and filled of various plants' reiki. There was almost no dirt or dust in the air. It was around 8 to 9 months ago when he cleaned the table of the lab. Now, it was still as clean as before. After touching it, he saw no dirt at all. If air could be sold, Zhang Tie even wanted to sell the air in cans.

Zhang Tie then held the flask and went to the stream. After cleaning it completely, he took it back into the lab.

'If only I could install a waterpipe in the lab!' However, Zhang Tie knew that he was unable to make something like that for the time being. It would be too boring for him to buy a water tower and water pipes and then bring them into the Castle of Black Iron.

"Welcome to the Castle of Black Iron, Castle Lord!"

While Zhang Tie was washing the flask, Heller arrived and met him at the entrance of the lab. He bowed towards Zhang Tie. At Zhang Tie's behest, Heller finally didn't add "Handsome and Magnificent" onto Zhang Tie's title. Zhang Tie knew that he could enjoy it alone, but it would be unwise for him to make others join in with him.

Zhang Tie greeted Heller and they walked into the lab together.

After entering the lab, Zhang Tie hurriedly started his work while Heller just stood aside quietly.

Each bottle contained about 500 liters of liquor. Zhang Tie then opened the lids and poured the all of the liquor into the bigger glass flask.

The total of liquor filled about 80% of the flask.

After that, Zhang Tie held that lotus seedpod which was as heavy as a piece of ironwood. He then broke it and took out the lotus seeds from inside one by another.

Each lotus seed of fiery-flame red lotus was almost as big as a glass ball[1] that Zhang Tie used to play with when he was young. The crimson seeds were as heavy as iron. Zhang Tie pinched one but couldn't break it at all. Therefore, Zhang Tie put one in mouth and bit it; however, he felt like biting a steel bead.

After trying it, Zhang Tie knew that his master was right. If he forcefully swallowed it, he would definitely excrete it in the same state as it currently was.

There was a total of 18 seeds inside the seedpod, which was a bit less than what he had expected. After soaking 10 lotus seeds inside the liquor, Zhang Tie only had 8 left. Glazing at those seeds, Zhang Tie instantly thought up an idea.

He almost jumped up——now that these were lotus seeds, why not sow them in Castle of Black Iron, then...

"Heller!" Zhang Tie instantly turned his face towards Heller who was standing beside him, "Erm, can we create magma here?"

"You finally got it, my lord. I was thinking about reminding you. It seems that it's not necessary!" Heller then revealed a smile, "Of course, you could create an environment full of magma, it was nothing different than creating a surface environment. Your seeds are from silicon-based plants, which are rarely seen. They contain a very special energy. If they were sown, they would definitely be of great use to you and the Castle of Black Iron!"

"Silicon-based plant? You mean fiery-flame red lotus is a silicon-based plant?" Zhang Tie was amazed by this term. This was his first time seeing a non-carbon-based organism since he was born. He'd thought that he might not even see a non-carbon-based organism in his whole life.

"Of course, if it's not a silicon-based plant, how could it grow in such a high-temperature environment like magma? Carbon-based organisms could never do this!"

"Can we grow fiery-flame red lotus here?"

"This is where even the Manjusaka Karma Fruit Tree could grow. There's no plant cannot be grown here!" Heller replied confidently.

Hearing this answer, Zhang Tie's heart almost burst out of his throat...

Chapter 343: Sowing Lotus Seeds (II)

After being told that he could sow the fiery-flame red lotus seeds in the Castle of Black Iron, Zhang Tie became really excited. That meant he could have one more trump card and one more resource.

Zhang Tie suddenly thought of a question, "How long will it take a fiery-flame red lotus seed to become ripe?"

"All the silicon-based plants grow very slowly; it will take a seed of fiery-flame red lotus over 60 years to become ripe!"

Hearing this answer, Zhang Tie's smile froze at once; however, Heller hadn't finished what he was saying.

"But if you can input a great amount of reiki into it, you could accelerate its growth greatly and make it ripe in half a year. Based on the current reiki provision in Castle of Black Iron, if you put all the reiki into a seed of fiery-flame red lotus, you could make it ripe in about 2 years!"

Although Zhang Tie knew that the reiki in Castle of Black Iron could accelerate the growth of plants, he had not imagined that reiki could also promote the growth of fiery-flame red lotus.

"Can we create the proper underground environment for the growth of the seeds of fiery-flame red lotus?"

"Yes, castle lord, the basic energy storage that you've accumulated in Hidden Dragon Island could allow a small area of space and terrain creation!"

Hearing Heller's reply, Zhang Tie instantly opened the management panel of Castle of Black Iron. After choosing the button "space and terrain creation" on the menu, three sub-menus appeared.

- Surface Layer
- Subterranean Layer
- Subsurface Layer

Zhang Tie chose the option "Subterranean Layer". In a split second, a three-dimensional image that included the underground area of the Castle of Black Iron had appeared in front of Zhang Tie.

After gaining the Castle of Black Iron, it was Zhang Tie's first time seeing the whole subterranean world of the Castle of Black Iron.

The whole Castle of Black Iron was a cube. The subterranean depth of Castle of Black Iron was about 800 m, the same as its length and width.

As Heller had added over 200,000 square meters of fresh water to the lake, Zhang Tie could see it in the holographic image of the subterranean structure of Castle of Black Iron. The soil and rock layer under that fresh water lake was only dozens of meters in depth. Compared to other original places of Castle of Black Iron, it looked very thin.

"What's wrong with the thickness of the subterranean layer here?" Zhang Tie asked Heller.

"This is the default thickness of any new soil and subterranean layer in Castle of Black Iron. You might have not gotten enough basic energy storage to make it as thick as that of the other places!" Heller explained, "For those living on the surface, it's meaningless to provide them too thick subterranean layer! It would just be wasting basic energy!"

"Can I make the subterranean layer of this lake as deep as that of the other places?"

"You can have a try, my lord. As long as you have enough energy storage, you can extend the surface land or the subterranean layer of Castle of Black Iron as much as you can. If you have enough basic energy storage, you can even make the subterranean layer of each place in Castle of Black Iron as thick as 1 million km!"

Zhang Tie nodded as he sighed inside. 'For this function alone, the Castle of Black Iron would require limitless basic energy storage. Even though I am able to absorb all the sea water, Castle of Black Iron can easily consume all the basic energy. It seems to be a long-term job to accumulate basic energy.'

After inspecting the subterranean structure of the Castle of Black Iron for a while, Zhang Tie directly projected his image of the karst cave and the magma environment of fiery-flame red lotus in Hidden Dragon Cave onto that three-dimensional holographic diagram. After adjusting and measuring the current basic energy storage of Castle of Black Iron a few times, Zhang Tie finally got an image of that subterranean layer.

The entrance of the subterranean layer was close to the south-central part of Castle of Black Iron. It was only 100 m away from Zhang Tie. Being located in a pine wood, the entrance was a hill as high as 10 meters or so. A mountain cave extended 100 m underground like a spiral staircase from this entrance.

At the other end of the mountain cave, Zhang Tie opened an underground karst cave which was as large as about half an American Football field. There was an irregular magma lake as large as 2 basketball courts and some 2-m wide twisting ditches of magma were connected to that magma lake.

"The magma lake looks too white; it indicates a high temperature. However, seeds of fiery-flame red lotus are only suitable to grow in magma under 800 Celsius degrees!" Heller explained as he instantly adjusted the temperature on the holographic image. Then, Zhang Tie noticed that the magma turned a bit redder while the temperature stayed at 617 Celsius degrees.

After doing this, Heller nodded.

— As the completeness of your illusion on the details of the subterranean layer is lower than 8%, do you allow the system to start the casual natural creation law to fix up the rest? After the system completes the construction, you can adjust it by hand, my lord!

— Agree or disagree?

Zhang Tie chose "Agree".

In a split second, all the obscure parts on the three-dimensional holographic image became clear and alive.

— As a new subterranean layer has been opened, it can contain minerals. Do you want to have mineral resources in the new subterranean layer, my lord?

— Yes...No!

'Minerals?' Zhang Tie was startled by this information, "Argh, if that's the case, can I form any mineral in the subterranean layer that I want? What if I get a gold mine or crystal mine here?"

"It's not that simple!" Heller shook his head, "The varieties of mineral resources that can be created in the subterranean layer of Castle of Black Iron through the space and terrain creation function are only limited to the kinds of minerals that have been absorbed and dissolved by the Pool of Chaos. Additionally, when the system forms special minerals, it will consume a lot of basic energy, merit value points and aura value points. Based on the current situation of Castle of Black Iron, we cannot afford that at all."

After choosing "Yes", Zhang Tie found that the system could only produce pyrites and crystals of poor quality, which had been thrown into the Pool of Chaos when he attended the survival training in the Wild Wolf Valley.

After forming a narrow strip of pyrite, the basic energy storage, merit values and aura values of Castle of Black Iron had turned red.

Compared to forming a pyrite mine, crystal mine required huge amounts of merit value points and aura value points.

'F*ck!' Zhang Tie swore inside as he completely gave up the unrealistic idea of forming rare minerals in the Castle of Black Iron.

Zhang Tie had deepened his understanding of the Castle of Black Iron. Everything that he gained here was due to karma — as a man sows, so does he reap.

This round of space and terrain creation requires the following resources:

Basic energy storage: 713698

Aura value points: 35190

Merit value points: 4822

— Do you want to create it?

— 'Yes' or 'No'

— Yes!

'This round of space and terrain creation will start in half a minute. It will take 18 seconds, during which period, you cannot leave Castle of Black Iron, my lord.'

— Count down: 30...29...28...27...26...

"I remember that when I created that spring last time, I was asked to leave Castle of Black Iron. Why not this time?" Zhang Tie asked Heller. The creation of that spring was still shocking him until now. He recalled that when he came back in Castle of Black Iron after half a minute, he saw a sweet and crystal spring, which was dreamlike.

"Because the Castle of Black Iron and Castle Lord are one. The energy fluctuation frequency, due to the creation of space and terrain in the Castle of Black Iron, would stabilize your spiritual energy. When your spiritual energy was low, it would be very dangerous for you to experience the space and terrain creation in Castle of Black Iron. If your spiritual energy resonates with the energy frequency arisen from space and terrain creation, your head might be exploded!"

"What about other living beings in the Castle of Black Iron? Won't they suffer a head explosion then?"

"No, they won't. This resonance only exists on you!"

Zhang Tie understood it. At the same time, he was extremely curious about how this round of space and terrain creation would be completed in Castle of Black Iron. He then walked out of the lab and watched that pine wood 100 m away in the south of the lab.

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Count down: 5...4...3...2...1.

Then, the whole Castle of Black Iron became dark at once. Closely following that, the colorful fog surrounding the space of Castle of Black Iron started to brighten up. In just a few seconds, the colorful light had become so dazzling that Zhang Tie had to close his eyes while covering them with a hand.

With his eyes closed, Zhang Tie could felt that the whole space was filled with light. Meanwhile, his spiritual energy started to surge, causing his ears to ring and experience acousmas.

When he felt the colorful, dazzling light had disappeared, he opened his eyes — the terrain of the pine wood 100 m away had changed while one 10-m high hill appeared over there with a pitch-black cave...

Chapter 344: Rapid Moving Skill

After 18 seconds later, the creation of the space and terrain were finished; however, it took Zhang Tie quite a while to recover his senses.

With an illuminating lamp in hand, Heller was standing beside Zhang Tie and waiting for him to recover his composure.

"Just now..." Zhang Tie forcefully swallowed his saliva.

"Everything is due to the application and manifestation of energy!" Heller answered calmly.

Knowing that Heller wouldn't tell him too much about that, Zhang Tie didn't ask Heller any more. Raising his head, Zhang Tie stared at the colorful fog surrounding the whole Castle of Black Iron. Just now, all this had been created by that fog and manifested in only 18 seconds.

'There must be a great secret in the colorful fog!' Zhang Tie thought; however, he was not able to discover the secret at that moment.

Seeing Heller having prepared to be the guide, Zhang Tie didn't say anything. They directly walked into the underground cave. With lamp in hand, Heller walked in front, followed by Zhang Tie. They followed the twisting path down into the cave's depths. After a short while, Zhang Tie had already seen the red glow reflected on the walls of the cave while the air felt a bit hot.

After turning a corner, Zhang Tie caught sight of the underground karst full of magma. It was exactly as he had imagined. Stalactites were hanging down from the top of the karst cave while below them was a fiery magma lake.

Of course, Zhang Tie would not throw the fiery-flame red lotus seeds into that magma lake. Even though those seeds could grow into fiery-flame red lotuses, it would be very difficult for him to pick them up. After all, he was not as powerful as his master. Therefore, Zhang Tie dug some ditches beside the magma lake and directly threw the 8 seeds of fiery-flame red lotus into those ditches full of flowing fiery magma.

In this way, when they grew into fiery-flame red lotuses, he would stand beside the ditches and picked up those seedpods only by reaching out a little.

'Oh, although my master didn't mention it, there should be a lotus root of the fiery-flame red lotus. I really wonder how potent the effects of the lotus flower and the lotus root of fiery-flame red lotus would be.'

The depth of magma in the ditches was only between 1m to 2m, which was very suitable to the growth of lotus flower.

Flowing magma had very great density itself. Therefore, the lotus seeds slowly sank into the magma.

Watching those sinking seeds, Zhang Tie instantly thought up an idea as he opened the basic attributes panel of the Castle of Black Iron.

Castle of Black Iron

— Length: 1 Krosa

- Width: 1 Krosa
- Aura value: 411,598
- Merit value: 71,612
- Basic energy storage: 846,520
- Special output: basic energy reiki yeast.

Now, with the increasing varieties of plants and their rapid growth in Castle of Black Iron, the aura values were increasing gradually. More than 3,000 aura values could be produced per day in Castle of Black Iron.

Recently, the merit values in the Castle of Black Iron had mainly come from the merits that he had gained through setting free sand-scale fish.

For the basic energy storage in Castle of Black Iron, although it was over 800,000, 600,000 of them had been promised to Heller in order to know if it was Lan Yunxi's first kiss. Therefore, only 600,000 of them were reserved for Heller.

That meant Zhang Tie could only use 246,520 basic energy units of them.

After checking his available resources, Zhang Tie then opened the option "Silicon-based Living Beings and Species Management" under the function "Living Beings and Species Management". He then selected the 8 seeds of fiery-flame red lotus that he had "sown" just now on the panel one by another.

Zhang Tie then input a certain number of "aura values", "basic energy values", and "merit values" into the seeds. He input one single resource into 3 seeds, 2 resources in the other 3 seeds and 3 resources in the rest 2 seeds.

Given the marvelous effects of fiery-flame red lotuses, this was largest amount of value points - in this batch mutations and evolutions of the seeds of fiery-flame red lotus - that Zhang Tie had spent ever since he'd gotten the Castle of Black Iron. Any seed being input in aura values or basic energy values would gain at least 20,000 values of a single resource. Additionally, Zhang Tie even input almost 10,000 merit values into the seeds.

Zhang Tie selected different directions of evolution and mutation for each seed. He didn't know what those seeds really needed; he just wanted to have a try, like buying lottery. It was almost expected that he wouldn't win a prize; however, once he succeeded, he would gain a great benefit from them, just like those mutated basic energy reiki yeast.

After doing all this, Zhang Tie and Heller returned to the surface.

"Castle Lord, the growth circle of fiery-flame red lotus is very long. If you want to see the result of this round of mutation and evolution as soon as possible, you have to input more aura value points to accelerate its growth. With more land, you will be able to grow more plants; with more plants, you will gain more aura value points."

"If I want more land, I have to have more basic energy storage first!" Zhang Tie nodded, "Don't worry about the basic energy storage, I will keep it in mind. I don't want to gain the result of this round of mutation and evolution for 10 years."

Heller the nodded, "Well, I will not disturb your cultivation, my lord. Manjusaka Karma Fruit Tree has brought you a great surprise, I'm expecting for my lord to become one of the most powerful beings as soon as possible!"

After that, Heller left. According to Heller, he and the three servants also needed a sleep to maintain their vitality. As it was late in the evening, the other three servants would have already fallen asleep. Alone, Zhang Tie took a walk in the Castle of Black Iron under the moonlight.

Thinking about Heller's words, Zhang Tie's heart raced as he walked towards that small tree. In three days, the latest Leakless Fruit would become ripe tomorrow.

When he saw the latest "Fruit of Brilliance" on the other side of the small tree, Zhang Tie was not too amazed. As those people who had been killed by him in Dragon Cave were so vicious, Zhang Tie knew that they must have done a lot of evil things; therefore, it was normal for him to gain a fruit of brilliance.

'I wonder whether the LV 10 guy who committed a suicide during my questioning has contributed to this Fruit of Brilliance; if he did, the fruit of brilliance will be very nutritious. Even if he didn't, as I've killed a LV 9 guy and 10 more lackeys, this fruit will not be too disappointing either.

'Heller's "surprise" should not be the fruit of brilliance.'

Zhang Tie then checked all the twigs on small tree very carefully. Finally, he caught sight of a fruit that he had not seen for a long time.

The fruit was pitch-dark with tadpole-like runes swimming inside while there was a cross on its surface.

'Fruit of Judgment!'

Zhang Tie became so excited that he almost jumped up as it had been so long since he had experienced its effects.

Zhang Tie couldn't wait to check the attributes of this fruit of judgment by reaching out his hand.

Heart pounding, Zhang Tie didn't know whether this fruit of judgment could update his "binding skill" or bring him a new skill; no matter what, it would definitely stimulate Zhang Tie to howl like a wolf.

— Fruit of Judgment; the fruit has become ripe. It contains a god's rune whose effect is "moving rapidly". Usage: Pick it and paste it on the place between your eyebrows; then, activate it with your spiritual energy to integrate it with your body. Notice: The fruit cannot be taken out of the Castle of Black Iron. Twelve hours after being picked off the tree, its energy and vitality will gradually decline.

'Moving rapidly? Is it a skill to increase my speed?' Having experienced the achievement of binding skill, Zhang Tie knew that he needed to integrate with this god's rune before learned the effect of this god's rune

'How did I gain a fruit of judgment this time?' Compared to his excitement, Zhang Tie was more curious about this; therefore, he continued to check the instructions on this fruit.

— Darkness would cover the mother land. Numerous lives would wail in blood sea and fiery flame; Those followers of demons betray the honor that was born within them; they enjoy pleasant feasts at the cost of the rest of mankind. Their souls have deteriorated while their bodies have become dirty. To those dauntless men who dared to wave your broadswords towards darkness, please hold fast your broadsword and end these dirty lives; please judge their evils by broadsword; according to the rule of creation, the more judgments you've made, the more power you will gain to become a judge.

Zhang Tie really wondered how many evil things the Zhen family of Heavens Cold City had done. 'F*ck! I always thought that this treatment only came from those mulings of Sun Dynasty who do evil things in the name of celestial beings!'

After thinking that way, Zhang Tie then took a careful look at that instruction. Then, a chilly thought flashed in his mind — the Zhen family might have relations with demons?

Zhang Tie was stunned for a while; then, he shook his head, 'I've been set up with Zhen clan; therefore, I will kill them all no matter whether they have relations with demons or not.'

He then picked the fruit of brilliance and sat down on the ground with cross legs to slowly absorb the spirit of the fruit.

The spirit carried by this fruit was out of Zhang Tie's expectation. The moment the fruit entered his mouth, the spirit inside had started to enter his mind constantly and integrated with Zhang Tie's original spiritual energy.

Before eating this fruit, Zhang Tie's spiritual energy was almost 64 to 65 times greater than that of his base spiritual energy after his practice and ignition of surging points during the past half year; however, after absorbing this fruit of brilliance, Zhang Tie's spiritual energy surged and became 87-88 times that of his base energy, a one third increase.

This really surprised Zhang Tie, making him ecstatic.

After eating the fruit of brilliance, Zhang Tie picked that fruit of judgment without any hesitation and pasted it between his eyebrows while penetrating the spiritual energy that he had greatly improved just now into that fruit of judgment.

The same as the first fruit of judgment that he had experienced, after Zhang Tie triggered it with his spiritual energy, the fruit of judgment gradually became cooler. Eventually, the fruit changed into a weird rune, like water flowing into the sea, and disappeared from his hand; after that, it entered Zhang Tie's mind and connected to that "binding" rune in his mind.

At the same time, the information about the attributes of this rune also appeared in Zhang Tie's mind.

God's rune skill — rapid moving skill!

Level — preliminary.

The current number/maximum stored rapid moving runes — 0/7.

The available environment of rapid moving rune — land and water.

Effect of the rapid moving skill: increase moving speed by 120% of the original moving speed.

Lasting time of a triggered rapid moving skill — 1 hour!

The condition to terminate the effect of rapid moving skill — when you exceed your physical strength by 110%, its effect would terminate.

When in battle, the effect of rapid moving skill would decline by 80%!

Rapid moving runes can be used constantly as long as your physical strength can sustain it and the runes aren't all used up.

...

The moment he finished reading them, Zhang Tie's spiritual energy had rolled in the new rune. After swallowing about 40 bases worth of his spiritual energy, the rune of the rapid moving skill suddenly radiated golden rays. With a slight quake, a rune of rapid moving skill appeared beside that god's rune like a kid's soap bubbles and started to rotate around that god's rune where it had been born.

Like having found their new partners, the swimming snake-like binding chains in the surrounding all swam towards this soap-bubble like guy and greeted it.

After this soap-bubble like thing came out, an attribute of rapid moving skill also changed:

— The current number/maximum stored rapid moving runes — 1/7.

Chapter 345: Stars Viewing City

Stars Viewing City was located in the northwest of Huaiyuan Prefecture where the largest slaves trade center of Huaiyuan Prefecture was situated.

The slave trade center in Stars Viewing City not only ranked first in Huaiyuan Prefecture, but was also very famous across the entire Waii Sub-Continent. The reason was that, besides the local slaves from Waii Sub-Continent, the slaves from other continents and some small, distant human settlements would also be transported to Huaiyuan Prefecture through overseas trade constantly and be transferred here through ports like Yiyang Port of Huaiyuan Prefecture.

Slaves were the 4th most popular trading commodity among humans in this age. According to many slave traders, the slave trade was an important system to optimize the general human resources allocation of mankind, maintain the survival of the fittest among people, and keep everyone energetic and enterprising.

Although the slave trade was not noble, its existence was necessary and reasonable to a certain degree; after all, not only slaves, each person in this age was facing the threat of demons.

The name 'Stars Viewing City' was very poetic; however, the city itself was not poetic at all. Besides the mammoth scale slave trade, it also had the biggest gambling houses, most exotic brothels, and the bloodiest fighting arena of Huaiyuan Prefecture.

Zhang Clan of Huaiyuan Palace presented another image here.

Many people could imagine how a place with the most slaves, prostitutes, and gamblers looked. If it wasn't in Huaiyuan Prefecture, Stars Viewing City might be very chaotic; however, due to the most terrifying Hurricane Army of Huaiyuan Palace, the city was in a pretty good order.

The crime rate of this city was even a bit lower than that of Yiyang City. Its level of public security could rank in the top 3 of the 8 cities within Huaiyuan Prefecture.

As the iron fist of Huaiyuan Palace, Hurricane Army contained 420,000 people, over two thirds of which were slaves from countries on different continents. After completing the stipulated term of service or performing certain military exploits, they would gain the status of free citizen from Huaiyuan Palace.

Hurricane Army had existed for over 300 years, during which period, Huaiyuan Palace had already worked out an efficient and stable system on managing this mixed army. Under this management system, each person's fighting strength and loyalty were exerted to the utmost.

Many senior brothers served in Hurricane Army as military officers after leaving Hidden Dragon Palace.

Zhang Tie learned the general information about Stars Viewing City while he was free at home.

After staying at home for 2 days, Zhang Tie left for Stars Viewing City alone after breakfast at home.

It was a sunny day. Zhang Tie was wearing a pair of sunglasses and driving his Faerie Dragon T9 sports car which he had bought less than an hour ago on the highway from Jinhai City to Stars Viewing City.

Over the past hour, Zhang Tie had figured out a few things.

First, the price of an average car was as high as 1000 gold coins. In this age, the price of most steam-driven cars changed from 100 gold coins to 200 gold coins. The reason that cars in Blackhot City were very expensive was that there were no car manufacturers in Blackhot City; therefore, the cost of those cars being transported to Blackhot City had to include various taxes and the importation policy of Blackhot City.

Because Huaiyuan Prefecture had its own automobile industry, the price of an average steam-driven automobile was only a bit more than 100 gold coins.

The price of the sports car that Zhang Tie was driving was only a bit more than 500 gold coins, which almost ranked top among automobiles.

Second, in this age, although automobiles were driven by steam, different steam-driven units on automobiles would bring completely different driving results.

There was a set of turbine-steam driven, heat-recollection, external combustion engine installed on Faerie Dragon T9. This kind of engine was in between an internal combustion engine and common steam-driven boiler engine. Compared to common steam-driven engines, this kind of engine featured a higher heat utilization efficiency. Additionally, this engine didn't consume coal, but pure alcohol, which had a fuel value that was much lower than that of coal. Pure alcohol was several times more expensive than coal.

This heat-recollection external combustion engine driven by turbine steam contained 9 parallel pistons, which were installed on the chassis in a tilted way. With the movement of pistons, its power output was

not transferred by rotating but by swaying; through an inclined shaft, its power output could then be transferred to the axle through an angle transmission device before driving the car to move forward.

Compared to automobiles with coal as fuel and common steam-driven engines as the power unit, this kind of automobile with pure alcohol as the fuel and a turbine steam-driven, heat-recollection, external combustion engine as the power unit featured a rapid start-up, which could greatly shorten the preheating start time of the steam-driven car.

However, this car also had extremely high running costs.

One kg of pure alcohol was made from 10 kgs of fermented grains; one could almost buy one ton of coal in coal-producing area like Blackhot City or hundreds of kgs of coal in other areas for that much grain. Additionally, the fuel value of alcohol as heavy as coal was far lower than that of the latter; therefore, the price of alcohol would almost be 1000 times that of coal for the same amount of fuel value.

Due to the above factors, alcohol-driven automobiles became an expensive toy that could only be afforded by few people.

Before the Catastrophe, humans could gain alcohol through chemistry; however, as non-renewable resources like petroleum became exhausted, and after the Catastrophe, mankind could only gain alcohol through the traditional method — fermenting grains. In this age with resource shortages, many countries even forbade the production and sale of power equipment with alcohol as the fuel.

A notable exception was the Holy Golden Orchid Empire, whose crazy emperor Heiger VII dreamed about manufacturing a powerful, alcohol-driven internal combustion engine to help him fly in the sky.

It was said that alcohol truly could be used as the fuel of internal combustion engine of automobiles and planes. However, after the Catastrophe, like many other substances whose states and attributes had changed, alcohol's fuel value also became much lower; therefore, it could not meet the requirement to be the fuel of an efficient internal combustion engine.

...

The Faerie Dragon T9 was flying on the highway at the speed of over 100 km per hour. Zhang Tie was really satisfied by the cool feeling of driving in such a convertible.

After leaving Hidden Dragon Island, Zhang Tie felt he'd become incredibly rich.

On Hidden Dragon Island, he'd spent hundreds of thousands of gold coins to build a castle so easily and could gain dozens or hundreds of gold coins a day just by selling a few vials of all-purpose medicament. As he could make money so easily, Zhang Tie almost ignored the notion of money.

Although this car was even cheaper than that vial of senior recovery medicament that he had given to his elder brother, he was still under the admirable and jealous eyes of the people in the vehicles passing by. At this moment, Zhang Tie strongly felt that — it's really good to be rich!

After leaving Hidden Dragon Island, he could buy a cool sports car only at the cost of several hundreds of gold coins, stay in a city comfortably for one month at the cost of only a couple of gold coins, buy a nice house at the cost of several hundreds of gold coins, buy a villa at the cost of one thousand gold coins,

share a grand dinner with his family members at the cost of just over 10 silver coins, and employ an average worker at the cost of dozens of silver coins...

All this made Zhang Tie enjoy the magic of money.

The Stars Viewing City that he was heading for was definitely a place that defined the magic of money. In that place, you could even buy people at the cost of dozens of gold coins or hundreds of gold coins.

With the paper note of 20,000 gold coins that was given by Zhang Taibai for one of his well-fermented terrine of all-purpose medicament, Zhang Tie came to Stars Viewing City to buy slaves.

After experiencing one crisis, Zhang Tie realized that it was time for him to slowly change money into a power to shock others; otherwise, what was the function of money? Without money, even a few douchebags could chase him like chasing a dog; with money, he could give them a lesson with money.

After driving for one more hour, Zhang Tie found more and more billboards along the roadside, which were advertising various sexy beauties or gambling devices, available at hotels, gambling houses, and brothels.

Of course, there was also advertisements for the biggest slave trade center. He saw a line on a billboard with a background of a unique building outline — Paradise Lost, You Can Find Everything Here.

Suddenly, with the jarring, booming sound of an engine, a red sports car into the lane on the left of Zhang Tie's Faerie Dragon T9. The two cars then drove shoulder to shoulder.

Compared to the Faerie Dragon T9, which had a masculine look, that Red Rabbit sports car looked more elegant and slimmer, whose driver was a 20-odd young beauty with short hair.

Zhang Tie exchanged glances with that beauty.

However, Zhang Tie had not imagined that the girl would throw a contemptuous glance towards him with her nose turned up...

Chapter 346: Paradise Lost

At this moment, Zhang Tie absolutely looked like some rich young master. He was wearing T-shirt and a pair of sunglasses with one arm on the door of the cab while driving the brand new car with one hand in a casual way.

That girl was also bizarre. Although looking beautiful with smoky eyes, she was wearing a blue cowboy jacket which indicated that she was a tomboy. Additionally, on her ear closest to Zhang Tie, there were more than 5 ear piercings of different colors. Obviously, she was tricky.

Raising her eyebrows, she threw an aggressive glance at Zhang Tie while pressing down the accelerator, surging ahead of Zhang Tie.

Zhang Tie then replied with a smile as he also pressed down on his accelerator; in a split second, the steam-driven valve of the Faerie Dragon T9 opened to release the super powerful torque of 670 Nm

from the turbine steam-driven, external combustion engine. In the blink of an eye, he had long passed ahead of that Red Rabbit...

...

When Zhang Tie arrived at Stars Viewing City, he could not even see the shadow of the Red Rabbit that had been chasing after him. Zhang Tie then took a look at the oil gauge and found that he had consumed more than 90 liters of alcohol, leaving less than 1/5 in the oil tank...

Looking around, he was impressed by the size of the city's population as all the avenues were crowded with people. 2/3 of them were Chinese while 1/3 of them were of other nationalities.

On both sides of the streets were various entertainment venues, such as "Fragrances House", "Beauties Department", "Flowers Valley", "Magical Women Palace", and "Paradise". Zhang Tie saw all sorts of brothels with branded beauties in different levels.

The whole city was so boisterous; yet, the streets were clean and in good order, which formed a sharp contrast to Zhang Tie's imagination.

When Zhang Tie caught sight of that "Paradise Lost", it was almost 2 pm.

That building complex was like a huge playground or a theme park in the city; at least the brand "Paradise Lost" on the tallest building of that building complex would cause such an association. However, this was neither a playground nor a theme park, but the well-know, biggest slave trade center.

There were some more slave trade markets like this one; but "Paradise Lost" was the most famous and biggest one; therefore, Zhang Tie chose to have a look here first.

Seeing Zhang Tie walking towards the entrance of Paradise Lost the moment he parked his car, a number of men who were waiting outside Paradise Lost instantly surrounded Zhang Tie. With a casual look, my god! Zhang Tie saw at least 5 different nationalities based on the color of their skin, hair, and eyes.

After surrounding Zhang Tie, they started to introduce their own businesses.

"Sir, our business group has a large amount of beauties and virgins; some of them are docile, some are feisty, do you want a look?"

...

"Sir, our Heaven Stars Business Group has just purchased a large batch of conquered people, male or female, young or old. We can definitely meet your demands!

"Professional slave trafficking manager Marques is willing to serve you, sir"

...

"We are 'Curious' company. We can provide your follow-up services after you purchase slaves. As long as you hand your slaves to us, we will turn a rustic village girl into a goddess and a tiger into a kitty."

...

"Sir, I'm the Agela Kingdom's population affairs commissioner in Jinyun Country; if you want a noble and satisfactory status for your slaves, come for me. Our princess is the cheapest!"

'What Agela Kingdom?' Zhang Tie had not heard it before; but this guy's words reminded Zhang Tie of the Holy Golden Orchid Empire. He remembered that the Holy Golden Orchid Empire was good at doing such business.

Zhang Tie thought that nobody would sell statuses in Jinhai City since Holy Golden Orchid Empire moved out of the business. He had not imagined that this business would be picked up; what was more, they even improved the business by selling the status of princess. It seemed that such a trick was really profitable here.

"Can I buy the status of queen?" Zhang Tie joked.

It was really unexpected that that guy became really excited after hearing this question.

"Of course, you can, sir, Agela Kingdom is a free and romantic kingdom. Our king can make any women a queen. To tell you the truth, as of now, we have more than 20 queens. It only takes you 1200 gold coins to complete the queen coronation ceremony for the one you like. Queen of Agela Kingdom has her own jade chip and gold broach; she will wear phoenix coronet and robes of rank. Besides, she will receive the guidance of our court etiquette tutor. It only takes you 1200 gold coins to have a queen as your slave and enjoy a king's treatment!"

Hearing this answer, Zhang Tie was really startled. 'F*ck! These people really can do whatever they want. They can even coronate a queen. What the f*ck...'

"Sir, if you really need a mature and noble queen as your slave, I know where she is. She's a real queen, not that kind that you could buy!"

With such a voice, a 50-odd half-baldheaded man with swollen brown eyes in brown hair pushed away the crowd and walked towards Zhang Tie. He looked nasty and a bit shrewd. Firstly, he made a slight bow to Zhang Tie; then, he stood straight and said, "Please allow me to introduce myself. I'm Davinci, the slave trafficking agent of Stars Viewing City. It's my great pleasure to serve you!"

At the sight of this guy, Zhang Tie was really stunned, "You mean I could buy a real queen here?"

"Of course, sir, 2 months ago, a war broke out on Mianoki Peninsula while the Tadon Alliance defeated the Misa kingdom and broke through the capital of the latter. This is a war of clan vengeance that had been brewing for over 100 years. According to the rule of Clan vengeance war on Mianoki Peninsula, all the members of imperial household of Misa Kingdom would be sold as slaves by Excellency Belli, the chairman of Tadon Alliance. The former queen of Misa Kingdom is in Stars Viewing City. If you want to buy a real queen, I can arrange an exclusive auction for you!" Davinci said in a confident tone, which formed a sharp contrast with his weird look.

Zhang Tie glanced over this guy carefully. Since this guy seized the opportunity to step up and attracted his attention, Zhang Tie knew that this guy was sharper than the others.

"Davinci, I like this name. Show the way, please; I want to take a look in Paradise Lost first!"

Hearing Zhang Tie's request, Davinci instantly showed a smile as he bowed to the others elegantly, "Sorry, this sir has decided to employ me as his slave trade agent, I know what kind of services you can provide; if this sir has any demand that is suitable to you, I will bring him for you!"

Hearing Davinci's words, all the rest left.

"Sir, I will guide you in Paradise Lost first, please!"

Davinci made a gesture as he slightly bowed with a flattering smile. He then guided Zhang Tie into Paradise Lost.

"What's happening in Agela Kingdom? How could they even sell the status of queen?" Zhang Tie asked Davinci.

Before talking, Davinci looked back at that guy who called himself the Agela Kingdom's population affairs manager in Jinyun Country. After confirming that that guy could not hear their conversation, Davinci lowered his voice, "Sir, they are liars. Previously, they made and sold various fake certificates in Stars Viewing City. After making a bit money, they bought a remote tiny island which was only 1-2 sq km on the sea 1000 km away from the land and built a kingdom, Agela, on the tiny island!

"There were only several hundreds of people in Agela Kingdom. They are all liars and liars' family members and apprentices!

"The imperial palace over there is only a small castle. With a brand, a thatched house would be Agela National University or Military Department of Agela Kingdom. They have even described a canoe as the naval army of Agela Kingdom, and 2 dogs as Special Operations Command of Agela Kingdom. The military rank of the commander of the Special Operations Command is admiral, which could be bought with 10 gold coins, excluding the uniform. They can fabricate any position and status for you over there."

'Two dogs? Special Operations Command?' Zhang Tie was so dumbfounded that even his eyes and mouth became tilted. What a wonder!

After a short while, Davinci had guided Zhang Tie into Paradise Lost. The entrance of Paradise Lost was like a hotel lobby as many people were accessing it.

Zhang Tie presumed that Davinci must have been here often as a female worker directly greeted Zhang Tie when they entered while ignoring Davinci.

"Sir, if you want to enter Paradise Lost, you need to present your ID certificate and the purchase ability proof of 500 gold coins at the minimum!"

Saying nothing, Zhang Tie directly pulled out his Clan ID plate and that notepaper of 20,000 gold coins.

Seeing Zhang Tie taking out the 2 items, the worker immediately revealed a big smile and became much more enthusiastic, "Sir, do you need us to arrange a professional purchase guide for you?"

"No need, I've already got an agent!"

Being a bit amazed at Zhang Tie's two items, Davinci made a deep bow to Zhang Tie once again, "Please forgive me for my rudeness, I couldn't have imagined that Mr. Zhang is from Huaiyuan Palace. Huaiyuan Palace is a great clan. It's my great honor to serve you!"

This was also Zhang Tie's first time experiencing the influence of Huaiyuan Palace's clan ID plate in Huaiyuan Prefecture. When he was on Hidden Dragon Island, which was full of members of Huaiyuan Palace, this status was average; however, across Huaiyuan Prefecture, the ruling status of Huaiyuan Palace became obviously higher than commoners. With this plate, Zhang Tie seemed like a relative of a royal family in Huaiyuan Prefecture.

After Zhang Tie's status and purchase ability were confirmed, Zhang Tie and Davinci entered Paradise Lost.

There was an old saying in Stars Viewing City — if you've not been to Paradise Lost, you've not been to Stars Viewing City. After entering Paradise Lost, Zhang Tie realized that this saying was pretty true.

Before coming here, Zhang Tie's impression of slaves were those wounded ones in shabby clothes and restless expressions standing in places like a stable. After entering Paradise Lost, Zhang Tie knew that his impression was ungrounded.

In front of Zhang Tie was a festive town. People on the streets were so happy.

Among those happy people were clowns in cosmetics, walking on stilts and riding monocycles. They were performing various shows...

Bands were playing festive tunes on the roadsides...

Girls in beautiful clothes were playing on the streets...

Soldiers were patrolling on the streets in a square matrix.

Wagoners were driving carriages...

A beautiful female waiter was walking out of the door with a cup of coffee and placed it onto the table outside the coffee shop while her hand was seized by a guest...

Blacksmiths and watchmakers were working inside their stores, causing clatters...

Coquettish, young women in carriages were ogling men on the roadside...

Tough men were playing a 100 pound broadsword on the streets...

Kids were rolling iron rings on the roadsides...

The small town contained people of different ethnicities, from all walks of life, male or female, old or young...

This was Zhang Tie's first impression of Paradise Lost.

Zhang Tie was a bit puzzled as he looked at Davinci, "Don't you say this is the biggest slaves trade center? Where are the slaves?"

Davinci then pointed at those people, "All of them that you can see are slaves, including those beautiful girls, clowns, soldiers, wagoners, blacksmiths, musicians, the female waiter in that coffee shop, even those bosses who were checking account books inside stores and tailors. Have you seen those small badges made of enamel on their chests and breasts? The number on the badge is their price!"

Zhang Tie then took a careful look and truly found everybody had a enamel badge except for that female waiter whose hand had been grabbed by that old man.

The number on the enamel badge of that clown who was performing on tilts was 65!

"Slaves are commodities which need to be packed. These are their looks in front of their buyers after being packed!" Davinci explained, "In this age, slaves trade has been a huge industrial chain. After thousands of years' of slaves trading, those business groups have already figured out how to exploit those slaves to the utmost!

"Look at that clown!" Davinci pointed at that clown whom Zhang Tie had noticed, "That is a young man without no special talent. His original value was 50 gold coins; after being strictly managed and trained, he mastered some clown skills; then, his value became 65 gold coins!

"For that female waiter in the coffee shop, if she were in a brothel, that man might only spend dozens of gold coins for her; however, here, that man might spend hundreds of gold coins for a beautiful female waiter of a coffee shop! The same commodities have different values in different packaging; the same principle applies to slaves!"

Watching this scene, Zhang Tie was really shocked, 'This is anything but slave trade! This is selling the most mysterious and evil desire in people's heart. As long as one has money, one can buy anything here.'

In other places, no matter how rich you were, you would not be able to buy whatever you wanted. For instance, you could not buy those beautiful girls in other places as you wanted; but here, everything was different as you could buy beautiful girls on streets as you wished.

This stimulating feeling of buying girls or female waiters on streets was definitely unparalleled. It was far cooler than the slave trade in his mind.

Paradise Lost was a supermarket for slave trade!

Watching those slaves, Zhang Tie then felt a bit sad; however, after thinking for a short while, he recovered his composure.

No matter what, even though not every slave trade center was like this, it was much better than choosing slaves in gloomy and dirty stables.

"If you want to buy women, you can take a casual look on streets; if you are not satisfied with those on streets, you can check private residences. Some women like to stay at home, which caters to the exploring desire of some guests; some talented women perform dances and sing songs in operas of the small town..." As he spoke about the women, Davinci's presented truly wretched expression.

"How much is a woman here?" Zhang Tie asked.

"An average one only costs you 50-70 gold coins; those with a better look or some talents would be a bit more expensive; some special ones would be more expensive; the highest ever price of an unrivalled beauty here was over 60,000 gold coins!"

"I don't need unrivalled beauty. I don't care about their looks. I need loyalty; they need to do some daily jobs" Zhang Tie then calculated based on the size of his castle on Hidden Dragon Island, "I need about 30 women like this."

Chapter 347: Female Slaves

"I need 30 women; they must be loyal to me!"

Receiving this request, Davinci rolled his eyes, "There are so many women like this, I can find you 300 if you want. What else do you need?"

"They'd better not be Chinese!" As a Chinese himself, Zhang Tie hated the idea of using Chinese as slaves.

"It's okay. Generally speaking, non-Chinese slaves are always loyal to their owners in Chinese communities!" Davinci explained in an experienced way, "If you'd like, follow me, please!"

Davinci then guided Zhang Tie into the small town.

Zhang Tie walked as he watched talented and beautiful slaves. Besides those enamel badges that represented that they were slaves, there was nothing different between them and commoners when looking aspects like costumes, speech, and actions.

"Are they living in this small town?" Zhang Tie asked Davinci.

"Does it seem strange? The small town is like a clean showcase which is used to exhibit commodities. Of course, the lower quality commodities would be moved away from the showcase and be replaced with new ones! All the slaves here treasure this opportunity very much; because they know that if they get sold at a high price here, they will not live that hard from then on; if they miss this opportunity, they would be dealt with like discounted commodities!"

"How will they be dealt with if they cannot be sold?" Zhang Tie became curious.

"Because those business groups in the slave trade will not feed them for their rest of lives, men will have to do dangerous and hard work in mines while females might be sold in low-level brothels where they'd be hard pressed to survive for 10 years. Finally, they would die due to various reasons. Generally speaking, such slaves would be sold at the price of only a couple of gold coins or a bit more than 10 gold coins."

Hearing this reply, Zhang Tie was shocked inside, 'This just shows how cruel the slave trade is! As slaves, they've already lost the ability to control their own fate.'

"Do we have such poor slaves in Paradise Lost?"

"As overdue products could not be sold at a high price, nobody would display them in the showcase; instead, they are carried to the other places of Stars Viewing City. I suggest to not go there as they are full of despair and would bring you bad luck!" Davinci persuaded aside.

"Your words have excited my interest. After leaving here, show me where those cheap slaves are!" Zhang Tie smiled. Although he could not change the current situation of slave trade, Zhang Tie didn't think that the slave trade was noble. Although slaves were marked with different prices, Zhang Tie knew that no life was humble; even an earthworm had its own magical ability and dignity, let alone humans.

"I just want to have a look."

"No problem, as you will, after leaving Paradise Lost, I will take you to have a look over there; but I suggest you don't choose any of them!"

...

After walking in Paradise Lost several minutes, under the guidance of Davinci, Zhang Tie had already arrived at a place branded with "Karst Business Group Trade Agency".

Since Paradise Lost was a supermarket for slave trading, there must be sales agency from the manufacturers. This was what Davinci explained to Zhang Tie on the way here. Undoubtedly, Karst Business Group Trade Agency was such an agency.

"Welcome, honorable guest and my old friend Davinci!"

The moment they entered Karst Business Group Trade Agency, a swarthy guy with a marvelous handlebar moustache and in a funny and fat hat had walked towards them enthusiastically. He hugged with Davinci first before shaking hands with Zhang Tie politely.

"Tamir, Mr. Zhang comes from Huaiyuan Palace, the noblest clan among mankind. He wants to choose some docile female servants; therefore, I brought him here for you. I hope you won't disappoint him!" Davinci told this guy.

"Of course, it's the great honor of Karst Business Group to serve Mr. Zhang!" Knowing Zhang Tie's status, Tamir made a deep bow towards him.

"Erm, Davinci said your agency... is not bad and that perhaps you can meet my requirements, therefore, he brought me here!"

At this moment, Zhang Tie felt a bit embarrassed, because the moment he and Davinci entered, some young and beauties with swarthy skin had knelt down in front of them, 2 girls cleaned their shoes. After that, another 2 girls moved forward and started to massage their calves.

Zhang Tie had not enjoyed such a special treatment before; therefore, he was not accustomed to it; however, Davinci and that guy with handlebar moustache had been completely accustomed to this service. He didn't even glance at that girl kneeling down in front of him.

After briefing Zhang Tie's request to Davinci, Tamir became thrilled. 30 female slaves meant thousands of gold coins. It was not a small business for Karst Business Group.

"We have over 50 female slaves in Paradise Lost, they all have good looks; please wait here for a minute, I will arrange them for you to choose!"

After inviting Zhang Tie and Davinci into an exotic lounge and serving them some fruit, tea, and pastries, Tamir hurriedly went out jubilantly. After Zhang Tie and Davinci sat down, the same two girls entered and knelt down in front of them like catties and started to massage their calves.

Davinci then gazed at that girl in front of him with lewd eyes while his swollen eyeballs started to scan across her breasts which were still in development.

The 2 girls both wore yarn skirts with their collars wide open, showing off their breasts. After kneeling down, they could easily expose their boobs to Davinci and Zhang Tie; additionally, they were very good at massaging. With proper rhythm and power, even though they only massaged calves, it was already very comfortable and relaxing.

Not only Davinci, even Zhang Tie had already been immersed in that massage. After being relaxed, Zhang Tie gazed at her breasts as he started to feel his mummy becoming restless.

Since leaving Blapei, Zhang Tie had not made love with women for over 7 months. Due to his rising hormones, Zhang Tie kept recalling the raptured moments between him and Hanna and those girls of Rose Association recently.

The girls kneeling down in front of them were like a mix of Chinese and White women. They had large, black eyes, high and straight noses and smooth skin. They looked a bit brownish red and were similar to those from a tropical zone. Their hair was black, which was similar to Chinese girls; however, their heads were oval; if they were divided by the shape of skull, they should be standard white women.

Although the 2 girls didn't look as hot as Hanna and Alice; their figures were very outstanding...

Noticing that Zhang Tie was observing her, the girl's face slightly blushed.

Knowing that if he kept watching that, his mummy would definitely become stiff and raise a tent on his crotch, Zhang Tie hurriedly moved his eyes away from that girl's chests. He then took 2 big mouths of tea water and sensed a weird taste of ewe milk. Having not been accustomed to that, Zhang Tie put the cup back onto the table.

"Ha...ha..." Davinci laughed in a wretched way, "All of Varner's beautiful female slaves practice "Love Expression" since they were young. They have learned how to please men at a young age; therefore, they are very docile; if you like, you can buy one. It would only take you 100 gold coins for such a beautiful Varner virgin. How about it? Do you want a try?"

"They all come from the Varner Empire?"

"Of course, I'm afraid that only Varner women could satisfy your requirements across Paradise Lost; therefore, I bring you here!"

Zhang Tie thought for a while and agreed.

Thanks to what he had learned in Hidden Dragon Palace during the past half year, Zhang Tie had learned about this Varner Empire from map and books.

Varner Empire was a strange hierarchical slave-owner's state. All the slaves in the country came from a social class — soutuona which was derived from the caste system of this country.

In Varner Empire, soutuona meant humble and slave. People coming from this class would be slaves generation after generation.

Varner Empire was famous for its slaves as its slaves were well known by being loyal to their owners.

After a few minutes, Tamir had entered with big smiles, "I've already arranged it, you can select them now!"

Under the guidance of Tamir, Zhang Tie and Davinci walked into the courtyard behind the Karst Business Group Agency. The moment he arrived there, Zhang Tie felt like being punched face-to-face as his face turned slightly pale.

Over 50 women were standing in rows tidily over there. Judging from their looks, their ages changed from 15 to 40 years old.

However, they were all naked with their hands covering the special place between their legs. They looked like fruits being peeled off.

In any human country, it would be a humiliation for women to display their naked body in the public, even if they were slaves.

Those women slightly quivered, their bodies being a bit stiff. With tears in eye sockets, many of them tried their best to lower their heads to cover their private places.

If it was another scene such as when he stayed with those girls of Rose Association, Zhang Tie would be very pleasant at the sight of so many girls peeling off their clothes in front of him; however, at the present, Zhang Tie felt very uncomfortable and pained at the sight of those naked women.

"Stand up straight; move away your hands and display your naked bodies..." Tamir instantly changed his smile into a solemn expression. Being scolded, those women shook heavily as they moved away their hands from their private places; meanwhile, many of them started to drop tears.

After frightening those women, Tamir turned around his head towards Zhang Tie, "You can check them now. They are all B class beauties. Their prices change from 60 gold coins to 80 gold coins; some of them are innocent virgins; each of them would cost you 80 gold coins; for the others, as long as you can find a scar or defect on their bodies, you can have 1 gold coin deducted!"

"Let...let them put on clothes!" Zhang Tie said in a low voice while trying his best to control his fury.

"What?" Tamir didn't hear it clearly as he asked out of curiosity.

"Are you motherf*cking deaf?" Being driven infuriated, Zhang Tie instantly grabbed Tamir and pulled him in front of him. With one hand on Tamir's collar, he easily lifted Tamir in the air with his eyes glaring at him as he growled, "Let them put on clothes, right now!"

Seeing Zhang Tie's sudden rage, Davinci's face turned pale while Tamir's face turned totally bloodless. Zhang Tie's sharp and powerful eyes shocked Tamir too much.

"Hurry up...hurry up...put on your clothes right now!" While his collar was grabbed, Tamir shrieked loudly. Hearing Tamir's order, all the women glanced at Zhang Tie in appreciation; after that, they turned back and hurriedly squatted down to put on their clothes.

Seeing them putting on their clothes, Zhang Tie gradually recovered his composure. He then loosened his grip on Tamir.

Davinci then glanced at Zhang Tie with strange eyes, "It's a rule for the buyer to check the bodies of those female slaves, Tamir didn't know that you don't like this!"

"Argh. Mr. Zhang doesn't like this rule. I know now. I'm really sorry for that. I promise you nothing similar will happen next time..." Although Tamir was still a bit shocked and still didn't understand why Zhang Tie lost his temper just now, considering so many weird people here, he presumed that perhaps Zhang Tie saw this as taboo; therefore, he hurriedly apologized to Zhang Tie.

In this line, the customers were gods, especially those coming from the ruling clan of Huaiyuan Prefecture like Zhang Tie. Although he'd been roared at by Zhang Tie, Tamir still retained his smile.

"Do they need to do this...every time?" Zhang Tie asked Davinci in a low voice.

"Yes, every time, until they are bought away. This batch is new here; they are not accustomed to doing it. They will adapt to it in the future..." Davinci explained calmly.

"Every time..."

Davinci noticed Zhang Tie mumbling something several times before taking out the papernote of 20,000 gold coins and patted it onto Tamir, "No need to choose, I want them all!"

...

After Zhang Tie determined to buy those female slaves, it was Davinci's turn to bargain with Tamir. According to the rule, the compensation of the slave trade agent would be 1/10 of the difference between the offer of the seller and the turnover. The greater the difference was, the more compensation Davinci would gain.

There were 53 female slaves in total and Tamir's offer was 3756 gold coins. After a sharp bargain between Davinci and Tamir, the final turnover was 3640 gold coins. After it was done, Zhang Tie immediately threw 12 gold coins to Davinci. Davinci became so happy that he instantly broke out into a broad smile.

Actually, Zhang Tie bought 53 female slaves at the cost of 3652 gold coins.

After those female slaves followed Zhang Tie out of the Karst Business Group Trade Center, the girl that had massaged Zhang Tie's calf just now rushed out of the room and hugged another woman among those female slaves. They cried loudly at once like that they would separated forever.

"What's happening?" Zhang Tie asked Tamir.

"They are sisters. After this separation, they might never see each other in the future!" Tamir replied.

Seeing this scene, many girls started to drop tears while some girls showed their heads out of the rooms far away and looked towards here with pitiful expressions. Hearing their heart-tearing cries, even Zhang Tie felt like crying.

'Well, I will always be the good man!' Zhang Tie sighed inside. 'No matter what, I've already bought more than 50, I don't care to have one more. My castle on Hidden Dragon Island could even hold 300-500 people. I can afford their accommodations and food!'

"Oh, my castle needs some servants to take care of the flowers and grasses. Call out those little girls who received me just now, I will bring them away together!"

'With more than 50 female servants to help me ferment the enzyme and do chores, it will be great! What's next is to buy some male servants...'

Chapter 348: Square Spear Matrix

After buying 59 female slaves, Zhang Tie's following trip in Paradise Lost was smooth. Only after visiting Paradise Lost for half an hour, Zhang Tie spent another 15000 gold coins.

This time, he bought a small, square spear matrix composed of 100 LV 2 slave soldiers.

It was a standard spear matrix, which was more powerful than the spear matrix Zhang Tie had been part of when he was at school.

In Paradise Lost, if you had money, you could buy all sorts of people, including fighting force.

Although LV 2 fighters could only be cannon fodder in battle fields, Zhang Tie didn't mean to send them to battlefields; instead, he only wanted them to defend his castle on Hidden Dragon Island. Therefore, even though they had poor fighting force, they could frighten average people; what was more important, there was no mole among them.

Previously, Zhang Tie planned to employ people from Long Wind Business Group to defend his castle on Hidden Dragon Island; however, after what happened several days ago, Zhang Tie changed his mind. As at least 80 people were needed to defend the castle, Zhang Tie didn't want anyone who could leak information to the public at any given time and set him up at a critical moment.

After meeting Zhang Taibai's wife, Zhang Tie had been too scared about Long Wind Business Group; since then, he had constantly been concerned about being screwed over and betrayed. Therefore, Zhang Tie decided to only use his own followers from now on.

Zhang Tie didn't believe that those people could predict what he was going to do and had arranged their moles among these slaves.

This batch of soldiers were all from the spirits clan. For the other clans, a LV 2 soldier is only worth 120 gold coins; however, spirits soldiers had good physical strength and robust figures. What was more, they were loyal to their owners. They were born to be infantryman; therefore, they were 30 gold coins more expensive than LV 2 soldiers of other clans.

Through this trade, Zhang Tie came to understand more about the prices of the soldiers and warriors of other levels.

In Stars Viewing City, a LV 1 slave soldier was worth about 80 gold coins; a LV 2 slave soldier was worth about 120 gold coins; a LV 3 slave soldier was worth 170 gold coins; a LV 4 slave soldier was worth 260 gold coins; a LV 5 slave soldier was worth 400 gold coins and a LV 6 slave soldier was worth 600 gold coins.

For those soldiers below LV 6, as long as you could afford, those businessmen could easily prepare a division for you.

LV 6 was the highest one could get a slave soldier relatively cheaply as a LV 7 slave would be worth 1100 gold coins, a LV 8 would be worth 3500 gold coins. For LV 9 slaves, if you were lucky, you could get one at the cost of above 10000 gold coins. Actually, you could only see LV 9 slaves at high-end auctions.

Slaves above LV 10 could be rarely seen in slave trade centers. Davinci said he saw one before; although that LV 10 guy was a slave, he was a clan warrior cultivated by a big figure. As nobody would sell a LV 10 powerful fighter and few LV 10 powerful fighters were still slaves.

Those spirits soldiers were all at about 20 years old; they had definitely accepted more military skills training than Zhang Tie had learned in school in Blackhot City. After being bought, those spirits soldiers then knelt down at once and swore to be loyal to Zhang Tie with the solemn promise of their ancestors.

Glancing over more than 100 pairs of eyes, Zhang Tie made an appointment with all the LV 2 spirits soldiers at once.

"As long as you are loyal to me and complete your tasks seriously, I swear here in the name of my ancestors, anyone among you, once reaches LV 6, could gain freedom; additionally, I will gift him 200 gold coins as my thanks for his service over the past years!"

Noticing their faces turning blush and their gleaming eyes, Zhang Tie knew that he had reached his target. Like what Donder said — it's easy to win popular support, as long as you give the people what they want.

What would a LV 2 slave soldier long for most? Freedom and gold coins. With the two items, they would have everything else. You don't need to talk about philosophy, dreams, or relationships with them at all.

"Do you mean that?" A two meter tall slave soldier suddenly stood up as he asked with his eyes opened as big as copper bells.

"Of course I mean it. You will soon witness my power to fulfill this promise!" Zhang Tie then stared at this giant man, "What's your name?"

"I'm Lenox!"

"Well, as you are brave enough to ask such a question on behalf of everybody else, I appoint you as the head of this matrix; but you need to bear it in mind, this is the first time and the last time for you to doubt my words. If you ask such foolish question once again, I will chop off your head, am I clear?"

Saying this, Zhang Tie's killing intent instantly covered the matrix of more than 100 LV 2 spirits soldiers. Feeling this, everybody became shocked and frightened. At this moment, everybody felt that as long as Zhang Tie liked, he could easily kill them all.

Under the sharp gaze of Zhang Tie, Lenox felt cold sweat all over his back. Although being robust in figure, the fighter didn't even to look straight into Zhang Tie's eyes; instead, he lowered his head in awe, "Yes, sir!"

After this transaction, Zhang Tie left Paradise Lost with Davinci. In 24 hours, Paradise Lost would send these soldiers in Zhang Tie's castle on Hidden Dragon Island.

Although that castle was not completed yet, the completed section would be able to house the slaves.

Any customer purchasing more than 5 slaves in Paradise Lost could enjoy a free door-to-door delivery. As Zhang Tie bought 100 LV 2 spirits soldiers, Paradise Lost gifted him 100 long spears as the weapons for those soldiers.

Zhang Tie entered Paradise Lost with the papernote of 20000 gold coins; however, when he walked out of Paradise Lost, he only had less than 1000 gold coins left; instead, he got 100 LV 2 spirits soldiers and 59 female slaves from Varner Empire.

This was Zhang Tie first private force. Zhang Tie even appointed 2 heads for them.

The head of the spirits soldiers was Lenox while the head of those female slaves was Sonia — that girl who was almost separated from her younger sister. Because of Zhang Tie, a tragedy between the sisters was avoided; what if he hadn't been there? Therefore, Zhang Tie believed that Sonia would do her job well so as to gain his appreciation.

Although he spent too much this time, he felt so cool.

...

"Mr. Zhang, do you really want to take a look at the cheapest slave trade center? That place is dirty and disorderly. Slaves there are almost dead!" Davinci tried to persuade Zhang Tie once again.

"No crap!" Zhang Tie then got on the vehicle. After inserting in the key and rotating it to unlock the steering and the pedal ignition device, Zhang Tie stepped on the ignition pedal before it sprung back up; however, the engine didn't respond.

Zhang Tie then stepped down on it eight consecutive times before the car started to slightly shake and the familiar sound of the engine drifted. Then, the engine was ignited. This turbine steam-driven, thermal recollected, external combustion engine was featured by mechanical ignition and alcohol combustion, which could shorten the ignition process to a little over ten seconds.

When Zhang Tie ignited the Faerie Dragon T9, Davinci took a look around the car before opened the side door and meticulously sat in with an emotional sigh, "It's really a good car!"

Zhang Tie then gazed at the dash board of the car. Half a minute later, when the hand of steam pressure pointed at 2900 psi, Zhang Tie pushed down the hand brake and shifted in reverse; meanwhile, he stepped the accelerator and backed his car out of the parking space smoothly.

"Which way am I heading?"

Davinci sighed, "Keep forward and turn right at the second turning..."

The sports car then instantly dashed out...

...

In less than 10 minutes, Zhang Tie had already arrived at that slave trade center under the guidance of Davinci. This was really like an animal trade center outside Blackhot City. It was in a wood outside the city.

Compared to Paradise Lost, this place was in alignment with Zhang Tie's imagination — disorderly, dirty, and noisy. Under the hot sun, this place was full of weird smells that made people feel like vomiting. Besides, there were all sorts of complaints, bargaining voices, and wails.

In dirty and shabby clothes, the slaves were like animals as they were gathered in a cramped space surrounded by steel pipes and iron wires. They were looking at the surrounding people with dumb and despairing looks.

There were some extremely rough platforms which were only 1 m higher than the ground. The platforms were covered with a broken water-proof tarpaulin, on which naked female slaves were exposed and forced to display their own bodies, including their private places for auctioning themselves.

The moment Zhang Tie arrived here, he had seen a baldheaded tough guy forcefully pat a woman's butt and yelled loudly, "9 gold coins? Anyone higher? This woman has not given birth to a baby; she's only 40-odd years old. Except for that scald on her face, she has a nice figure; she's definitely docile; after turning off the light at night, she could still make you happy. Any one higher? The minimal added price each time is only 10 silver coins..."

"10 gold coins!" Zhang Tie roared...

Chapter 349: Setting the Slaves Free

People are different from each other. Even for humble slaves, when they were told that they could be free, their expressions were also different from each other.

Some of them became rapturous, some became vacant, while others became perplexed.

At this moment, on an opening of a wood beside the slave trade center, when Zhang Tie declared to the 50-odd slaves that they were free, those slaves fixed their eyes on him with various expressions.

Some slaves' faces even turned completely pale out of fear as they shook all over.

"No, no, I don't want freedom. I don't want to play this game any more..." a slave shouted loudly with his face full of fear as he glanced around at the surrounding woods in a flurried way, "I know that as long as I take a few steps away, you playboys would chase after me like hunting wild dogs. I've experienced this before. Those bowmen must be hiding nearby, right?"

Hearing this man's doubts, some others also looked panicked; they looked here and there out of fear. They seemed to have heard about similar experiences. In some places, when the playboys set slaves free, they would start a hunting game at the cost of the lives of the slaves. As they were outside the city, this place was suitable for them to play such a game.

Hearing such comment, Zhang Tie kept rolling his eyes while Davinci stared at Zhang Tie on one side, seemingly telling him 'Look, they're slaves! What did you expect?'

Although some slaves looked pretty panicked, Zhang Tie noticed that there were still some looked relatively calm. One of them only had one arm. Being about 50 years old, that man was tough and tall with stubble, making him very attractive. Zhang Tie beckoned him to the front by waving his hand. Seeing Zhang Tie's gesture, that man then strode towards him.

"You were a soldier?" Zhang Tie glanced at him and asked.

"I lost one hand on the battle field. I was a first lieutenant officer of the Macedonian Empire!" That 50-odd man answered calmly.

This man was a prisoner of war, the most common sort of slave.

"What's your name?"

"Stephen!"

Zhang Tie glanced at Davinci as the latter instantly pulled out a contract from that pile of contracts and gave it to Zhang Tie. The photo on this contract was Stephen's.

"You're free!" Zhang Tie handed the man's contract to him. After taking his contract with the only one arm, Stephen gazed at Zhang Tie for 2 seconds as he directly foisted the contract into his mouth, forcefully chewed and swallowed it before revealing a smile...

"I will bear you in mind!"

After saying that, the man turned around and left.

"Wait a second!" Zhang Tie stopped him.

Hearing Zhang Tie's voice, that man turned back and stared at Zhang Tie with vigilance, "What, do you regret it? Or are you playboys wanting to play some trick?"

Zhang Tie then popped out a gold coin towards him after drawing a shiny arc in the air. That man seized it by hand at once.

"For your travel expenses!"

With that gold coin, the man's expression became complicated. Without saying anything, that guy just nodded towards Zhang Tie before left.

With eyes wide open, the other slaves gazed at that leaving man and the calm looking Zhang Tie.

Another slave then plucked up his courage and walked out of the crowd.

"What's your name?"

"Fite!"

...

After Fite left with his contract and a gold coin like Stephen, more slaves crowded towards Zhang Tie.

Finally, with their own contracts and gold coins, only 3 out of 50 or so slaves chose to stay.

One was an old, hunched man in his 70s. One was that woman whom Zhang Tie bought from the auction whose face had some terrifying scalds. The third one was a man in his 30s who looked thin and vacant.

After the others left, the old man sighed as he gave his contract and one gold coin back to Zhang Tie, which really shocked Zhang Tie.

"Master, please let me stay with you. I'm still useful; I can be your doorkeeper and feed horses for you; I can also pass message for you. When it's necessary, I can also kill myself if you want. Just take me as an old dog. Just keep me alive with some leftover soup and food. When I'm dead, just throw me away or chop me into pieces to feed dog or pig; I won't bring you any trouble

The old man's voice became hoarse as his miserable, frowned look slightly moved Zhang Tie. Therefore, after a deep sigh, Zhang Tie put the one gold coin back to his hand once again.

"Clean yourself and buy some good clothes. Then, you can go to Yunju Mountain on Hidden Dragon Island and be the doorkeeper of my castle. It is currently still under construction!"

The old man then knelt down and kissed Zhang Tie's shoes before leaving with that gold coin.

After the old man left, that woman also left after glancing at Zhang Tie.

Hearing the word "castle", a shiny light instantly flashed by the eyes of the thin and vacant man.

"What's wrong with you?" Zhang Tie then asked him patiently.

"You have a castle. You're rich. Therefore, you are able to do that for me. As long as you give me a hand, I... I... will follow you forever..." That man with a vacant look realized something at once as he knelt down and hugged one of Zhang Tie's feet like it was his last chance. He became so excited.

Zhang Tie then burst out laughing loudly and felt that this guy must have been kicked in the head by a donkey, "I granted you freedom just now; if I want you to do something for me, I wouldn't have to give you freedom. If you want me to do something for you, at least show me your value!"

Feeling like he'd been struck by lightning bolt, that man opened his mouth and stayed still for a while before recovering his despaired and vacant look.

After glancing at this frustrated man, Zhang Tie shook his head and left right away. 'As each slave had his own miserable experience, I'm not God, it's impossible for me to meet anyone's requirements.'

When Zhang Tie turned back and prepared to leave, that man suddenly burst out laughter loudly.

"Phili... Gaylen... dad and mom, please forgive me. I'm too useless; I've not revenged for you for such a long time... Believe me, this time, I... I will go back and find Keehn... I will stab him even if I get torn to pieces in the process, even though he's a big muling. After that, we will reunite with each other..."

That man burst into loud sobs and condemned himself first; then, he prayed and made his determination by mumbling. He spoke Hebrew which could not be understood by most people nearby, except for Zhang Tie. When Zhang Tie heard the word "big muling", he stopped at 20 steps away and walked back.

Zhang Tie then glanced over this guy once again. "Are you from Sun Dynasty?"

Kneeling down on the ground, the man raised his red and swollen eyes and looked at Zhang Tie. He then forced a bitter smile, "Yes, I'm from Sun Dynasty; additionally, I'm a clergy who believes in the God of Brilliance piously..."

Zhang Tie then became interested about that, "How can you be so miserable today?"

"They chose me as the alternate muling; however, they preferred me to complete the sacrifice ceremony using an innocent kid's fresh blood and life. I didn't want to do that; therefore, I set that kid free; finally, I was set up by my best friend and was framed as a heretic and blasphemer. Even my family members were involved; finally, in front of me, my youngest brother was forced to finish his sacrifice ceremony to become a muling. Gaylen was only 6 years old..."

Speaking of that, that man covered his face with his hands and cried mournfully once again.

This was a common story in Sun Dynasty as it would happen many times a year. Zhang Tie had not imagined that he could meet a man from Sun Dynasty here.

"Is that Keehn? What's his current position?"

"Yes, it's him. When I escaped from Sun Dynasty, he was already a 3-star muling. Over 10 years have passed. He might be a moon-level big muling now!" Saying that, the man raised his eyes towards Zhang Tie with the last beacon of hope, "I know you're rich; it means you can employ assassin to kill him. If you kill him, I would like to do anything for you..."

Zhang Tie then shook his head, "Do you know how much it would cost me to employ an assassin to kill such a powerful muling and how much risk I would assume? Do you think you are that valuable to me that I would do that for you?"

The man kept silent.

"You have a chance to show me your value. You've already heard the words I said to that old man just now. You can also go to Hidden Dragon Island for me. When you have become of sufficient value to me, I will have people bring Keehn's head in front of you!"

"I will go to Hidden Dragon Island!"

Kneeling down on the ground, that man's eyes radiated gleaming light. He then stood up decisively and left here.

At that moment, Davinci cried. He finally knew that curiosity killed the cat. He even wanted to slap himself and block his ears with cement. 'I'd already turned to leave just now, why did I turn back with Zhang Tie? What the f*ck am I doing?'

Zhang Tie then gazed at Davinci with a grin...

"I didn't hear anything," Davinci explained to Zhang Tie hurriedly. After accompanying Zhang Tie for the whole afternoon, he hadn't realised how terrifying Zhang Tie's grin was until now.

'As long as I say didn't hear anything, what happens between Huaiyuan Palace and Sun Dynasty will have nothing to do with me in the future. If I don't express my stance, I might be involved in this thing in the future; however, for Huaiyuan Palace and Sun Dynasty, I'm nothing but a bug,' Davinci thought.

"Do you know what to do now?" Zhang Tie asked Davinci.

Davinci then nodded with a bitter smile...

Chapter 350: Preparations

Sometimes, a person would not do something 100% rationally; for instance, Zhang Tie set free a great number of slaves this afternoon.

Perhaps it was out of his appreciation towards life, his pity for those slaves, or his selfish desire to earn a fruit of redemption.

Thus, Zhang Tie spent over 1,000 gold coins to set free a number of "cheap" slaves. In many people's eyes, at least in the eyes of Davinci, Zhang Tie was a spendthrift who didn't know it was very hard to make money.

Upon hearing that Zhang Tie had a castle, Davinci naturally thought it was built by Zhang Tie's clan for him. As a guy who was qualified to have a castle on Hidden Dragon Island and surnamed Zhang, undoubtedly, Zhang Tie must be a key apprentice from the leading clan of Huaiyuan Palace.

Davinci believed that he was right. Although Huaiyuan Palace was very large, few young men could buy hundreds of slaves at the price of tens of thousands of gold coins without any hesitation like Zhang Tie.

'Perhaps I should find a big backer like Zhang Tie. It wouldn't be bad to have the backing of a big clan behind me.' Davinci thought. Additionally, in Davinci's opinion, he believed that Zhang Tie was not vicious. A person who could be pitiful about those humble slaves, and was respectful to even the most humble ones, could not be bad.

Zhang Tie drove Davinci into another street nearby Paradise Lost.

"I'm in a sophisticated environment. Many people want to kill me or don't want me to grow mature; if they knew that you are working for me, you will almost definitely die. I don't want to see you lie in a ditch of Stars Viewing City. Am I clear?" Zhang Tie told him seriously, as Davinci got out of the car.

As Zhang Tie wanted to find someone to work for him in Stars Viewing City secretly, he'd better tell him the truth in case he got involved in any conflict due to Zhang Tie's business.

Hearing Zhang Tie's warning, Davinci shrugged his shoulders as he looked aside and forcefully swallowed his saliva, "Don't worry, I will take care of it!"

"If I need you, I will have someone come here for you. If you need me, you can also come for me. Do you know where to find me?"

"Your castle on Yunju Mountain, Hidden Dragon Island!" Davinci replied in a low voice.

Zhang Tie then nodded, "There's only one castle over there. You can easily find there. As long as you don't violate the law of Huaiyuan Prefecture and become wanted by the police, I'm sure you will be safe there!"

Davinci then felt a bit better, "Hmm, you've not named your castle, right?"

"Right, I've not thought about it yet!" Zhang Tie smiled, "Well, see you then!"

Waving his hand, Zhang Tie stepped on the accelerator. With a light boom, the Faerie Dragon T9 rushed out at once.

...

2 minutes later, Zhang Tie parked outside a pioneering shop in an avenue of Stars Viewing City. He then entered the shop.

Pioneers were commonly seen everywhere in this age, even in Jinyun Country. Even though it was in the territory of a country's map, there were still many places yet to be reclaimed. These undiscovered places were as luring as gold mines waiting to be exploited.

Most of places in Huaiyuan Prefecture were populated. Cities in Huaiyuan Prefecture were situated close to each other; however, in places 800 km away from Huaiyuan Prefecture were increasingly more regions yet to be discovered. Therefore, there were still many pioneers based in Huaiyuan Prefecture.

For young men with good family backgrounds in developed areas like Huaiyuan Prefecture, wasteland reclamation became a pastime, almost, that combined adventure, travel, and self-improvement. It was not only for gold coins.

Each shop that sold pioneering products was branded by package, long sword, gold coins, beasts, and similar themes.

Therefore, Zhang Tie parked beside such an eye-catchingly branded store.

The moment Zhang Tie entered the door, a white, attractive girl walked towards him and asked politely, "What can I do for you, sir?"

Zhang Tie then glanced over the products in the shop. The shop floor was over 1000 sq meters, filled with various commodities. It included many more commodities compared to the pioneering shops in Blackhot City. Even the weapons here were no less than common weapon stores.

"Do you have a map?"

"Yes, what kind of map do you want?"

"Maps of Stars Viewing City, Huaiyuan Prefecture, and Jinyun Country, one of each!"

"Well, we have common maps and professional water-proof maps; the latter ones are a bit more expensive. Which kind do you want?" the girl asked.

"Waterproof maps!"

The vendor took out three rolled-up, waterproof maps rapidly.

Being held in slim cylinders covered with copper shells, waterproof maps were made of a special resin. When in need, you could spread the map to check it; when you didn't need it, you just roll it back up like a tape measure. Although this kind of map was waterproof, it was not fire resistant; aluminum maps that could resist both water and fire were much more expensive.

"The price of each map of Stars Viewing City and Huaiyuan Prefecture is 3 silver coins. For the latest map of Jinyun Country, as some undiscovered areas were confirmed on it by pioneers at the end of this May, it's a bit more expensive, 18 silver coins."

"No problem, I also need a high-powered spyglass!" Zhang Tie pointed at a monocular in the counter over there.

The salesgirl then took the spyglass for Zhang Tie. After checking its power, Zhang Tie nodded.

"What else, sir?"

"What's the most popular type of armor-breaking bolts?" Zhang Tie asked.

"The most popular armor-breaking bolts are Breaking-Wind 6 Armor-Breaking Bolts without tail feathers. This kind of armor-breaking bolt was adapted to the latest small and medium-sized metal crossbows made in terms of GM760 on human weapons. With a medium-sized metal crossbow, you could penetrate through a LV 6 pangolin within 80 m. Many troops of the Hurricane Army and Jinyun Country are equipped with this kind of bolt!" the salesgirl explained very smoothly.

"Show me one, please."

The salesgirl rapidly took out a black bolt with a grim three-sided head, which looked like a poisonous snake's head, and handed it to Zhang Tie.

Holding it, Zhang Tie took a look and felt it; then, the precise data about this armor-breaking bolt appeared in Zhang Tie's mind.

Breaking-Wind 6 Armor-Breaking Bolts without tail feathers

Length: 42.7 cm.

Width of head: 3.5 cm.

Total weight: 721 grams.

With a length of over 40 cm, this bolt was made in terms of the most popular aerodynamics in this age. The body of the bolt was divided into 4 sections of different thicknesses and lengths. It seemed to be made in terms of some strange rules as it felt very comfortable.

Weighing it in hand, Zhang Tie then glanced outside. In a split second, Zhang Tie had locked his spiritual energy onto a lamp hanging outside a shop 100 m away on the other side of the avenue. Zhang Tie then revealed a smile, 'Although this bolt is not as light as my handbolt, its destructive power is not smaller than my handbolt.'

Additionally, due to its heavier weight, its destructive power would be a bit greater. Its effective shooting range in Zhang Tie's hands was about 140 m which was almost equal to that of a small javelin.

After experiencing the assassination attempt, Zhang Tie knew that for some people, the fact that he had awakened his ancestral bloodline and customized 2000 handbolts in the Items Department of Hidden Dragon Island might not be a secret at all. If he kept killing people with his handbolts, even though he could recollect all the handbolts, the wounds on the victims would still expose a lot of information, which would undoubtedly arise others' doubts about him.

Therefore, he decided it would be better to purchase some popular weapons to hide his tracks.

Zhang Tie then ordered 2 containers of those bolts, making 48 bolts in total. For such weapons that were available in mass production, their cost would be much cheaper than that of Zhang Tie's handbolts as each kind of bolt only cost him a bit more than 1 silver coins.

After buying the armor-breaking bolts, Zhang Tie bought another two common heavy swords, a set of military slacks, and a multi-purpose backpack. After putting all the items into his backpack, Zhang Tie left this shop with his backpack.

Among all the items that Zhang Tie had bought, the most expensive were the 2 heavy swords; however, the total price of the two heavy swords was less than 5 gold coins. Each sword was even lighter than 20 kg. For a man who had used "Man's Certificate", this kind of heavy sword was really too ridiculous for Zhang Tie in terms of both size and weight.

However, it wasn't a matter of whether it was ridiculous or not, as long as it was destructive.

...

1 hour later, Zhang Tie settled down in a luxury suite on Floor 28 of Milkyway Hotel, the most luxurious hotel in Stars Viewing City.

Pushing a luggage cart, a bellboy guided Zhang Tie into his room and politely asked, "Sir, here's your room. What else can I do for you?"

Zhang Tie peered outside the window of the room and revealed a smile.

"Please bring me my backpack from the luggage cart." After saying that, Zhang Tie gave a silver coin to that bellboy as a tip, "Thanks, there's nothing else; I want to have a rest."

"Fine, sir. If you need any room service, just ring the bell here. If you want to relax or try your luck, there's a gambling house on the floor above; the dining room is on the 2nd floor..." explained the bellboy as he closed the door.

Putting down his backpack, Zhang Tie walked through the corridor to lock the door from inside before walked back.

Squatting on the ground, Zhang Tie opened the lock catch and the zipper on the backpack and took out the rectangular package of that high-power spyglass.

Zhang Tie rapidly assembled the spyglass and inserted the lens. After that, he carried the spyglass to the front window of his bedroom. He firstly adjusted the distance between the blinds to change brightness;

he then drew the silk curtains. Finally, Zhang Tie placed the lens of his spyglass between two blinds and aimed at a place one kilometer away from the hotel.

After slightly adjusting the angle and focus of the spyglass, he could see clearly that place.

— Zhen Clan Mansion of Heavens Cold City —

A huge sign with golden words appeared in Zhang Tie's vision. Below that sign were some ferocious entrance guards in black uniforms. As it was only one kilometer away, Zhang Tie could even see clearly the expressions of the guard to the left of the entrance.

Zhang Tie kept his eyes fixed on that place for about an hour. He moved his eyes away until the dusk fell outside.

After leaving the window, Zhang Tie turned on the flourite lamp in the bedroom and took out of his map of Stars Viewing City...

Zhang Tie pointed at the region between the Milkway Hotel and that Zhen Clan Mansion and studied each street and ally, including each building over 10 times. After that, he put it back and took out the map of Huaiyuan Prefecture.

On the map of Huaiyuan Prefecture, Stars Viewing City only occupied a small area. Due to different scales, details being presented were different.

"Gulu... gulu..."

Right then, Zhang Tie heard his stomach sounding. Touching his stomach, Zhang Tie remembered that he'd only eaten breakfast that morning and had missed lunch.

...

Zhang Tie left the room for the dining room on the 2nd floor of the hotel. The moment he walked out of the lift, he had crashed with a person.

"It's you?"

With colorful earrings and in a blue cowboy vest, that girl was pretty amazed at the sight of Zhang Tie. Before Zhang Tie reacted, that girl had already put her arm around his neck and kissed on his face rapidly as she said in a spoiled voice, "Hubby, why are here so late. I really miss you!"

Hearing those words, Zhang Tie realized that he'd obviously become a scapegoat. Soon after that, he saw some ferocious, tough men walking towards him...