

Envelope 1671

Red Envelope Group of the Three Realms

Chapter 1671: Let's Place A Bet

"May not be?" smiled the Octopus man. "Childe Chen, I'm afraid you don't understand that the oceans in Neptune Starfield are the deepest, most expansive in the human realm*! The deeper we go, the greater the pressure would bear down on you. It would difficult for a human, even one with a high cultivation level to swim quickly to the bottom!"

"I already told you that I'm good with water!" Chen Xiaobei answered calmly. "If you don't believe me, we can race each other!"

"Are you sure, Childe Chen? Are you sure you're not just joking?" Octopus man chuckled. "This is the first time in my life that I'm hearing a human challenging a merperson to a swimming race!"

"Childe Chen, don't be stubborn!" Ao Liancheng was also very amused. "Every race* has its own strengths; the merpeople's strength is water! The oceans are the merpeople's homeground! You are the first person to have ever challenged a merperson in his backyard!"

Chen Xiaobei merely shrugged at the comment. "Childe Liancheng's cultivation is higher than mine so I cannot compete with him, but I am confident enough to compete with Brother Octopus."

"Childe Chen, you are our honored guest but..." Octopus man frowned. "I must tell you this, however – you're being a bit too ostentatious!"

"You think I'm being ostentatious?" Chen Xiaobei's eyebrows raised. "Does Childe LiangCheng think so too?"

Ao Liancheng smiled. "It's a little rude for me to say this, but to be honest, a human challenging a merman to a swimming race undoubtedly is quite the ostentatious move indeed!"

"Alright! Since both of you think that way, why don't we place a bet?" Chen Xiaobei grinned. "Brother Octopus and I will dive 3,000 meters deep. The first person to reach wins! If I lose, I will fulfill any request you have but if I win, you'll have to give me a 100,000 years Ambergris!"

"What?!" Ao Liancheng and Octopus man stared at each other, a strange expression adorning their faces.

"Why? Are you guys afraid?" Chen Xiaobei challenged.

Ao Liancheng hesitated for some time before saying, "Childe Chen, it appears that you do not understand the current condition in Neptune! We don't even have a 30,000 years Ambergris to spare!"

"Why... Why is that?" The disappointment was evident on Chen Xiaobei's face.

Chen Xiaobei had hoped that he could increase his cultivation as quickly as possible using high-grade Ambergris. Woefully, Ao Liancheng had just shattered his dream of that ever happening!

Ao Liangcheng answered. "That information is kept secret – it has something to do with our holy emperor's illness! If you could cure his royal highness, I will tell you everything! Should anything happen to him, this secret will be buried forever, and our race will face the risk of extinction!"

"Extinction? That drastic?!" Chen Xiaobei was suddenly worried.

Ao Liancheng smiled comfortingly. "Don't worry, Childe Chen. The danger is there but we should be fine for the time being."

Chen Xiaobei's forehead wrinkled. He found it difficult not to worry.

If even the Neptunes could not save themselves, what would happen to him should he get entangled in their affairs?

"Childe Chen! There really is no need to worry! I can vouch for your safety!" To lighten the mood, Ao Liancheng steered the conversation in another direction. "So that bet you were mentioning just now. Are you still on? Don't tell me you're scared now!"

"Scared? Such a word does not exist in my dictionary!" Chen Xiaobei said with full confidence.

"Alright! The conditions are the same except we'll have to raise the stakes!" Ao Liancheng said. "If my bodyguard loses, I will agree to fulfill an attainable request you have! If you lose, I won't pay your consultation fee!"

"Alright! I concur!" Chen Xiaobei answered.

Although he may not obtain the Ambergris, he could at least ask for Ao Liancheng's help to find the emperor of Greenhill.

This had to do for the sake of Bai Lingsu and girls' safety – this was of paramount importance.

"Then, I'll go wait at the 3,000-meter mark first! The first to arrive wins!" Ao Liancheng smiled. He dove into the ocean so quickly he was but a blur of a red, leaving a crimson trail behind.

Chen Xiaobei could not help but exclaim, "Wow! So fast!"

Ding!

[Cultivation: Early phase of God-Ascension cultivation; Lifespan: 1,317 years; Health: 600,000 (+100,000); Combat power: Health: 600,000 (+100,000)]

Chen Xiaobei checked Ao Liancheng's cultivation again.

It was as what Ling Qingfeng had said: In the sea, Ao Liancheng could wield 700,000 combat power.

On top of that, the ocean was the merpeople's domain. The crushing pressure from the depth and the resistance of the seawater were barely an impediment for them.

In the vast ocean, Ao Liancheng was undefeatable to those of the same cultivation level.

Ding!

[Cultivation: Pinnacle phase of Celestial cultivation; Lifespan: 104 years; Health: 130,000 (+50,000); Combat power: Health: 130,000 (+50,000)]

Octopus man's cultivation, on the other hand, was much lower. His bloodline was nowhere near Ao Liancheng's either.

Nevertheless, with all things considered, Octopus man was not to be underestimated.

In the ocean, he could compete with an Ethereal Cultivation elite with 180,000 combat power.

As a matter of fact, Chen Xiaobei's combat power was 180,000.

But after he had consumed the Blood Emperor's neutron, his health was increased to 200,000. With the enhancements gained from the Primordial Witch King Combat Enhancement Training Manual, he could then wield a whopping 200,000 combat power!

That was going to be Chen Xiaobei's basis for winning!

Not knowing this, Octopus man even teased, "Childe Chen, should I give you a ten-minute head start?"

Chen Xiaobei shrugged. "That won't be necessary. When Childe Liancheng gives the signal, we'll start together!"

Octopus man chuckled, "Won't that make me a bully then?"

"You should save that speech after you win. Who knows, you might have spoken too soon!" Chen Xiaobei said playfully.

"Alright! If you insist, I won't go easy on you!" Octopus man smiled. "Don't blame me for beating you later!"

"Hehe." Chen Xiaobei smiled back at him, unfazed.

Swoosh!

Suddenly, a red light shot out from the deep end of the ocean. It was simply a harmless beam – Ao Liancheng's signal for them to begin the race.

Whoosh!

Octopus man's eight tentacles stirred under the water, and off he went, pulsating away deep into the ocean as a black shadow.

Whoosh!

Chen Xiaobei was just as focused. He quickly dove into the water, wielding all his might.

At the initial 1,000-meter mark, the water pressure and the water-resistance were not too bad. Chen Xiaobei and Octopus man were racing each other shoulder to shoulder.

"You... Aren't you human... How could a human..." Octopus man stared at Chen Xiaobei, who was swimming next to him. He was completely baffled that a human could swim as quickly as he could. He had never heard or seen anyone like that before... until now!

Chen Xiaobei merely responded with a smile, and a confident, "The best part is yet to come!"

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Chapter 1672: You re Too Slow

"Best part? What best part? Did you mean... You could swim even faster? No... That's impossible... I'd rather believe that birds can swim than believe that..." Octopus man shook his head, focusing his energy on his swimming, making use of every ounce of energy in his body.

"The seawater's effects on merpeople are small, but they're not completely unaffected." Chen Xiaobei said, maintaining speed while matching his pace alongside octopus man.

"What... do you mean?" Octopus man asked.

"You will know soon!" Chen Xiaobei smiled to himself.

They were both very fast. Soon, they were already swimming beyond 1,000 meters. The water pressure and the water-resistance gradually increased by the meter.

As Chen Xiaobei had said earlier, seawater's effects on merpeople may be small, but they were not completely immune to its effects either.

Based on that premise, Octopus man began to slow down a little.

Whereas, Chen Xiaobei's speed was completely unaffected, and remained constant.

Slowly but surely, Chen Xiaobei began to surpass Octopus man.

"My god... Am I dreaming... Are you not affected by the water pressure and resistance... That doesn't make sense..." Octopus man's eyes widened in astonishment.

"I already told you that I'm good when it comes to water!" Chen Xiaobei said with a quiet smile.

"Is this a matter of skill... You're not human! You are not human!" Octopus man shouted in shock.

"Don't be so surprised!" Chen Xiaobei said. "This is not my fastest speed yet!"

"What? You can be faster still?" Octopus man's eyes were as round as saucers.

Both of them had already passed the 2,000-meter mark. The pressure and the resistance greatly intensified, inflicting a crushing force that was many times greater than the surface.

Octopus man was also gradually slowing down.

Chen Xiaobei said to him, "You're too slow. I can't keep waiting for you anymore. I'll be going first."

Whoosh!

Chen Xiaobei increased his speed, leaving Octopus man in his dust.

"Tha... That..." Octopus man broke down, and cried, "Oh god... Oh heaven... Am I really part fish?"

Before the race, he even said that humans could never beat a fish, and had even told Chen Xiaobei in the face that he was being ostentatious.

But now that the truth was set before him, Octopus man found himself proven wrong.

He even began to compare himself to Chen Xiaobei, thinking that Chen Xiaobei was more of a merperson than he was and that he himself was a fake fish!

3,000 meters underwater.

“How... Is this possible?” Ao Liancheng spotted Chen Xiaobei’s silhouette but there was no sign of Octopus man, which meant that Chen Xiaobei was way faster than Octopus man.

Even Ao Liancheng, a God-Ascension level elite who was born in a high-ranking starfield and had seen all sorts of wonders was completely floored by what he was witnessing.

“Childe Liancheng, I won this round! You won’t backtrack on your promise, will you?” Chen Xiaobei swam towards Ao Liancheng, a smile on his face.

“No... Why would I do that... I just think that your speed is incredible...” Ao Liancheng exclaimed. “This is 3,000 meters underwater... A normal human being would’ve died under such tremendous pressure... Even human elites would have trouble with their movement... but you...”

“Like I mentioned, I’m really good in the water!” Chen Xiaobei grinned.

“No... That’s not it! There must be another reason why you’re able to swim this fast!” Ao Liancheng said with conviction.

“Childe Liancheng is really sharp-witted!” Chen Xiaobei beamed. “But this is my secret – I cannot reveal it to you!”

His secret was the Hydrophobe Orb, of course!

In the water, Chen Xiaobei could control the seawater’s resistant force.

Under normal conditions, Chen Xiaobei could cause the resistance of the surrounding waters to increase so that he could float.

But for the race, he dropped its resistance all the way down to zero.

On top of that, Chen Xiaobei’s cultivation was much higher than the Octopus man’s.

For those very reasons, Chen Xiaobei’s speed of diving was much faster.

Chen Xiaobei would never tell anyone about his Hydrophobe Orb, of course.

Ao Liancheng frowned. “Childe Chen! You really do know how to keep people in suspense! You piqued my curiosity and then refused to reveal the answer... This need to know is killing me...”

Chen Xiaobei just shrugged in response, shooting him an apologetic smile.

“My prince... I... I lost...” Octopus man was in tears when he arrived, having to admit his defeat.

“You don’t need to tell me! I’ve already seen it!” Ao Liancheng said. “Childe Chen is not a common man. Go back and tell everyone that they are not allowed to offend Childe Chen!”

“Yes, your highness...” Octopus nodded. His eyes wandered to Chen Xiaobei, and they were filled with respect and awe.

“Let’s go! Let’s continue downwards!” Ao Liancheng said. “This planet is in the periphery of Neptune. The ocean is ten thousand meters deep. There’s a portal at the bottom that connects to the Neptune Capital Planet! The holy emperor resides there!”

The three of them went deeper at a reasonably slow pace so that Octopus man could keep up.

Ao Liancheng said, “I lost the bet just now. If Childe Chen would like to make a request, please do not hesitate to ask. As long as it is within my ability to fulfill it, I will not refuse it!”

“I would like you to help me find someone!” Chen Xiaobei answered almost immediately. “He is the emperor of Greenhill Starfield. He came here a few months ago!”

“No problem!” Ao Liancheng agreed instantly. He turned to Octopus man and said, “Once we return, you are to instruct the intelligence division to look into this matter!”

“Yes, sir!” Octopus man nodded. “Childe Chen, do you have any other information that may be useful for our search?”

“No...” Chen Xiaobei shook his head.

“With so little information... I’m afraid it’s going to be really difficult...” Octopus man said. “There are hundreds of planets in Neptune. It’s going to be like finding a needle in a haystack...”

“What nonsense!” Ao Liancheng scolded. “If it was easy, would Childe Chen have asked us to help? Upon our return, take my token and inform all the Elders of the planets to arrange for a search!”

“Yes... I understand!” Octopus man swallowed. He rarely saw this side of Ao Liancheng.

He could tell that Ao Liancheng really favored Chen Xiaobei.

At the bottom of the ocean.

For the first time in his life, Chen Xiaobei saw with his own two eyes, an underwater world crowded with so many half-human, half-fish aquatic citizens similar to that of Donghai Dragon Palace in “Journey to the West”.

This was just the starting point.

After they had gone through the portal, Chen Xiaobei would see the core of Neptune Starfield, before catching a glimpse of the real Crystal Palace!

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Chapter 1673: Mermaid Princess

The Capital City of Neptune was a sight to behold, grand and breathtaking – a very magical underwater city on a super scale.

Right in the heart of the city was a magnificent, glittering crystal palace. It was as if someone had placed a mountain of crystals there. The carvings on it were a work of art, its craftsmanship remarkable.

That was the Neptune Emperor's palace.

With the crystal palace in the center, the Imperial City extended itself in all directions.

All around the city, you could see houses in the form of giant seashells and conches with colorful coral-decorated doors and windows. Instead of tiles, the roofs were dotted with pearls that glimmered like stars. It was like stepping into a fairytale world, an absolutely enchanting experience.

The streets were covered in a soft, fine white sand of which many of the merpeople traversed.

There were 'Mutant Ninja Turtles' with turtle shells growing on their backs, and 'shrimp soldiers and crab generals'* with giant crab pincers and shrimp tails. There were even Bai Suzhens* who was half-human, half-snake!

It was like Ao Liancheng said, the merpeople's outward appearances were very unusual, very intriguing.

Suddenly, a guy whose appearance nearly made Chen Xiaobei burst into laughter came swimming towards them, calling out, "Prince Liancheng! You're finally back! The royals were looking for you everywhere!"

The human half of the guy was really fat, with a fat head and big ears like a little Budai while the lower half of his body, on the other hand, was Pipi Prawn's body!

"What happened?" Ao Liancheng anxiously asked.

The fatty replied, "There's unusual movement in the North Ocean! That 'thing' seems to be getting ready to head North!"

"What?! So fast?" Ao Liancheng's expression turned grim, a flicker of fear visible in his eyes. "Grand Steward Pi, please take care of Childe Chen for me. He is my guest so please do not neglect him!"

Whoosh!

Ao Liancheng once again turned into a fleeting red shadow speeding towards the crystal palace at the heart of the city.

Octopus man was overwrought when he spoke, "Childe Chen, please allow Grand Steward Pu to bring you around for some sightseeing. I have to go to the intelligence division! Don't worry, I will do my best to find the person you are looking for!"

Octopus man too, left in a hurry.

"What in the world happened?" Chen Xiaobei wondered aloud. "They just left me here like that? Don't they need me to treat the emperor?"

Grand Steward Pi said politely, "Childe Chen, there is an emergency in the palace. If Prince Liancheng doesn't return, I will tend to you for the time being. If there's anything you need, please do not hesitate to let me know!"

"I don't need anything..." Chen Xiaobei thought for a moment and then asked, "Can you tell me what that 'thing' is?"

“Er... I’m afraid not...” Grand Steward Pi said nervously. “You are our distinguished guest. You cannot be involved in the matters of that ‘thing’ nor can I tell you anything about it!”

“I understand. I am just an outsider, I shouldn’t be asking these things...” Chen Xiaobei nodded, his eyebrows furrowed.

“How about I bring you around town?” Grand Steward Pi said. “Drinking, eating, and entertainment – whatever it is that you want to do, I can bring you there!”

Chen Xiaobei looked around and then suddenly cried out in excitement. “Pipi Prawn! Let’s go!”

“Huh?” Steward Pi looked at him quizzically.

“Oh, er... Grand Steward Pi, let’s go!” Chen Xiaobei was excited.

“Go where...”

Chen Xiaobei came to the door of a store that hung a plaque with the words ‘Ambergris Corner’ written on it!

“Grand Steward Pi, does this place sell Ambergris?” Chen Xiaobei asked.

“They don’t sell. You have to gamble for it! If Childe Chen is interested, you can go in and take a look!”

“Gamble? How? I really would like to take a look!” Chen Xiaobei ran inside, bubbling with excitement.

There were many black rocks, large and small; the small ones came in the size of fists while the big ones were the size of fish tanks in different shades of colors and variety of shapes.

“These are not Ambergris, are they?” Chen Xiaobei asked.

Grand Steward Pi chuckled. “Ambergris are deposited nearby Spirit Channel’s seabed for many years – the shortest being ten thousand years, and the longest is one million years. Sand and stones attached themselves on the surfaces, and over time, as the minerals accumulate to form rocks.”

“You mean that by cracking these stones, I can get Ambergris?” Chen Xiaobei asked.

“Theoretically, yes; but realistically, no! Ambergris gambling is like gambling for stones in the other starfields. After you’ve chosen one, you have to pay for it before you open it. If there’s Ambergris, you earn; but if there’s none then you lose!”

“Oh! Gambling for stones!” Chen Xiaobei snapped his fingers. “There is something I don’t understand, though. The other starfield’s stone gambling businesses are all thriving, but why is it that this Ambergris gambling business so unpopular?”

There was no one else in the large store except for Chen Xiaobei and the steward. There was not even a shopkeeper within sight.

One could only imagine how bad the business here was, to the point that nobody cared about it.

Grand Steward Pi heaved a heavy sigh. “The business here was the most prosperous one in the whole city! But a few months ago, there was a problem with the supply. Nearly half of the stones were empty. Even if there was an Ambergris inside, the oldest was only about 10,000 years! There wasn’t a single

high-grade one! Gambling has always been about using a small amount to yield greater rewards. With no high-grade Ambergris available, the customers, naturally, lost interest! The problem was with the supply of these stones, and that could not be solved. Gradually, this place became less and less frequented.”

Chen Xiaobei turned to look at the steward. “This problem with the supply has to do with that ‘thing’, right?”

“Err...” Steward Pi could not answer.

“If I guessing correctly, his majesty, your holy emperor’s illness is related to that ‘thing’ too!” Chen Xiaobei added.

“Ho... how did you know?” Grand Steward Pi was genuinely surprised. “That is top secret!”

“Ao Liancheng invited me here to cure the holy emperor of his illness,” Chen Xiaobei explained. “Before this, he also mentioned that there was barely any 30 to 50 thousand year Ambergris left! He said that this was a secret and that if I could cure his majesty, he would reveal it to me!”

“Oh...” Steward Pi nodded, and confessed, “You guessed correctly. The problem with the Ambergris supply and the holy emperor’s illness are tied to that ‘thing’! But I cannot tell you what that is!”

“Don’t worry, I won’t force you to tell me.” Chen Xiaobei shrugged. “Ao Liancheng probably won’t be back for a while. Why don’t we gamble for a bit?”

“Who wants to gamble Ambergris?” A mellifluous female voice came from the back of the store.

“Huh? Your highness, princess, why are you here?” Steward Pi asked.

“Princess?” Chen Xiaobei cocked his head to the side. “Mermaid princess? What does she look like?”

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Chapter 1674: Lucky Guess

A mermaid much akin to the ones in fairytales swam out from the backroom.

“Steward Pi, why did you bring people here?” she asked.

Her tail was covered in pink scales that glittered like gems and gave off an opalescent hue. The upper half of her body was slender and her exquisite facial features were complemented by her long, wavy hair and fair skin. She was, in other words, a gorgeous, flawless lass.

“Greetings, your royal highness!” Steward Pi saluted her.

“Who is this?” The pretty mermaid regarded Chen Xiaobei uneasily due to Chen Xiaobei’s peculiar manner of gawking at her.

“Ahem...” Steward Pi coughed. “Allow me to introduce to you – this is a friend of Prince Liancheng, Childe Chen!”

“Childe Chen, can you please stop looking at me like that?” The little mermaid was not pleased.

“Childe Chen... Childe Chen...” Steward Pi tugged at Chen Xiaobei’s sleeve nervously. “I know the princess is good looking but you cannot stare at people like that!”

“Huh...” Chen Xiaobei snapped out of his stupor. “I apologize! I’m very sorry, princess. It’s just that you look very much like a character from the stories of my childhood. I was so surprised that I was completely bewitched...”

The mermaid pursed her lips, still half-suspicious.

To ease the awkwardness, Steward Pi quickly jumped in, “Childe Chen, please allow me to introduce to you Neptune’s youngest little princess, Ao Chun’er!”

“How do you do, princess!” Chen Xiaobei smiled as courteously and as gracefully as he could.

Ao Chun’er’s furrowed brows seemed to ease a little. “How do you do? I overheard that you want to try your luck at Ambergris gambling.”

“Yes, I do! Because Childe Liancheng is busy, I was hoping to have a flutter of two to pass the time.” Chen Xiaobei shrugged.

“I’m afraid you can’t!” Ao Chun’er shook her head. “This Ambergris Corner operates under my name. I’ve come here today to shut it down temporarily!”

Ambergris were a rare and valuable resource. Only a member of the imperial family could afford running a business like that.

“Is it because of the problem with the supply?” Chen Xiaobei asked.

“Yes...” Ao Chun’er answered frankly. “There’s problem with the supply. So, our business of Ambergris gambling will only be a liability. If the business continues to run, we’ll go bankrupt real soon!”

Chen Xiaobei blinked, activating his Golden Gaze Fiery Eyes to survey the rocks. “It’s not all that bad, the merchandise here! I’ve spotted a few that I’d like to buy. How many Spiritual Stones would they cost?”

Ao Chun’er and Steward Pi shared a look, furrows in their brows.

Chen Xiaobei had chosen the largest stone in the corner of the store.

“Childe Chen!” Ao Chun’er said solemnly. “First of all, there really is a problem with the supply and you really are such an amateur! When it comes to Ambergris gambling, bigger is not always better! There’s nothing inside! It’s been in the store for three years and no one has ever been interested in it!”

“Since it hadn’t been sold for three years, why don’t you just get rid of it?” Chen Xiaobei asked, smiling cheekily.

Ao Chun’er sighed. “The shopkeeper I hired is a little superstitious. He hired a Feng Shui master to inspect the shop, and was told to put that grounding rock at that corner to maintain luck and prosperity. That’s why we haven’t thrown it away yet!”

“Since it’s not important, give me a price and sell it to me!” Chen Xiaobei smiled.

“Childe Chen! Are you even listening to what I’m saying?!” Ao Chun’er was getting frustrated. “I already told you that there won’t be any Ambergris inside that rock. Why do you still want to buy it?”

Chen Xiaobei grinned, “We have this saying in our family that a guy who likes to smile would have good luck! I believe in my luck!”

“You...” Ao Chun’er stared at Chen Xiaobei like he had lost his mind.

Steward Pi also advised against it. “Childe Chen, just listen to the princess...”

“Don’t try to convince me!” Chen Xiaobei said firmly. “I want that rock!”

“You know what...” Ao Chun’er sighed. “Ugh... you know what? I’ll just give this rock to you. I’ll ask the shopkeeper to find us another grounding rock!”

“Give it to me? How can I accept it?” Chen Xiaobei smiled. “Princess, just give me a price. If there’s Ambergris inside, I’m afraid you’ll regret it!”

“No, I won’t.” Ao Chun’er shook her head. “First, there’s no way that there’s any Ambergris inside, and second, I care a lot about my reputation. I would not want to take it back after giving it to you!”

“Alright! I’ll take your word for it!” Chen Xiaobei walked over to the rock, formed a blade with his Ethereal Force and cut the rock.

In a blink of an eye, the rock was split in half.

And in the middle of that rock was a coal-black Ambergris the size of a basketball!

“That...that that that...” Ao Chun’er’s big beautiful eyes widened and her mouth formed a perfectly round O.

“My goodness... Am I dreaming...” The steward was befuddled and was left dumbfounded. He even pinched his chubby cheeks to convince himself that he was not dreaming.

“The both of you, don’t get distracted. Tell me, did I hit the jackpot?” Chen Xiaobei smiled.

“Chen... Childe Chen...” Ao Chun’er bit her lip. “How did you know that there’s an Ambergris inside?”

Chen Xiaobei shrugged. “I am an amateur. That’s probably just dumb luck.”

“Impossible! There’s no way you’re an amateur!” Ao Chun’er said in disbelief. “You must have been able to tell, or you wouldn’t have been so adamant in wanting this rock!”

“It was really just a blind guess!” Chen Xiaobei said. “Because there are problems with the recent supply, I decided to go with this one which has been here for three years! I thought that it’d be interesting to try my luck. I really didn’t expect to have guessed correctly!”

Chen Xiaobei could not reveal the secret which was his Golden Gaze Fiery Eyes.

Ao Chun’er frowned as she stared hard at Chen Xiaobei, obviously doubtful over his stroke of luck.

Chen Xiaobei smiled cheekily. “Your royal highness, please don’t stare at me like that. People might get the wrong idea!”

“You must be hiding something!” Ao Chun’er pouted, dewy eyed. “Can you please, please, please tell me? I’ve been in the Ambergris business for so many years, but I’ve never seen anyone quite as skilled as you!”

Seeing the adorable puppy-dog expressing the pretty Ao Chun’er put out, Chen Xiaobei suddenly felt a burning desire to add this mermaid into his harem.

“Childe Chen! Finally! I’ve found you! Prince Liancheng requires your presence in the palace immediately!” Octopus man came running into the shop, shouting. But he was suddenly distracted. “My god... How... How is it that there’s a 100,000-year-old Ambergris here???”

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Chapter 1675: Imminent Danger

“Heavens! Am I imagining things?” Octopus man rubbed his eyes, and then looked at the rock again.

“No, I’m not... This is an actual 100,000-year Ambergris! My god... Ever since that ‘thing’ appeared, we have not seen a single 100,000-year Ambergris for more than half a year!”

“Is this a 100,000-year Ambergris?” Chen Xiaobei lit up. “Well then! It would seem that I’ve hit the jackpot this time! Wahahaha...”

Octopus man gasped, “Childe... Chen... You were the one who scored this Ambergris? Are you like a professional Ambergris gambler?”

“No, I’m just an amateur. It was a lucky pick.” Chen Xiaobei grinned.

“A lucky pick?” Octopus man nearly tripped over himself. “Childe Chen... that is some phenomenal luck you have!”

“Childe Chen, you’re too humble.” Ao Chun’er put on a grim look but there was awe in her eyes. “You were able to find that Ambergris because you must have some special secret know-how!”

“Why? Are you going to back out, princess?” Chen Xiaobei smiled. “I’m not comfortable taking something so valuable for free. Why don’t you name a price, princess? I am willing to pay with Spiritual Stones!”

“No! That’s not what I meant!” Ao Chun’er said. “I gave you the rock. So, whatever is inside belongs to you too. I will not renege, but I want to know your secret!”

“Since it’s a secret, how can I tell anyone about it?” Chen Xiaobei smiled politely. “If you mean what you say, perhaps you could enlighten me on how much of an increase in combat power I can get from this Ambergris?”

“What cultivation level you at?” Ao Chun’er asked.

“Early phase of Ethereal Cultivation.” Chen Xiaobei answered

“Ethereal cultivation...” Ao Chun’er tapped a finger against her chin. “A 100,000-year Ambergris can help you gain an increase... 10,000 combat power.”

“Why is it only 10,000? If a 10,000-year Ambergris can help increase a person’s combat power by 3,000, then shouldn’t a 100,000-year Ambergris mean an increase of 30,000 combat power?” asked a perplexed and slightly disappointed Chen Xiaobei.

“That’s not how an Ambergris works!” Ao Chun’er explained. “Its effect and the user’s cultivation are inversely proportional! The higher the cultivation, the weaker the Ambergris’ effect! Take a 10,000-year Ambergris, for example. An elite whose cultivation is below Celestial Cultivation can have a 3,000 combat power increase whereas a Celestial Cultivation elite can only have a 1,000 combat power increase! For an Ethereal Cultivation elite, it’s basically useless! Similarly, a 100,000-year Ambergris will add 30,000 combat power to elites who are below Ethereal Cultivation, 10,000 combat power to Ethereal Cultivators, and nothing to God-Ascension cultivators. If there were no such constraints, our race would have used Ambergris to produce a multitude of Earth-God level elites!”

Ao Chun’er had given a very detailed, and logical explanation.

Chen Xiaobei nodded. “I understand now. The higher the cultivation, the more difficult it is to advance. That’s common sense!”

“Are you disappointed?” Ao Chun’er asked empathetically.

Chen Xiaobei shook his head. “No, a 10,000 combat power increase would actually be considered as pretty good. I can save quite a lot of time!”

There were still a lot of Demonic Beast essences stored inside his body. If all of that was absorbed, he could increase both his combat power and health by approximately 100,000!

The catch was, that it would take one hour to increase 100 combat power and 100 health.

It would take him a total of 100 hours to increase 10,000 combat power – that’s four days and four hours!

Right now, Chen Xiaobei was on a time-crunch!

On one hand, was his three-month deal with Lady Nuwo! On the other, was Luo Puti’s martial arts competition.

Chen Xiaobei would never give up either one!

Every minute and every second of Chen Xiaobei’s time had to be carefully planned!

Right now, being able to save four days was a result that Chen Xiaobei was more than happy to see.

“Childe Chen, you can use this Ambergris now.” Ao Chun’er said.

“There’s no rush.” Chen Xiaobei said. “Octopus brother, why were you in a rush when you got here? What happened?”

“Oh no! I almost forgot about that!” Octopus man smacked himself on the forehead. “The prince asked me to send for you immediately! Your royal highness, and Steward Pi should come with me too!”

“I have to go too?” Ao Chun’er held her breath. “Could grandfather’s condition be worsening?”

“Yes..” Octopus man swallowed nervously. “His majesty’s condition is getting worse. He could...die... anytime...”

“How did it become like that... What are those useless doctors doing...” The rim of the princess’s eyes reddened.

Whoosh!

Ao Chun’er rushed out of the store towards the crystal palace, with Chen Xiaobei and the others at her heel.

...

In the royal crystal palace.

Chen Xiaobei was in no mood to admire the magical palace. He followed Steward Pi at an increasing speed into the Imperial Palace.

In the Neptune holy emperor’s bedchamber.

There were about a dozen people of varied races from Neptunes to humans kneeling at the foot of the stone steps outside the palace. They were the doctors who were hired to cure the holy emperor.

Another dozen men and women of varied ages were inside the palace. From their dress-code and their aristocratic demeanor, Chen Xiaobei could tell that they were the royalties of Neptune Starfield.

Once she entered the bedchamber, Ao Chun’er threw herself to the emperor’s bedside, and began weeping.

“Grandfather...Grandfather... Chun’er is here... Open your eyes to look at Chun’er... sniff... sob sob...”

“Chun’er! Stop crying... Don’t disrupt grandfather’s rest...” A few beautiful young mermaids gathered around the crying Ao Chun’er and pulled her away.

“Liancheng! Where is that Miracle Doctor you found? Why isn’t he here yet?” A middle-aged man who looked very much like Ao Liancheng asked with a sense of urgency in his voice.

“I’m here!” Chen Xiaobei walked into the room behind Steward Pi.

Every pair of eyes in the room turned towards Chen Xiaobei.

The middle-aged man was livid. “Ao Liancheng! What kind of joke is this?! Don’t you know what condition your grandfather is in? This matter affects the survival of our entire race, and you’ve got us a kid? Have you lost your mind?”

“Father...” Ao Liancheng said with conviction. “Childe Chen is extraordinary! I’ve seen his skills with my very own eyes! He is worthy to be called a Miracle Doctor! Please let him take a look at grandfather!”

“Shut up!” The middle-aged man barked. “As the royal elite member of the Neptune race, I will not permit anyone to make a joke out of his majesty’s life! This is equal to making a joke of the lives of the hundreds and millions of Neptune’s citizens!”

“I...” Ao Liancheng was bereft of speech.

Chen Xiaobei stepped in. "I'm not joking around. If you don't let me cure your holy emperor. He will draw his last breath in 10 minutes' time!"

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Chapter 1676: Divine Doctor

"You disgusting urchin! How dare you say such morbid things here!" Da Wangye* shouted. "Guards! Get this kid out of here! No, throw him out of the Imperial City!"

Immediately, two half-human, half-shark guards barged in, their eyes locked on Chen Xiaobei.

"Stand down!" Ao Liancheng shouted. "Childe Chen is an honored guest of mine! Even if you don't believe in his medical skills, you should at least treat him with respect!"

"Ao Liancheng, you really disappoint me!" Da Wangye said coldly. "You're almost thirty already, and you still can't tell between what's real and what's not? Is that kid a divine doctor or a fraud? Even a three-year-old knows the answer to that!"

Ao Liancheng refused to back down. "Father! Do I really have such bad judgement in your eyes? I have personally witnessed Childe Chen's strength, ability, and loyalty! If he is a fraud, I am willing to die for my crime!"

"You dimwit! Have you been brainwashed by that kid?" Da Wangye bellowed. "Go out and take a look for yourself! The people kneeling outside the door are all of the most distinguished and experienced Traditional Chinese Medicine doctors! Which one of them does not have white hair? Which one of them is not hundreds of years old and above?"

Ao Liancheng was resolute. "Heroes are made in the youth! Who stipulated that doctors need to be aged old men?"

"You unfilial son! Are you revolting?!" Da Wangye hissed. "Guards! Get rid of this unfilial son and that fraud!"

The other members of the imperial family immediately tried to salvage the situation.

"Calm down, Da Wangye! This child Liancheng was just blindsided. He has no ill intention!"

"Liancheng! You too! Your grandfather is at death's door, and your father is burning with worry as it is. Don't make him angry anymore!"

"Yeah! Liancheng! Listen to your father! Take that kid away, and stop causing trouble!"

"Yeah! Yeah! Liancheng! Hurry up and leave! If anything happens to your grandfather, all of Neptune will fall into chaos!"

Nearly everyone was advising Ao Liancheng to bring Chen Xiaobei away.

Common sense and logic made it difficult for them to believe that Chen Xiaobei was indeed the legendary divine doctor.

Nevertheless, Ao Liancheng was remained resolute.

“It is exactly because of grandfather’s welfare and the survival of our race that we need Childe Chen’s help! Even if Childe Chen could only bring us a little bit of hope, we have to give it a try!” Ao Liancheng spoke with total conviction. “All those doctors outside can’t do anything for grandfather! If Childe Chen leaves, our last bit of hope leaves with him too! Pardon me for what I’m about to say – but grandfather will die!”

Everyone went completely still and no one said anything. There was nothing but the sound of people’s breathing and their hearts pounding.

Even Da Wangye was rendered speechless.

It was without a question that right here, right now, Chen Xiaobei was the holy emperor’s final hope!

Although it was small uncertain hope, at least it was a chance.

But if Chen Xiaobei walked away, whatever last piece of hope left would vanish with him out the door!

As the doctors they hired could not do anything, the only thing waiting for the holy emperor and the people of Neptune was death!

“Da Wangye!” Ao Chun’er wiped away her tears, and said, “Chun’er believes that Childe Chen is not a fraud! Please permit him to try! Chu’er is willing to swear on her life!”

Chen Xiaobei’s eyes lit up.

He did not know until now that he carried that much weight in Ao Chun’er’s heart.

Initially, Chen Xiaobei was getting ready to show himself out of the door. He was not about to stay and help people who did not want or appreciate his help.

But like the saying ‘a true gentleman will sacrifice his life for a friend who understands him’ – Ao Liancheng and Ao Chun’er were willing to swear on their own lives for Chen Xiaobei – therefore Chen Xiaobei too, was willing to humble himself and help them this once.

“Da Wangye, please allow me to say a few words. It’s not too late to make a decision.” Chen Xiaobei stepped forward and looked at the emperor’s Qi. “His majesty’s sickness is in the heart. The illness is caused by some strange poison that had entered the blood! This poison inhibits the Blood Qi’s circulation. If I’m not mistaken, his majesty’s pulse and breathing are so weak that it’s almost non-existent!”

“How... How do you know these things...”

Not only was Da Wangye stupefied but everyone in the room was as well.

Chen Xiaobei’s diagnosis was on spot on.

“Brother Liancheng, did you tell these things to Childe Chen?” Ao Chun’er asked.

Da Wangye spoke before Ao Liancheng could answer. “Ao Liancheng didn’t tell him anything! He had been cultivating in seclusion before this. When he came out, he had to prepare for the Saint Duke’s martial arts competition! To prevent him from being distracted, I gave orders that no one was allowed to tell him about his majesty’s illness!”

Ao Chun'er's beautiful eyes widened in delight. "That means Childe Chen's diagnosis of grandfather's condition was all based on his own medical knowledge! Which means that Childe Chen really is a divine doctor!"

"Divine doctor! Childe Chen is a divine doctor for sure!" Da Wangye nodded. "Those people outside spent months to determine the cause of his majesty's illness! But all it took was one look for Childe Chen to do that! He did not even have to check his majesty's pulse! If he's not a divine doctor, then I don't know what he is!"

The members of the royal family were all pleasantly surprised by this revelation.

If Chen Xiaobei truly was a divine doctor, the people of Neptune could then be saved!

"Childe Chen!" Da Wangye walked up to Chen Xiaobei and gave him a deep bow.

"Please forgive me for judging you by your appearance! I was blindsided! I, hereby, would like to apologize to you!" Da Wangye maintained his bowing position. "Childe Chen, I'm deeply embarrassed by myself! But please, for the sake of the millions of citizens of Neptune Starfield, help us save our holy emperor!"

The other members of the royal family bowed to Chen Xiaobei as well, asking, "Childe Chen! Please save our holy emperor!"

"Alright! Let's put that all that behind us! Please get up!" Chen Xiaobei said as he walked towards the holy emperor's bedside. "I will now begin treating his majesty. Everyone, please vacate the room. Leave only two to three people to follow my instructions!"

"I will stay! Just tell me whatever you need!"

Da Wangye stepped forward, unwilling to pass on his responsibility to others.

"I'll stay too!" Ao Liancheng said.

"Me too!" Ao Chun'er cried.

When the rest of the people had left the room, Chen Xiaobei began the treatment.

Footnote:

Da Wangye*: generic title given to the high-ranking sons of Emperors.

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Chapter 1677: Ultimate Toxic

Once everyone left the bedchamber, it fell quiet again.

Chen Xiaobei took out silver needles and began working quickly, inserting them into various points on the holy emperor's body.

The emperor's physical form was very much like Da Wangye's and Ao Liancheng's – a human body covered in fish scales, which would prove extremely difficult for Chen Xiaobei to perform the acupuncture procedure.

Luckily, the merpeople were similar to the people of Greenhill in that they were all half-beasts, and not the pure creature's during the primordial era.

For that reason, the meridian and acupuncture points on the holy emperor's body were almost identical to that of humans.

While it was a difficult task, it did not hinder the effectiveness of Chen Xiaobei's treatment.

He paired the Nine Dragons Acupuncture Technique with his Ethereal Force and, little by little, released the suppressed Qi and blood in the emperor's body.

After that, Chen Xiaobei took his Seven Treasuries Fragrant Pouch that hung on his chest and placed it above the emperor's heart.

The pouch carried the Cleansing Bodhi that Duobao Rulai gave to Chen Xiaobei. Not only could it be used to do magical stuff, but it could also neutralize poison, black magic, and even curses.

Thus, as the emperor's Qi and blood began to circulate while passing through the heart, the cleansing bodhi would eliminate any toxin from his qi and blood.

Once the emperor's Qi and blood has completed one cycle of circulation, the toxin in his body would be reduced by one percent.

After 36 cycles, Chen Xiaobei removed the Seven Treasuries Fragrant Pouch and the silver needles.

"Childe Chen! How is my grandfather?" Ao Chun'er asked, her eyes still raw from the crying.

Both Da Wangye and Ao Liancheng were just as on edge, asking, "Childe Chen? How is his majesty? Can he be cured? Please be frank with us! We are mentally prepared..."

"What are... you mentally prepared for..." The emperor suddenly spoke. His eyes fluttered open; his voice was weak but his complexion had visibly improved.

"My goodness... Grandfather, you're awake... You've been unconscious for nearly half a month... You're finally awake..." Ao Chun'er's eyes glistened with tears again.

But this time it was tears of joy.

Da Wangye and Ao Liancheng stared at their emperor, "Your majesty! You... You're awake! We thought you were..."

"What? That I was going to die..." The emperor gave them a tired smile. "To be honest, I thought that I was going to bite the dust too... I didn't expect to be able to cheat death and regain my life!"

"Grandfather! It was Childe Chen who had saved you! If it were not for his superior medical skills, you would have never awakened from your slumber..." Ao Liancheng conveyed.

The holy emperor of Neptune looked at Chen Xiaobei, and said earnestly, "Childe Chen! Thank you for saving my life... I can't get up and bow to you right now... but I will remember what you've done forever and I will repay you generously!"

"It's really nothing. It didn't take a lot of effort." Chen Xiaobei shrugged.

“Childe Chen! You’re too humble!” Da Wangye exclaimed. “All of us thought that there was barely any hope left and we had prepared for the worst... We never expected this. You gave us the best outcome! This means a lot to us Neptunes!”

“That’s right! Childe Chen is our benefactor!” Ao Lianchen nodded. Her endearing little face was brimming with adulation.

“Oh yes... I still don’t know Childe Chen’s name.” The holy emperor noted.

Ao Liancheng took upon himself to make the official introduction. “Childe Chen’s name is Zhufeng! He’s only in his early twenties but soon all of the nine zones will know the name of Childe Zhufeng!”

“Known all over nine zones? Is Childe Chen on the Nine-Zones Earth Leaderboard?” The emperor asked.

“That’s very perceptive of you, grandfather!” Ao Liancheng said. “Childe Chen is equal in strength to Childe Qingfeng. They share the same rank on the leaderboard!”

“If I remember correctly, the dragon girl is about twenty-six, right?” The emperor said. “Childe Chen is five years younger than her but already possesses the same strength she does. Heroes really are made young!”

Da Wangye shared the emperor’s enthusiasm. “Enough about Ling Qingfeng! Even in Apocalypse Starfield, no one around the age of twenty-one could compare to Childe Chen in terms of his brilliance!”

“Childe Chen! You’re really incredible!” Ao Chun’er said in veneration, almost to the point of worship. Her eyes sparkled with adoration. “By the time you’re thirty, you might even come first on the leaderboard!”

“Placed first when I’m thirty?” Chen Xiaobei was unmoved but he smiled anyway. “Okay. Let’s hope it comes true then.”

Suddenly, loud cheering noises came from outside the bedchamber.

The people outside had been standing by the door, listening in on the conversation in the room. They were already informed of the happenings inside the bedchamber.

One could only imagine how excited the royal family members had become, and the amount of awe the doctors were in!

“Chun’er... Go out and invite the other Wangyes in. Dismiss everyone else...” The emperor directed.

“Grandfather! You’ve only just recovered! Please rest! You don’t have to rush into getting back to work...” Ao Chun’er frowned.

“This matter has to do with the life and death of our race... This is urgent...” The emperor, still weak, sighed softly. “Hurry up! After this, I want you to return to the princess’s residence. Don’t go running around!”

“Yes... Chun’er will follow your orders...” Ao Chun’er nodded. This was a serious matter. She had to be obedient whether she wanted to or not.

“I will go too.” Chen Xiaobei said.

But the emperor stopped him. “Please stay, Childe Chen... We still need your medical skills for this matter...”

Chen Xiaobei raised an eyebrow. “I’m afraid I will have to disappoint you, your majesty... My medical skills may not be able to save the entire Neptune race!”

“Childe Chen... You know our enemy?” The emperor asked, surprised.

“I don’t know yet. But I have a theory!” Chen Xiaobei said.

“Can you tell me what it is? Why would your medical skills disappoint us?” The emperor asked.

Da Wangye, Ao Liancheng and the other Wangyes who had just entered the room started to pay full attention to what Chen Xiaobei had to say.

Chen Xiaobei explained, “Earlier on when I was in the Ambergris Corner, I heard that that the ‘thing’s’ appearance had caused problems with the supply of Ambergris! The injuries and the poison in your majesty’s body is also probably the work of that thing! Your majesty wants to keep me here so that I can use my medical skills to cure the poison and eventually, help you conquer it! But, I guess that the thing’s toxic has already reached the peak of a God-Ascension cultivation level! Your majesty’s body is extraordinary and that is why you were able to hold out for a few months! But when an ordinary person even makes the slightest contact with that toxin, he will die immediately! I can’t possibly save millions of people... There just won’t be enough time... That’s why you’ll all be disappointed...”

Faces fell at Chen Xiaobei’s answer and the initial excitement was replaced with groans of despair and disappointment.

“Childe Chen, you’ve guessed correctly...” The emperor exclaimed. “If the poison can be neutralized, I might have a chance at winning... but if it cannot be neutralized, and that thing cannot be subdued... our race will be doomed...”

“That may not be the case!” Chen Xiaobei said. “Medical skills are one of the many tricks up my sleeve. I would first need you to tell me what that thing is before I’ll see if I can think of any other way!”

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Chapter 1678: Let’s Make a Move Now

Ao Liancheng answered, “Let me tell you! Your majesty, please rest! When we talk about the ‘thing’, we’ll have to start from 10,000 years ago when none of us here, a time when not even grandfather was even born yet! According to the history books, a Demonic Beast from an unknown starfield invaded our capital planet and massacred our people! That beast was already a Yuan Shen cultivation level Earth God! It was a giant – as tall and as wide as a mountain and its talent was formidable! Its combat power unfathomable by living beings!

“More importantly, it kills without motive! It killed to kill! There was no way to communicate with it, no way to negotiate at all! It just kept attacking until it threatened the safety of the imperial city! When push came to shove, the three peaks of God-Ascension elites came together and decided to fight fire with fire in order to get rid of that Demonic Beast once and for all! When the battle took place... the three of our elites were able to subdue the Demonic Beast using the power of three Earth-God’s instruments.”

“When they were about to go in for the kill, the beast released a massive cloud of black toxin! All three elites were hit by it, resulting in their combat powers crashing and were subsequently subdued by the Demonic Beast. In such moments of desperation, the three elites decided to sacrifice themselves and used the three Earth-God’s instruments to activate an ancient formation belonging to our race to seal the beast in a holy altar. Just like that, the three elites’ self-sacrifice and the three Earth-God’s instruments successfully sealed the beast which brought many years of peace and order to our people!”

This explanation answered Chen Xiaobei’s myriad of questions.

What Ao Liancheng would say next was all very easily predictable.

“A few months ago, there was a massive earthquake on the seabed! The seal on the altar was broken, and the Demonic Beast was freed causing it to approach the imperial city! Grandfather took our people’s last Earth-God’s instrument and attempted to stop the beast but was poisoned instead. Luckily, grandfather managed to escape and return!”

Chen Xiaobei was puzzled. “His majesty has been poisoned for a few months now. Why hasn’t the beast attacked yet?”

Ao Liancheng answered, “That’s because the Demonic Beast found out about the Spirit Channel core in our capital planet. It has been sealed away for 10,000 years, so its body is very weak. These few months, it has been frantically absorbing Spiritual Qi to recover!”

Chen Xiaobei suddenly put two and two together. “No wonder there was a problem with the Ambergris! The Demonic Beast was hogging the Spirit Channel dry!”

“Yes. It has been cultivating these few months!” Ao Liancheng said. “Only yesterday, our intelligence division reported a big movement in the ocean current. That tells us that the Demonic Beast has recovered to its full strength and is on the move!”

Chen Xiaobei frowned at this news. “If it’s impossible to kill it when it was at its weakest, it’s going to be even more impossible now that it has fully recovered!”

“Yes... The three of our two-star Earth-God instruments were left behind in the ruins of the holy altar...” The emperor heaved a heavy sigh. “Now, I only have one One-star Earth-God instrument. I figured that if there was a way to neutralize the beast’s toxin, I could attempt to fight it. But now we know it’s not possible... there’s no way for us to win...”

“Why not go to the altar to retrieve the Earth-God instruments?” Chen Xiaobei asked.

“The earthquake was so violent that the altar is now completely unrecognizable. We’ll have to dig at least three feet below to retrieve the instruments!” said the emperor in dismay. “On top of that, all the places that the Demonic Beast had set foot are now permeated with the toxin. If it cannot be neutralized, no one can reach the altar!”

“Mm, I have a better understanding of the situation now... Please wait for moment. Let me think...” Chen Xiaobei said.

Everyone in the bedchamber went silent, watching Chen Xiaobei intently and waiting for his conclusion.

From this moment on, everything that Chen Xiaobei said could affect the future of the entire Neptune race.

“I have a rough idea!” Chen Xiaobei finally announced. “Tell me the location of the altar, and then bring me the most detailed blueprint you have of the altar!”

“Why... is that?” The people asked, perplexed.

“That’s easy.” Chen Xiaobei answered. “I will go and search for the three Earth-God instruments, rebuild the altar, and seal the beast again!”

“How... is that even possible?” Every person in the room was doubtful.

Ao Liancheng spoke up, “Childe Chen, say you have a way to get through the poisonous waters, finding the instruments and rebuilding the altar will take an infinitesimal amount of time! Won’t it take years if it were to be only you doing all the work?”

“Yeah!” Da Wangye nodded. “The Demonic Beast is breaking out in full fury! Danger is at our doorstep! We cannot afford to wait that long!”

“Don’t worry! I have my own way of doing things! I won’t make you wait for too long!” Chen Xiaobei said confidently.

“Childe Chen! Even if you have a way to find all three Earth-God instruments, and rebuild the altar...” The emperor frowned. “There’s a very complicated seal formation inside the holy altar! Even if we have the materials to build the formation, it’s impossible to form the 3,000 high-level runes that the formation needs in such a short time!”

“Don’t worry! I have a way to fix it!” Chen Xiaobei shrugged.

“How... is that possible...” Everyone’s eyes widened.

Had it been someone else making these claims, they would never have believed it. But since it was Chen Xiaobei who had made them, they could not help but believe him.

Of course, even if they did believe him, they could not wrap their minds around how Chen Xiaobei was going to complete this impossible mission!

“The particulars to this plan are my secrets so I won’t reveal them!” Chen Xiaobei said. “The only thing I’m worried about: would it require an elite at the peak of God-Ascension cultivation to sacrifice his life to seal the beast?”

“That’s not necessary...” The emperor answered. “Back then, the three elites had not reached Earth-God cultivation. So, they had to use Spiritual Stones to wield the Earth-God instruments. By the end of the battle, they did not have enough Spiritual Stones so they had to resort to life sacrifice!”

“Understood!” Chen Xiaobei nodded. “So, as long as I have enough Spiritual Stones, I can administer the seal!”

“Exactly!” The emperor confirmed.

“Alright! I know what to do now! Let’s make a move now!” Chen Xiaobei announced.

“What? Leave now?” Everyone stared at Chen Xiaobei, mouths ajar.

They were talking about fighting an Earth-God level Demonic Beast, not going on a holiday. How could he take off just like that?

Chen Xiaobei assured them, “Don’t worry. Just leave everything to me!”

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Chapter 1679: Ancient Demonic Beast

Although none of them in the room could figure out what Chen Xiaobei was going to do, they were all in full cooperation since Chen Xiaobei was the one who devised a plan.

The holy emperor had personally prepared the map of the ocean floor, a blueprint of the altar, the sealing formation, and a total of 100 million Spiritual Stones for Chen Xiaobei.

Subsequently, all the Wangye’s of the merpeople and all the adult princes put on their armor and stocked up their weapons, before leading 100,000 elite merpeople soldiers to march out of the imperial city!

Never before had there been such a huge formation in Neptune for the past 10,000 years.

Every core member of the imperial family, with the addition of elite troops of burly soldiers amounting up to 10,000 strong were involved in the campaign.

The Neptune townspeople who were uninformed of the truth thought that a huge war was about to unfold!

It would never occur to them that this flamboyant line-up, this huge setup, was a convoy for a twenty-plus youngling, one whose cultivation was only moderately high!

What was more surprising, was that it would never have crossed their minds that the survival of the entire Neptune Starfield was entrusted under the care of this very young man.

If this young man’s plan failed, an irreversible apocalyptic doomsday would fall upon Neptune.

If this young man succeeded, however, Neptune’s crisis would be successfully overturned. Then, the great reputation of ‘Childe Chen’ would be known throughout every corner of Neptune Starfield. Hundreds of millions of people would call him their savior, revere him, worship him, and enshrine his feat for all eternity!

...

Neptune’s capital city was very big. It was roughly thousands of times bigger than the Earth’s landmass!

While the troops traveled at the fastest speed they could across the ocean floor, it took them a good three days and three nights to reach their destination.

“Childe Chen, the ocean currents here are very unpredictable, and the waters in front are filthy. If I’m right, we’ll be able to see the Demonic Beast about one thousand miles ahead!” the holy emperor of Neptune said, his eyes squinting. His vision and his perception allowed him to make a somewhat precise deduction.

Chen Xiaobei nodded. "I have seen the map. After I see the beast, it's a one-day and one-night journey to the holy altar!"

"That's right!" The emperor nodded. "The Demonic Beast can travel very quickly. It will be able to reach the imperial city within two days!"

"Mm, I understand!" Chen Xiaobei said. "Starting from now, until the successful completion of my plan should not exceed 48 hours!"

"Yes..." The holy emperor bobbed his head up and down heavily. "We can only send you this far. You will have to complete the rest of the journey on your own!"

"Don't worry! One person is enough!" Chen Xiaobei was calm and confident in his own plan.

"Some words... although not very pleasant to hear, they must be said..." The emperor said ceremonially. "Childe Chen is heading towards fierce and tempestuous dangers! If you succeed, our people will thank you lavishly! But if you fail, no one will be able to collect your body and you won't receive a proper burial..."

Chen Xiaobei shrugged in response.

The emperor continued, "But! If Childe Chen dies, all of the soldiers of Neptune will also fight to the death! Not one of us will live an ignominious existence! We will use our blood and our lives as a sacrificial offering for Childe Chen! In life and in death, the people of Neptune will remember the brave and honorable Childe Chen!"

The emperor raised his hands, hand-in fist, and bowed to Chen Xiaobei.

All the Wangyees, the princes, and the massive wave of 100,000 soldiers followed their emperor's lead and did the same.

"Alright! You should all go back! You should see the holy ray light up within 48 hours!" Chen Xiaobei said one final line and then continued forward, alone.

The troops remained where they were until they could no longer see Chen Xiaobei before turning back.

The troops too only had two days. They would probably be halfway through the journey then.

There, they would form the imperial city's last line of defense.

If Chen Xiaobei's plan fails, the entire troops would continue the struggle against the Demonic Beast, buying some time for the people in the city to retreat to other planets.

While Chen Xiaobei was brimming with confidence, many of them lacked any confidence at all. They even expected that they would surely die on the battlefield.

...

Chen Xiaobei pressed ahead at full speed. It did not take him long to travel the thousand miles.

Like the holy emperor had anticipated, Chen Xiaobei could see a monstrous silhouette lying on the ground a few hundred meters away, resting.

“What a strange thing...” Chen Xiaobei muttered to himself.

He could not tell what species that creature belonged to. It had a carapace of a tortoise which was shaped like a rock, barbed legs like insects, a head like a giant python, and a giant tail like a scorpion!

The beast was neither fish nor fowl.

The weirdest thing about it was the thick black smog spraying from the cracks of its carapace like the fumes from burning shoddy briquettes.

That thick smog was at the peak of God-Ascension cultivation level toxin!

Cultivators at the peak of God-Ascension cultivation like the Neptune royal emperor could take on the damage of the toxin with their robust health. Unfortunately, for a cultivator at Earth-God cultivation, coming into contact with this toxin would only result in death.

The Demonic Beast had bulldozed its way here, covering a large portion of the starfield in its putrid poison.

It was for this reason that the people of Neptune were unable to get to the holy altar.

Of course, Chen Xiaobei was different!

With the protection of the Cleansing Bodhi, he was immune to the toxin and could pass through the black smog without taking any damage.

Chen Xiaobei continued to move forward. When he was about a few hundred meters away from the beast, there was a sudden movement!

Boom!

The resting beast raised its head, and a pair of giant blood-red eyes looked directly at Chen Xiaobei.

“Crap! It saw me!” Chen Xiaobei cried. “It can sense me with its Primordial Spirit, I cannot hide from its extrasensory perception!”

Primordial Spirit’s biggest usage was inducing the sixth sense that went beyond sight, sound, taste, smell, and touch. It was also named the ‘divine sense’!

When the divine sense was in effect, the cultivator could sense the slightest movement from the whistles of the wind to the quavering of grass within the vicinity.

The divine sense could also be used to detect other people’s cultivation and to search for items with Spiritual Attributes within proximity! It had many wondrous uses!

Buzz...

Suddenly, an Ethereal Force gathered inside the beast’s eyes, and without the need for a gesture or movement, it shot right at Chen Xiaobei.

Before this God-Ascension cultivation Earth-God level Demonic Beast, Chen Xiaobei was just an insignificant little ant that could be squashed like a grape without so much as a flick of a finger.

But then, Chen Xiaobei had come prepared.

He smiled back at the best and said, “You want to kill me? It’s not going to be that easy!”

Red Envelope Group of the Three Realms

Chapter 1680: Primordial Spirit Zone

Whoosh!

In a split second, the ominous red Ethereal Force shot out from the Demonic Beast towards Chen Xiaobei.

The speed and strength of a Primordial Spirit Earth-God attack could crush Chen Xiaobei a thousand times over.

Just the shockwave and repercussion effects itself was enough to rip Chen Xiaobei apart.

But as always, Chen Xiaobei came prepared. Although his trump card was not powerful enough to fight an actual battle, it was not going to make it easy for that Demonic Beast to kill Chen Xiaobei.

“Penetrate the Nine Heavens!” Chen Xiaobei cried out softly.

The Primordial Spirit Earth-God attack may have been fast but the Penetrate the Nine Heavens allowed Chen Xiaobei to make split second movements.

Using Penetrate the Nine Heavens three times consecutively, Chen Xiaobei was able to travel as far as 30 meters, evading the daunting attack.

Rumble!

Rumble!

The Ethereal Force struck the spot where Chen Xiaobei was standing.

The immense energy unearthed the seabed until there was a giant cavity in the ground the size of a football field!

The sand was sent shooting through the water, and the undercurrent surged, sending intense tremors reverberating through the ocean!

All that sand and dirt clouding the water together with ghastly undercurrent tsunamis would have knocked a regular person unconscious – but not Chen Xiaobei!

With the Hydrophobe Orb in his belly, Chen Xiaobei was completely unaffected by the turbulent water; even the view-obstructing sand and dirt were filtered away.

That way, Chen Xiaobei did not have to worry about his environment. He only had to just swim forwards as quickly as he could.

“I was a hundred meters away from the beast when it detected me. That means that the Demonic Beast’s Divine Sense covers an area of a hundred miles.” Chen Xiaobei sped forward as he calculated aloud. “As long as I am out of its detection range, the beast won’t be able to determine my position... but I will have to steer clear of its line of sight as well!”

With Chen Xiaobei's current cultivation, he could travel a distance of 100 meters in a matter of seconds.

As he was making his way out of the range of the Demonic Beast's divine sense, he took out another trump card he had prepared.

"Look at my 72 Transformations!"

Chen Xiaobei activated the High-tier Prosperous Monkey Fur's Special Ability and it turned him into an ant.

No matter how sharp the Demonic Beast's vision was, it would never be able to find Chen Xiaobei in these wild sloshing waters saturated with sand.

Just like that, Chen Xiaobei used the chaos to escape to safety.

The Demonic Beast was not pleased with this surprise. "Huh? Where's that little human? He's only at the early phase of Ethereal Cultivation. How could he have escaped? That's impossible... Inconceivable..."

For a Primordial Spirit Earth-God level Demonic Beast, letting a weak Ethereal Cultivator escape its hands was an ultimate embarrassment, a disgrace!

The beast used its divine sense to its maximum capacity, and scanned its surroundings with its cosmic eyes to search for Chen Xiaobei but to no avail! There was not a single sign of that human!

Eventually, the beast had to stop the fruitless search.

The Demonic Beast cursed under its breath, "F*ck... Could it have been a ghost..."

Our friend Chen Xiaobei was already hundreds of meters away, observing the beast from afar!

"Primordial Spirit Earth-God... really is such a pain in the ass..." Chen Xiaobei squinted. "With that Primordial Spirit ability, not a single movement can escape from it! If it were not for that, I could have turned into an insect and flown into its mouth and shoved a dog biscuit down its throat! It looks like I won't be able to use the High-tier Prosperous Monkey Fur to force-feed any Primordial Spirit cultivation opponents... It's going to be ridiculously difficult to get a Primordial Spirit Earth-God to become my loyal hound!"

The last time, Chen Xiaobei had used the picture of a beautiful woman in exchange for ten High-tier Prosperous Monkey Fur with Zhu Bajie. Right now, he was left with only eight and not a lot of Heavenly Dog Biscuits either.

Unfortunately, because of Earth-Gods' Primordial Spirit ability, Chen Xiaobei would not be able to use his old trick on them.

He would have to come up with another way to get an Earth-God level loyal hound.

"Before I go, let's find out how high is an Earth-God's combat power!"

Previously in Atlantis, due to the direness of the situation and all the administrative things he had to tend to, Chen Xiaobei did not find out what Diao Chan's combat power was.

Now that he had escaped the danger zone, he had all the time in the world to learn about Earth-Gods' cultivation.

Ding!

[Your Netherspirit Battlescouter's level is inadequate. Please upgrade before attempting to discover the person's combat power!]

"What the hell! The Netherspirit Battlescouter is not at an Earth-God level?" Chen Xiaobei frowned as he recalled. "Hmm, in the beginning, my Netherspirit Battlescouter could not detect the cultivation of people with Pure Yang Spiritual Items. After that upgrade, it was immune to the effects of Pure Yang Spiritual Items and even had the ability of an Ultimate Protective Puppet added to it. Right now, it's telling me to upgrade again. It appears that my Netherspirit Battlescouter is at a Spiritual Item level, and so is the Ultimate Protective Puppet! Now that the enemies I'm facing are bigger and stronger, I have to ask Yanwang to help me upgrade the Netherspirit Battlescouter! I can do that during the Qixi festival which is only two days away!"

Chen Xiaobei was a little disappointed that he did not get to discover what an Earth-God's cultivation was like.

But this reminded him to upgrade his Netherspirit Battlescouter and Ultimate Protective Puppet as soon as possible.

If the Ultimate Protective Puppet could not withstand the attack of an Earth-God, Chen Xiaobei would lose an extremely important Life-saving Talisman.

After making a few simple calculations, Chen Xiaobei continued his journey to the sacred altar without making any stops.

Neptune's capital planet was extremely large. Even with Chen Xiaobei's speed, it took him a full day and night to reach his destination.

"This should be the place..." Chen Xiaobei stood over a pile of rubble, examining the place.

The area of the ruins was considerably big. It could even be compared to the entire Atlantis.

The earthquake that had taken place a few months back was a very violent one. Even the sacred altar was completely smashed to smithereens.

According to the holy emperor, there were three two-star Earth-God instruments buried under all this rubble.

But because the area of the wreck was so big and subsequently relocated by the earthquake, on top of which the current flow which shifted things around, a person would have to dig up the entire place to find the three Earth-God instruments!

After that lengthy, tedious journey, there were less than twenty-four hours left before the deadline.

Most people would never be able to find such tiny instruments under a sea of debris in such a short period of time.

But Chen Xiaobei had a way to complete this impossible task, lickety-split!

“Let me eat a Ginseng Fruit to calm myself down first!”

Chen Xiaobei smiled giddily as he took out the Ginseng Fruit which he used three million words of Zhufeng the Battlegod as an exchange. He gobbled it down in quick bites.

Ding!

[Cultivation: Early phase of Ethereal Cultivation; Lifespan: 3,170 years; Health: 200,000; Combat power: 180,000]