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The sect leader of Demon Sect fell silent for a brief moment before continuing, "I can also let you in on a secret." "What secret?" Kai asked.

"The spiritual energy will soon return to this world, but no one knows where it will return to. I can give you the exact location so you can plan ahead and beat everyone else to it," the sect leader replied.

"Stop wasting my time, will you? If you won't tell me, then I'll be on my way now. You can forget about getting the blood demon's body from me unless you're willing to pay a hefty price," Kai said nonchalantly.

Fearing that Kai would leave, the sect leader said, "It's Encanta Island. That's where the spiritual energy will first be restored to this world. It's the reason the blood demon sealed its body there."

Kai frowned slightly upon hearing that. "Encanta Island?"

That explains all the strange incidents that have taken place there lately! Godrick and the others had no choice but to return to Jadeborough. This must be the precursor to the recovery of spiritual energy!

Kai deliberately asked in the most uninterested tone possible, "Is that it?" "Yes, that's all I can tell you..." replied the sect leader of Demon Sect.

"Then I think we can forget about this. I need a fair deal if we are to work together. Why would I hand the blood demon's body over to you guys if you can't give me something of equal value?"

If I hand it over to Evil Heart Sect, they might just release my girlfriend and save me the trouble of locating their secret realm!" Kai said nonchalantly. "What do you want, then?"

The sect leader of Demon Sect was starting to get a little anxious. He was worried that Kai would actually hand the blood demon's body over to Evil Heart Sect.

"I need resources. I'm talking about rare herbs that are tens of thousands of years old. A sect in the secret realm such as yours should have no issues with that, right?" Kai asked with a smile.

While he couldn't actually see the sect leader's expression through the mask, he could tell that the sect leader had a gloomy look on his face.

Kai only said that to test and see if the location he previously discovered was where Demon Sect got its resources from. However, Patrick's reaction suggested that it wasn't the case.

"Mr. Chance, do you know how much a single ten-thousand-year herb is worth? It's not something we can just obtain easily from nature. We have been living in this secret realm all this while, so we are lacking in resources as is. Where will we even find such herbs? Please be more realistic about your demands, Mr. Chance, Patrick said calmly.

"You guys have so many members in your sect, though. Where do you get your resources for cultivation, if not from the secret realm?" Kai asked with doubt written all over his face.

"I'll be honest with you here, Mr. Chance. Most of our resources are purchased from the outside to support the cultivation of our members," Patrick replied.

"If you won't tell me what I want to know, then we can forget about this deal. It's pointless to continue this conversation," Kai said with a frown and started walking away.

Patrick quickly ran forward to block his path. "What makes you say that, Mr. Chance? We didn't lie to you!"

"Well, you're most certainly mocking my intelligence. Resources are extremely rare and expensive these days. I doubt there's a single prestigious family out there willing to support you guys financially for so many years.

It's obvious that you guys have your own supply of resources, but you don't trust me enough to tell me the truth." Kai carried on walking after voicing out his theory.

"Wait, Mr. Chance!" Patrick had a conflicted look in his eyes as he stopped Kai a second time. After hesitating for a bit, he clenched his teeth and said.

"To be honest, we don't have our own supply of resources, but our ancestors have left us a map that would indicate the location of rare herbs whenever they appeared in the world. We've been relying on that map to locate the rare herbs and stock up on resources."

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The mention of the map piqued Kai's interest and curiosity. Oh, wow... I didn't know such a map existed! Is it able to scan the environment like a radar or something?

“Could you please show me the map, Mr. Sullivan?” Kai asked. Patrick nodded without any hesitation. “Sure thing!” Since he had gone as far as telling Kai about the map, he was mentally prepared to show it to him.

While he was leading Kai to the back of the palace, the sect leader of Demon Sect simply sat there without saying a word. Kai couldn't help but find it a little strange.

Why would the sect leader let a vice sect leader make all these important decisions? Does he not care at all?

Kai stole a glance at the sect leader while walking past him. However, apart from being unable to detect the sect leader's aura, Kai didn't find anything strange about the sect leader at all.

Patrick led Kai into a secret room that was about one hundred square meters in size.

There was a highly detailed map drawn on one of its walls. The plants on the map looked so lifelike that one would easily mistake the map for a satellite image of an area.

Upon closer inspection, Kai realized that the large map only covered the area within a radius of a few hundred miles from Norham. “This is the map you guys used to collect your resources?” Kai asked in confusion, as he didn't see anything special about the map.

“That's right. Whenever a rare herb that is over a thousand years old appears, its location will be indicated on this map,” Patrick replied with a nod.

“Hmm... How peculiar!” Kai tried touching the map with his fingers, but he couldn't find anything unusual about it at all. “Wouldn't you guys get into conflicts with the Zagorski family while collecting resources? This is their territory, after all.”

I don't understand this at all. Demon Sect is a really large sect, so it must've obtained a huge amount of resources. How come no one has ever tried to stop them? The resources they're getting are extremely valuable and precious, after all.

“We rarely get into conflicts because we're usually able to pinpoint the exact location of the resources and quickly send our members to bring it back. The Zagorski family doesn't even know about it. Even if they did somehow hear about the resources, it would all have reached us by then,” Patrick explained calmly.

Hmm... I suppose that explanation makes sense. Having this map here is no different from having a radar for rare herbs, so there's no way the others would be able to compete against that!

“Regardless of how you guys obtain your resources, I can’t just hand you the blood demon’s physical body based on your verbal promise alone. You need to give me some kind of benefit as a deposit or down payment,” Kai said.

“No problem. Based on our past experience, a huge amount of rare herbs will soon emerge. How about we give it all to you, Mr. Chance?” Patrick asked.

Kai nodded. “Very well. I will hand the blood demon’s body over to you guys if I deem the resources worthwhile.”

The only benefit I get out of the blood demon is using its body as a shield anyway. My main priority right now is to rescue Josephine with Demon Sect’s help!

Josephine had been held prisoner for a very long time, so Kai was getting incredibly anxious after several failed attempts at rescuing her.

After leaving the secret room, Patrick summoned Jessica and had her stay with Kai for the time being. The smile on Patrick’s face vanished the moment Kai and Jessica left.

Suddenly, a man whose body was completely covered in a black robe stepped out of the shadows and asked Patrick, “Do you really think he’ll trust you and hand the blood demon’s body over as promised?”

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“If he wants to save his girlfriend, he will certainly oblige. But, we may have no choice but to give him the resources that are about to appear soon,” said Patrick Sullivan with a grim expression.

“This guy has a rebellious spirit. Then again, he will be of great help to us if we know how to make use of him,” said the black-robed man calmly.

“I’ll figure out a way to use him to our advantage. It’s better that you make a move first before someone sees you,” Patrick urged the black-robed man to leave as soon as possible.

“I’ll leave everything to you then. Once the spiritual energy has been revitalized, we, the demon spirits, will make a comeback.” With that, the guy in the black robe waved his hand in the air, and a ray of bright light lit up. He then disappeared into the light.

Soon after the black-robed man left, Patrick glanced at the leader of the Demon Sect who had been still all the while. He walked up and removed the mask of the leader.

There was only a set of skeletons underneath the mask. Not a single bit of blood or flesh. could be seen.

Once Jessica sent Kai back to his lodging.. she told him, “Mr. Chance, you can always look for me if anything crops up. I’m genuinely sorry for what happened today. Simon is indeed too impulsive.”

Jessica was apologizing because Simon Lambert tried to hit Kai earlier on.

“That has nothing to do with you.” Kai smiled. He knew that her position in Demon Sect was not high enough. Therefore, she did not have the right to interfere just now.

“Well then, I won’t take up any more of your time. Mr. Chance, please take a good rest.” With that, Jessica was about to leave.

Flaxseed had been waiting by the door all the while, and he immediately opened the door and said, “Ms. Zimmerman, why don’t you come in and take a seat? Let’s have a chat!”

Jessica rolled her eyes at Flaxseed. She knew that if she went into the house, Flaxseed would definitely take advantage of her.

However, just as Jessica was about to walk away, Kai suddenly called out to her, “Ms. Zimmerman, how long have you been in Demon Sect?”

She turned around and looked at him. “Mr. Chance, why do you want to know?” “Oh, I just want to know you better since we will be working with one another in the future!” explained Kai.

With a smile, Jessica replied, “I have been with them for more than a decade. I was brought here since I was a child.” “Why did you decide to join Demon Sect? Did they force you to join?” asked Kai curiously.

“No, of course. Demon Sect never forces anyone to join them. Back when I was only a child, my parents died after our family was hunted down by our enemies. Someone from Demon Sect saved me and took me back here,” Jessica clarified.

The moment Kai heard her explanation, he felt very awkward. He did not expect Jessica to have such a miserable past. “Ms. Zimmerman, I’m so sorry...”

Kai felt bad for reminding Jessica about her painful past. “It’s fine. That was a long time ago. Besides, I love my life now. Although others call us demon spirits, I find this place heartwarming.

Furthermore, for more than ten years, our lord has always taught us to become better people through cultivation and to not lose ourselves. If anyone who practices our

cultivation technique becomes greedy and loses control of himself, he will be devoured by the technique and will become a cruel and ruthless person.

That's why many people get the wrong idea about us. Now that you have met people from the Demon Sect, don't you think we're different from what you imagined us to be?"

When Jessica was talking about Demon Sect, her eyes lit up with pride. "You're right. It is, indeed, different," said Kai as he nodded his head. It was true that the moment Simon saw Kai, he challenged him to a fight and showed no mercy at all.

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In spite of that, those people did not feel evil to him at all. As for those black-robed men in Warriors. Alliance, they had spirits possessing them and exuded an evil aura.

Perhaps the two sects broke up because they held different beliefs. Kai felt that he would have to see Demonic Cultivators and demon spirits in a new light in the future.

"Honestly, our lord is the most lovely person I have ever seen in my life. He gives off a fatherly feeling every single time I see him!"

Admiration was written all over Jessica's face. Kai frowned and found it strange that Jessica was singing praises about her lord. "Your lord wears a mask and talks weirdly. I can't seem to sense the fatherly feeling that you're talking about."

"That's because you have never seen our lord in the past. He used to appear even more polite and refined than our second-in-command. Unfortunately, there was a fire five years ago, and it ruined our lord's face. Since then, his temperament changed drastically. From then on, I have never spoken to him again."

Jessica looked sad as she recounted the past. "How qualified is your vice sect leader?" As far as Kai was concerned, Patrick did not look very old. Surprisingly, he was able to become the vice-sect leader of Demon Sect.

Furthermore, Kai also noticed that Patrick seemed to be more powerful than the lord himself. That was why Kai got curious and asked Jessica that question.

"Our vice sect leader has only been here for six years. Although he joined the sect after I did, he is a very outstanding and capable man. Ever since our lord is injured in the fire, Mr. Sullivan was chosen to be our vice sect leader. He has been helping our lord run Demon Sect since then," said Jessica.

Kai frowned when he heard that. Something felt amiss to him, but he could not put his finger on it.

Patrick had been nothing but respectful to Kai, and he appeared very sincere too. He had even revealed the secret of Demon Sect to Kai as well.

Yet, Kai felt that there was something mysterious about Patrick. “Hmph! Outstanding, my foot! What’s so good about him? He’s just more handsome than me, that’s all. He’s just a toyboy...”

When Flaxseed heard Jessica praising Patrick, he became annoyed. “What nonsense are you talking about?”

Jessica frowned and stared angrily at Flaxseed. Kai took note of the woman’s anger and quickly said, “Sorry about that, Ms. Zimmerman. We’ll go and take our rest first.”

With that, Kai dragged Flaxseed away with him. “Hmph! That toyboy is up to no good. That silly girl must have been fooled by him.” Flaxseed was very jealous of the way Jessica was singing praises about Patrick.

“All right, that’s enough. That’s none of your business. But, there’s definitely something amiss with Patrick. I can’t explain the gut feeling I have, though,” said Kai as he furrowed his brows.

“What’s wrong? Did the discussion not go well? Is that place Demon Sect’s resources area?” asked Flaxseed when he saw the look on Kai’s face.

To that, Kai shook his head. “Demon Sect doesn’t have any resources area. However, they do have a magical map.” Thereafter, Kai began telling Flaxseed everything that happened in the main hall.

“I can’t believe such a magical map exists in the world!” Flaxseed exclaimed after hearing Kai’s description. A map that could predict the growth location of precious herbs was unheard of.

After Kai and Flaxseed stayed in the secret realm for another day, they started to find the place extremely boring.

After all, the secret realm was too small, and there was nothing special there. In the end, the two men decided to leave the place and head to Norham.

There was another reason why Kai wanted to go to Norham. He wanted to know if Austin was truly able to absorb the entire city’s natural energy.

After gaining approval, Jessica took Kai and Flaxseed out of the secret realm and into Norham.

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Jessica went around Norham with Kai and Flaxseed for half a day. It was only a small city, so they nearly covered the entire place within that time.

"I'm too tired! The two of you can continue exploring. I'm going to find someplace to rest." After making up an excuse, Flaxseed left in a hurry. Kai immediately knew why Flaxseed was dashing off. That guy is simply inseparable from women!

Jessica seemed aware of Flaxseed's intentions, too. She could not stop herself from rolling her eyes. "Are men truly so incapable of curbing their desires? Just look at the impatience on his face."

Her remark instantly made Kai feel a little awkward. He coughed softly and said, "Not all men are like Mr. Flaxseed. I'm still a virgin."

A look of surprise spread across her face at his words, and she stared at him in disbelief. "You... You have so many women around you, and you have a girlfriend. Didn't you ever..." "No. Absolutely not. I think that's a sacred act

that should wait until after marriage," Kai replied while waving his hand dismissively. She suddenly chuckled upon observing his reaction. "What a surprise.

I never thought that a pure young man like you would still exist in such a society. If it were not because I already have feelings for someone else, I'd really have the urge to pursue you." "Is Patrick the person you have feelings for?" he enquired without beating around the bush..

Her face flushed slightly. Then, she nodded. "Yes. He's very nice to me." For some reason, the sight of her shy expression sparked an uneasy feeling in Kai's heart. I can't seem to get a handle on Patrick. There's this niggling feeling that he's not the person he appears to be.

The pair chatted as they walked. Noon soon rolled around, and they found a place to eat. Although the small border city did not have upscale hotels like those found in the big cities, it had its own unique cuisine. Jessica ordered a myriad of dishes, which all looked delicious.

"Do you often come here to eat?" he asked.

She shook her head. "Demon Sect has strict rules. We're not allowed to wander outside the secret realm at will. My position requires me to come out frequently, so I've eaten here twice. However, some haven't stepped outside the secret realm since they joined the sect."

“How is that different from being locked up in prison?” Kai could not help remarking with a laugh. Being forced to stay in such a small space without being able to step foot outside is the same as being imprisoned!

“As a cultivator, shouldn't we ignore the affairs of the world and focus on cultivation? Actually, not allowing the other sect members to leave the secret realm at will is also our leader's way of protecting them. The world's spiritual energy has depleted, so it's no longer a suitable living environment for cultivators.

Besides, according to the laws of nature, staying outside for long periods of time will not only cause our cultivation level to remain stagnant but even deteriorate.

It could even cause irreversible damage to the body. Otherwise, cultivators would've already left the secret realm, and there wouldn't be any martial arts world left. Nonetheless, the spiritual energy is about to be replenished, and a battle might start again...”

There was a flicker of worry in her eyes. A battle for resources will happen again after the recovery of spiritual energy. When that time comes, immortals and demon spirits alike will go to any lengths for the sake of their own interests!

“Actually, it'd be a pretty good thing if we could continue living like this. If the restoration of spiritual energy occurs, it'll be a time of tribulation for the ordinary people.”

Kai could imagine each of the secret realms opening after the spiritual energy recovery and the entire world descending into chaos. By then, ordinary people will appear utterly worthless to cultivators.

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“That may be fate, and no one can change it. The will of the heavens cannot be thwarted.” In truth, Jessica did not wish for the situation to come to that either. The day it did would only mean misery, suffering, and endless fighting.

“By the way, Ms. Zimmerman, Demon Sect shares the same origin as Evil Heart Sect, the sect behind Warriors Alliance. So why are they allowed to roam freely on this earth and are not subjected to the same restrictions?”

Kai asked curiously. I always thought that the laws of nature only applied to spiritual energy cultivators but not demonic energy cultivators. From the looks of it, however, it seems that Demon Sect also has to abide by the same restrictions. That means my assumption was incorrect.

“The same restrictions apply to Evil Heart Sect. Why else do you think they haven’t sent a skilled fighter to kill you after how you provoked Warriors Alliance?”

Warriors Alliance is nothing more than Evil Heart Sect’s representative in the mundane world. Its members are merely people possessed by spirits, and the laws of nature don’t govern spirits without their real bodies. Evil Heart Sect used that loophole to make its members commit suicide, then made their spirits enter the mundane world.

However, there’s a fatal flaw to that method—the strength of those possessed by the spirits will be greatly diminished. Also, not everyone is suitable to be a host, and selecting a host isn’t all that simple.

Evil Heart Sect has gone all out to lay out their plans in the mundane world before the spiritual energy recovery. However, their practice of attaining what’s effectively a pyrrhic victory is too cruel,” she replied.

Kai looked shocked as he listened to her detailed explanation. It never crossed his mind that Evil Heart Sect would go so far as to make their members take their own lives just because they wanted to create spirits.

Suddenly, he recalled what happened when he was in Demon Sect’s secret realm. I wasn’t stopped by the mysterious force when I split my spirit from my body to pass through the chaos dimension, so it seems that force is the power of the laws of nature.

Very quickly, another question popped into his head. Jessica doesn’t hold a high position within Demon Sect, so why does she know so much? The recovery of spiritual energy and Evil Heart Sect’s plans should be considered confidential information. How did she learn about all that?

Puzzled, he asked, “If you don’t mind me asking, how did you come to know so much?”

His question jolted Jessica into the realization that she had said too much. Logically speaking, someone in my position shouldn’t be privy to that much information. However, since he’s already getting suspicious, I can’t hide anything from him anymore.

“Mr. Chance, I think of you as a friend. That’s why I’ve unknowingly been so open with you. You can’t let my sect leader know what I’ve told you, okay?” she responded, gazing at him with an imploring look.

He nodded. “Not to worry, Ms. Zimmerman. You think of me as a friend, so how could I betray a friend?”

Jessica hesitated for a moment. Then, she finally said, “Because you asked, I’ll tell you. I know all that because I heard about them from Mr. Sullivan. It seems he knows quite a bit about Evil Heart Sect and shared many things with me. Don’t tell anyone about this. If the sect leader finds out, he’ll surely punish Mr. Sullivan.”

“Don’t worry. My lips are sealed,” Kai promised. Nonetheless, he could not help feeling puzzled. Why did Patrick tell her all of this? Even if the two are in a relationship, there’s no need to touch on these matters. After all, in the current environment, the more one knows, the more dangerous that could be. If Patrick cared about her safety, he wouldn’t have told her these things.

“Ms. Zimmerman, I’m still a little confused. Why did Mr. Sullivan tell you all these? After all, it won’t do you any good to be aware of these matters, right?” Kai asked.