

A WARRIOR UNDEFEATABLE

Chapter 5151 Begin The Plundering

Although the female cultivators flung themselves to their knees, sobbing and begging for mercy, Jared's Dragonslayer Sword carved a merciless arc of light through the air. Scarlet droplets fanned outward; not a single woman survived his sweep.

Flaxseed staggered upright, one hand pressed to the gash at his side. When he saw the beautiful bodies strewn across the floor, he wheezed in pain—and exasperation. “Jared! Why'd you butcher every last one? Couldn't you have left me a few alive? I never even had the chance to enjoy their company...”

He hopped from one foot to the other, more agitated than injured.

Jared sheathed his blade and asked coolly, "Keep them alive so they could lure in more victims with those pretty faces?"

His golden eyes flicked toward Flaxseed. "Do you really think they would have surrendered? If I hadn't stepped in, you'd already be a puddle of blood."

Flaxseed let out a helpless sigh. "Fine, fine. If you had to kill them, at least leave the bodies intact-could still use them."

Jared could only roll his eyes in speechless disgust.

Everett and the others were likewise appalled; Flaxseed's lust truly knew no bounds.

"Start gathering whatever's worth taking," Jared ordered.

At that, Flaxseed brightened and was the first to dash toward the fallen women, rifling through their pouches.

The sword's last bead of blood had not yet fallen when Jared felt the heavens churn. Above, clouds previously torn apart by the Dragonslayer Sword re-knit themselves in a violent spiral. Five pillars of dark-violet astral wind plummeted from the sky like clawing ghosts, each laden with pressure strong enough to pulverize a mountain.

Flaxseed was crouched beside a corpse, rummaging for a scented sachet, when the sudden force made his hand tremble. The warm emerald he had just grabbed cracked in his fist. "What in the blazes is that?"

Everett was prying open the Bloodshadow Palace's iron treasury gate. Hearing Flaxseed's shout, he looked up-and his pupils shrank. "Level Nine Wandering Immortals! They're with that mysterious organization!"

Even as he spoke, five figures burst through the clouds and hovered over the ruined palace.

The leader wore a black cloak and a bronze ghost mask. A twist of black fire writhed around his fingertips. It was Ghostmask-the very man Jared had wounded days earlier.

"Young man, we meet again so soon," Ghostmask rasped, his voice like rusty chains. "Last time, I underestimated you. Today, you'll pay for every drop of blood you owe."

Behind him, the others revealed their strength: on the left floated a gray-robed elder encircled by twelve Nether Lanterns whose sickly green flames danced like souls in torment.

On the right swayed a woman in crimson, nine blood-red ribbons flicking about her waist like serpents.

Further back loomed a bare-chested giant, plated in dark-gold scales, twin axes as wide as millstones gripped in his hands.

The last figure was the eeriest of all-a person shrouded in white mist, only a pair of glacial eyes flickering within the fog.

"Mr. Chance, what now?" Everett shoved a disciple aside and flicked thirty-six tiny azure flags from his sleeve. They stabbed into the ground, instantly forming a protective formation.

Five Level Nine Wandering Immortals-heavy hitters even in the Third Heaven.

Flaxseed ducked behind Jared and whispered, "You're on your own for

mine. I burned through everything

fighting the Bloodshadow Palace, and I'm still hurt-I've got nothing left."

Indeed, he was drained and wounded; another bout was impossible for him.

Facing the five palpable killing auras,

Jared's Dragonslayer Sword

hummed in his palm. Each opponent was at least as strong as the Bloodshadow Palace's Saintess, and their auras were intertwined, hinting at a deadly combined attack.

Behind him, the treasury gate had finally cracked open. Piles of celestial ore glittered enticingly-enough to fuel Jared's cultivation for quite some time. He could not afford to abandon them.

Chapter 5152 One Man Against Five

Jared spun toward Everett, determination blazing in his golden eyes. "Everett, take everyone inside. Grab everything that isn't nailed down. Leave these five to me."

"But Mr. Chance, they're five Level Nine Wandering Immortals!" Everett gasped.

"Move, or there won't even be soup left for us!" Jared roared and swung the Dragonslayer Sword. A thunderous golden arc blasted the thick iron gate to powder.

Flaxseed whooped and bolted through the opening. "Hurry up! If we're late, there won't be anything left for us to loot!"

Realizing hesitation would be fatal, Everett grit his teeth and waved his arm. "Azurecloud Sect disciples, with me! Empty the vault!"

Hundreds of disciples poured in-some hauling celestial ores, others sweeping up magical items. The treasury erupted into frantic activity.

"Think you can rob us?" Ghostmask sneered. The black flame on his fingertip flared into a serpentine torrent that shot toward the vault entrance. "Stay where you are!"

Clang!

Jared flashed before the doorway, sword crosswise. The Dragonslayer Sword met the black fire; sparks exploded. A brute force flooded Jared's arm, numbing it. He slid three steps back before steadying himself, and a faint scorch mark marred the sword's gleaming surface.

Strange-days ago he was beneath me. Why the sudden surge in power? Jared frowned. Then he noticed the subtle current of energy linking Ghostmask to his four companions. He's siphoning strength from the others.

"Interesting."

The crimson-clad woman giggled, stepping forward. Her nine ribbons surged like a tide toward Jared. "Young man, my Allure Binding Silk is nothing like those petty seductions you met in the Bloodshadow Palace..."

Even before the ribbons reached him, a cloying, metallic scent invaded Jared's senses. His vision swam, but he forced his Focus Technique to life; golden light burst from his brow, scattering the charm.

By then, the ribbons were upon him, every strand edged with spatial-rending sharpness.

He had no time to weigh his options. Snapping his left hand into a rapid seal, he summoned a shimmering Golden Dragon that burst to life behind him.

Facing five formidable opponents, Jared dared not swagger; all he could do was hurl every last ounce of strength into the fight.

The Golden Dragon roared, its draconic energy crashing into the scarlet ribbons with a sky-splitting explosion.

The blood red ribbons snapped apart under the furious gale. The woman staggered, blood trickling from the corner of her lips. "A Golden Dragon? So you really are a Draconian!"

"He's from the Golden Dragon clan?" Ghostmask let greed flicker in his eyes. "No wonder you can fight" beyond your cultivation level and wipe out whole sects. That body will benefit us nicely."

The bare-chested giant behind him, could no longer restrain himself. Swinging his massive axes, he bellowed, "Who cares what blood got-split him in two first!"

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The axes, heavy enough to fell mountains, hurtled down. The Golden Dragon opened its jaws and bellowed back in defiance.

With a sickening crack, the dragon's radiant body split open, the wound so deep bone flashed beneath scales of light.

Jared felt a dull thud in his chest, and a bitter wash of blood surged into his throat.

Just then, the figure shrouded in white mist struck without warning, a silent ice- blue blast of wind shooting toward Jared's back.

"Watch out!"

Flaxseed's shout echoed from the vault as a charm streaked out to deflect the icy wind.

The rescue left Jared exposed; Ghostmask's Black Fire Serpent lashed forward again, striking for his face.

At that critical moment, Jared bit through his tongue and spat blood essence across the Dragonslayer Sword.

The blade erupted in blinding gold; the Golden Dragon instantly regenerated, soaring aloft with a roar that rattled heaven and earth.

"Attack!" Jared roared, sending the dragon lunging, jaws wide, at the Black Fire Serpent.

Boom!

The impact seemed to tear the sky apart; what little remained of Bloodshadow Palace crumbled to dust in the shockwave.

Chapter 5153 The Ravenousor

Above, dragon and serpent twisted in a murderous knot; the backlash of their power sheared neighboring peaks in half.

Ghostmask and his cohorts were forced three hundred meters back before they could steady themselves.

"How many tricks does that kid have left?"

The gray-robed elder's wary eyes fixed on the raging dragon. "Twelve Nether Lanterns-bind his soul!"

The twelve emerald lanterns shot out, whirling around Jared. From each wick, pale soulfire stretched into chaining tendrils that lashed toward the dragon.

The red-robed woman seized the moment: her nine ribbons wove into a blood-red phoenix that joined the muscular man's axes and the figure in the fog's icy gale in a synchronized assault.

The five attackers moved with ruthless harmony, their onslaught a relentless hurricane.

Jared felt the pressure spike; the Golden Dragon, entangled by the Black Fire Serpent, was bleeding strength.

The shockwaves had torn his clothes to rags, and scales of his Golem Body began to flake away.

Luckily, he had cultivated the Barbarian Body-Refinement Manual, which kept his flesh intact-for now.

No-at this rate I won't last until they finish moving the resources...

Anxious, he glanced at the vault. Disciples streamed out with bulging item pouches, and a cold resolve flashed in his eyes.

Golden scales sloughed away; cracks riddled the Golem Body's defense under the five-pronged assault.

The vault rang with the clatter of spiritual stones. Hundreds of disciples dashed past with stuffed item pouches; Flaxseed had donned a set of mithril armor and was popping glowing pills as he ran.

"Hold on! Ten more breaths!" Everett rasped.

The thirty-six azure banners of the Mountain Defense Formation now burned with holes, and the Nether Lanterns' chains coiled around its core.

Gritting his teeth, Jared slapped his Storage Ring. A blinding crimson light flared out.

"fire unicorn, come forth..."

He knew he could not defeat the five alone.

Though merely Level Nine Wandering Immortals, their true power rivaled the Top Level of that realm.

What in the world is this mysterious order?

How can they carve out a private dimension in the Third Heaven and command fighters this strong?

A roar split the clouds as a fire unicorn, mane ablaze, strode into the air, each hoofstep fanning waves of twisting flame.

"A fire unicorn?"

The red-robed woman's ribbons shuddered and recoiled. "That's an ancient celestial beast!"

The unicorn lashed its burning tail, golden eyes locking on Ghostmask and his allies, then spat a pillar of flame.

Ghostmask twisted aside; the Black Fire Serpent met the inferno, scattering sparks across the sky.

The man with the axes roared and hacked at the unicorn's neck, but the beast countered the axe with its flaming horn, spider-webbing the millstone-sized blade.

"All together!" Ghostmask barked, shaping black fire into a ghostly talon. "Beast Summoning Array-activate!"

In a blink, the five snapped into formation, the gray-robed elder's twelve Nether Lanterns floating to the formation's core.

The woman's scarlet ribbons

unfurled like living veins of blood, twining themselves around the base of the formation. The other two took up positions on either side, and the energy surging from their bodies flowed straight into the looming figure of Ghostmask.

The sky darkened without warning Five pillars of dusky violet light shot up from their crowns, converging

high above to outline the hulking shadow of some colossal beast.

"Is that... a Ravenousor Wraith?"

Everett's face drained of color, and the radiance of the Azure Banner Grand Array winked out almost at once.

He shouted a warning, "Mr. Chance, be careful-they've summoned a ghost beast!"

Black mist boiled. A Ravenousor

Wraith, studded with hundreds of staring eyeballs, thrust out its head; when its cavernous maw yawned open, even the air made a crackling, devoured hiss.

The fire unicorn pawed the ground in agitation, its flame-tipped mane bristling as though confronted by a natural predator.

Chapter 5154 The Celestial Devourer

Jared felt a wave of nausea. The thing was hideous-far uglier than his fire unicorn, ugly enough that even the Celestial Devourer looked handsome by comparison.

Roar!

The Ravenousor Wraith dived. Hundreds of eyes fired sickly green beams straight at the fire unicorn.

The unicorn leaped skyward, wreathing itself in searing flame, yet the moment those beams pierced the blaze, its forelegs sizzled black with corrosion.

"Jared, that monster eats away at spirits!" Flaxseed yelled from behind the vault's stone door, clutching the magical item he had just filched. "Your unicorn's still too small-it's no match!"

Jared's heart sank. He swung the Dragonslayer Sword at the Ravenousor Wraith, but the golden sword energy vanished the instant it touched the black mist.

Ghostmask's laughter drifted out of the gloom. "Pointless! A ravenousour devours everything. You and your pet are both going to die."

The fire unicorn screamed in pain; its flames dimmed visibly, and the wounds struck by the beams withered before Jared's eyes.

Seeing that, he bit through his own tongue, flicked a drop of blood onto the Dragonslayer Sword, and barked, "Cleave!"

Sword and unicorn burst into radiance together. A golden dragon shadow coiled with the flaming beast, fusing into a single pillar of gold-and-crimson fire that pierced the heavens.

For an instant, the Ravenousor Wraith's devouring faltered; its myriad eyes burst like overripe fruit.

"You're courting death!"

A cruel light flashed in Ghostmask's eyes. He wove another seal and drove it into the Ravenousor Wraith. "Swallow them—now!"

The Ravenousor Wraith swelled; its mouth opened into a black hole that engulfed both Jared and the unicorn.

The unicorn's flames were ripped away, scales sloughed off, and it gave a death- rattle screech.

Jared felt an invisible force tugging the strength from every limb; the Dragonslayer Sword nearly slipped from his grasp.

"No..." He saw the last batch of disciples fleeing the vault and hissed, "Mr. Vermilion, hurry up and possess me—lend me your power!"

He knew that without that possession, both he and the unicorn were finished. Great-first the Celestial Palace, now some secret organization. I really know how to pick enemies.

A sardonic voice echoed within him. "Kid, your skills get lamer every time. Need my help again?"

The taunt left Jared momentarily speechless.

It's not that I'm weaker-my enemies just keep getting more deranged! Initially, I was unbeatable in the Third Heaven, then this organization shows up...

"Cut the chatter. Are you helping or not? If I die, remember your divine soul dies with me."

"Help? Of course." Vermilion Demon Lord readied himself to possess Jared's body.

But just then, a terrifying pressure erupted inside Jared.

The already-dim sky split apart, and an enormous eye stared down through the rift.

"What is that?"

The man in the fog's voice shook; his ice-blue wind froze in mid-air.

Beneath the eye, a pitch-black crevice unzipped itself, and a shaggy beast padded out.

"T-the... Celestial Devourer?"

Ghostmask's voice broke; his black fire winked out. "A legend-something said to devour even the Heavenly Law! Why is it here?"

Relief washed over Jared when he spotted the creature. "Never mind, I won't need you after all."

With the Celestial Devourer awake, these villains didn't stand a chance; that beast could truly swallow anything.

If only I could control it... He grimaced, knowing the Celestial Devourer never stirred when danger first struck.

The creature shook its head. Its

golden slit pupils swept the battlefield, settled on the

Ravenousor Wraith, and it rumbled in satisfaction.

"Oh no!"

The gray-robed elder tried to recall his Nether Lanterns, but all twelve green lights were yanked free by an unseen force and streaked toward the Celestial Devourer.

Chapter 5155 The Mysterious Token

The Celestial Devourer opened its jaws and inhaled. The Nether Lanterns, the blood red ribbons, the axes, the icy wind-every last one vanished down its throat, and with them the gray-robed elder and his three companions were dragged helplessly into the void.

"Help me!"

"The woman in crimson flung out her blood-red ribbons to anchor herself to the shattered floor, but the Celestial Devourer slapped one paw down, pinning the ribbons and her-before sweeping both straight into its cavernous jaws. The shirtless giant hacked his battle-axe at the creature's talons; the blade vanished as though it had plunged into water, and an instant later, axe and man were swallowed without a trace.

The Ravenousor Wraith sensed its natural nemesis, loosed a terrified roar, and tried to slip into the void-only for the Celestial Devourer to clamp its fangs around the specter's neck. The black mist that formed the wraith's body was chewed contentedly between those teeth, and the hundreds of emerald beams shooting from its eyes could not scratch a single silver scale.

Nearby, the fire unicorn trotted back to Jared's side with its head lowered in awkward shame. It spent every day sharing Jared's Storage Ring with the Celestial Devourer, yet in a real fight, everyone still counted on the Celestial Devourer; it couldn't help Jared at all."

Jared stroked the unicorn's flaming mane and murmured, "You were great too. Don't blame yourself."

He sent the creature back into the ring to recover; plenty of resources waited inside to nurture its wounds and growth. Looking up again, he saw the Celestial Devourer munching on the Ravenousor Wraith, Ghostmask, and the rest as though they were popcorn, swallowing until not even a wisp of their aura remained.

"This..." Everett leaned on the splintered Azure Banners, his face drained of color. "Those Wandering Immortal Realm Level Nine cultivators... are gone just like that?"

Flaxseed stuck his head around the stone doorway and gawked. "Sweet mercy- that beast is ridiculous!"

Jared chuckled. "Careful, Mr. Flaxseed. It understands every word-talk like that, and it may eat you next."

Flaxseed squeaked and ducked back at once. The Celestial Devourer belched contentedly, then dissolved into a ball of golden light and slipped back inside the Storage Ring. Silence fell over the ruins of Bloodshadow Palace; only the crackle of dying flames and the distant clatter of disciples hauling away loot broke the stillness. Incredible beast, Jared mused, but it never talks to me. Life would be easier if it actually followed orders.

He said to Vermilion Demon Lord, "Mr. Vermilion, your old mount puts you to shame."

"Rubbish," Vermilion Demon Lord grumbled within his consciousness. "I'm down to a single shred of divine soul. When I grow a body again,

those five little gnats will explode if I so much as glare at them.

"Mr. Chance." Everett walked up, awe thick in his voice. "That really was the

Celestial Devourer, wasn't it?"

"It was," Jared confirmed.

Everett stared as though seeing a miracle. Jared had already

astounded him by fighting far above his cultivation level, by summoning a golden dragon, by controlling a fire unicorn- and now the Celestial Devourer? Whatever force stood behind Jared clearly did not belong to the Third Heavens; it had to reside much higher in the celestial realm.

By now, the treasure vault was bare. Disciples lugged bulging item pouches past Jared, their eyes brimming with reverence. Everett organized the ranks while Flaxseed kicked through rubble, hunting for overlooked treasures.

"Mr. Chance," a young Azurecloud Sect disciple said, offering a blood-spattered token. "This fell off the masked man. The word 'Nether' is carved on it."

The token was icy to the touch. The carved word seeped a faint smoke-black haze.

"Could this be that secret organization's pass?" Everett asked. "Maybe with it we can reach their base?"

"Maybe." Jared tucked the token away.

"So where to next, Jared?" Flaxseed asked.

Jared gazed at the horizon. He still had to deal with the Seventh Hall. Once that was done, he could dig into the secrets of this shadowy sect.

Chapter 5156 Breaking The Rules

"Brat, that token is strange-did you not notice?" Vermilion Demon Lord suddenly growled.

"Strange? How?" Jared frowned, pulling the token back out.

Cold as before, the single "Nether" character glimmered, yet he saw nothing odd.

"Hmph!" Vermilion Demon Lord snorted. "Your spiritual sense is still shallow. There's an illusion over the token's surface. If it were ordinary, why would even my fragment of a soul feel a tremor of dread?"

Jared's expression tightened. He turned the token over and over, but no clue revealed itself.

"Use your Nethersky Eye!" Vermilion Demon Lord barked. "And learn to pay attention!"

A jolt ran through Jared. Knowing Vermilion Demon Lord had sensed something, he used his Nethersky Eye. An eye blossomed on his forehead, and the world shifted into a murky monochrome haze.

Under the unblinking gaze of the Nethersky Eye, the black mist covering the token began to writhe as though it were alive.

The once-smooth character for "Nether" suddenly caved in, exposing a minuscule word beneath it—"Skyfall."

That tiny word glimmered with a gentle, jewel-like light utterly at odds with the icy aura shrouding the rest of the token.

Jared drew in a sharp breath and focused on Vermilion Demon Lord resting inside his consciousness field. "Mr. Vermilion, what exactly is this...?"

"Just as I thought!"

Vermilion Demon Lord's soul shuddered violently. "The Skyfall Grotto—one of the most mysterious existences of ancient times! Legend says the people of that place could stride across every plane of existence, picking cultivators marked by extraordinary fate.

merge "Even several ancestors of the celestial realm were once ushered away by them. Yet, ten millennia ago, the entire place vanished, along with the sect behind it, as though they had never existed."

Jared frowned. What link could that vanished sect have to the secret organization we're tracking? And why would its name appear inside this token when it supposedly disappeared ages ago?

"Everett, have you ever heard of the Skyfall Grotto?" he asked.

At the mention of those words, Everett's weapon slipped from his hand and clanged to the floor.

Color drained from the man's face, his voice trembling. "Jared, the Skyfall Grotto is supposed to be nothing more than a myth."

merge "They say the only criterion for entry is to upend the celestial realm's Heavenly Law itself."

merge "Once, a wandering

cultivator a mere Wandering

Immortal Realm Level One

cultivator- carried an exceedingly rare spiritual root. The Skyfall Sect bent its rules and took him in."

merge "Three days later, he returned as an Earthly Immortal Realm

gl.ne

cultivator and wiped out The

he'd ever made within the

Heaven before vanishing again."

merge "That story has circulated for countless years..."

"A whole major realm in three days?" Jared was dumbstruck.

That speed makes even my progress look tame!

A startling thought struck him. What if time flows differently there-three days outside becoming three years inside?

Only that could explain such monstrous advancement.

With enough resources, even he could reach a higher realm within three years.

Training in the Pentacarna Tower already gave him a ratio of three days to one year.

At some point, Flaxseed had edged over, eyes round as saucers. "Good grief, that's insane! If we could get into the Skyfall Sect, we'd shoot straight to the top!"

"Mr. Flaxseed, you've never heard of it?" Jared asked.

Flaxseed laughed awkwardly. "After cycling through who-knows-how-many lifetimes, I don't exactly keep up with current legends."

Jared pocketed the token, brow furrowed. "Let's set aside whatever ties exist between the sect and that

mous group for now. Our

priority now is the Seventh Hall."

"As for the remaining tokens, we'll tackle them as they come."

If I can gather every piece, I might truly uncover the Skyfall Grotto's secret- and maybe find an opportunity to gain more power.

"All right, let's head for the Seventh Hall," he said.

The Seventh Hall outclassed the Barbaric Clan, Destiny Sect, and Bloodshadow Palace.

After all, its overlord was at the Top Level Wandering Immortal Realm Level Nine.

And with the Celestial Palace of the celestials backing it, its strength was anything but ordinary.

Hence, Jared dared not treat this trip lightly.

The party set off toward the Seventh Hall.

Unease shadowed Jared's mind the entire way.

The Skyfall Sect legend was too overwhelming, and the shadow group plainly intertwined with it.

Was Ghostmask's token a pass into that organization or a key to the Skyfall Grotto?

While they journeyed, far away inside the Third Heaven lay a place cloaked in mystery.

Blinding white radiance surrounded it; to an outsider's eye, there was nothing but light.

Yet stepping through that brilliance revealed towering mountains crowned with magnificent palaces.

In one such palace, an elderly man sat cross-legged, eyes closed in deep meditation or perhaps cultivation.

At the chamber's center, a dozen terrified children stared around, tear streaks still glistening on their cheeks.

"Mommy, I want my mommy..."

"Please let us go..."

"I'm scared..."

Their cries rang out, but the old man remained unmoved, as though he were deaf to everything.

All around, wisps of collected souls and wandering spirits—directed by some unseen force-poured relentlessly into the children's bodies.

Those souls writhed in vain, unable to break free.

As the influx continued, the children gradually fell silent, their small faces twisting with unnatural ferocity.

Within moments, every one of them crumpled wordlessly to the floor, drained of life and pale as wax.

The elderly man opened his eyes at last. A weary breath slipped past his lips as he muttered, "Worthless trash."

With a lazy sweep of his sleeve, the dozen small bodies at his feet
al.ne

Saved into ash that a cold draft

away, leaving the floor of the great hall scrubbed of every stain.

"Grand Elder Dioz, terrible news-"

A robed disciple burst through the doors, panic shortening his stride.

Dioz's brows knitted. "Why the commotion?"

"G-Ghostmask has been killed..." the disciple whispered.

"What?" Dioz sprang upright, his chair toppling behind him. "Say that again!"

"The Five Wraiths-Ghostmask and the others are all dead."

"Rubbish!" Dioz's roar shook the Diaz's

rafters. "Those five are unrivaled throughout the Third Heaven. Who could possibly kill them? Together they can even summon the

Ravenousor Wraith; no one beneath the Earthly Immortal Realm could touch them."

He paced, voice shredding into a snarl. "A mere Third Heaven... No cultivator here could lay a finger on my Five Wraiths. Combined, they could crush a Top Level Wandering Immortal!"

"Grand Elder Dioz, it is true. All five soul lamps went dark moments ago." The disciple's helpless expression made the words land like stones.

"The token-Ghostmask's token-did you recover it?"

Dioz's face blanched. Sweat pearled on his forehead.

The disciple shook his head. "It's gone. Most likely lost."

Dioz's legs buckled; he crashed to the floor, ice trickling down his spine. If the token is missing, my own head will roll next.

"Go-bring me the Nether Duo. Now!"

The disciple fled. Within breaths, two dreadful auras swept into the great hall, and the lights dimmed to a deathly gloom. Shadows congealed into a pair of figures.

Chapter 5158 The Nether Duo

On the left stood a hunched crone. Skeletal fingers, nails tinted a corpse-blue, slipped from the sleeves of her black robe; at her waist spun a rosary of soul orbs.

On the right loomed a swollen-faced old man, eyes rolled white, drool threading from the corner of his mouth. He gripped a chain-bound scythe wreathed in ghostly fire.

They were the Nether Duo whom Dioz had summoned in haste-Granny Deadclaw and Lord Drowned Souls.

"Grand Elder Dioz, what calamity drives you to such panic?" Granny Deadclaw's voice screeched like nails skittering across a chalkboard.

A quick glance at the children's ashes had irritation flickering in her eyes. "Had you not hauled us here, we'd be tempering a fresh vessel with the Hundred Ghosts Soul-Refining Art."

Dioz jerked to his feet, sleeve trembling, and pointed at the dais where five extinguished lamps smoked faintly. "Ghostmask... all Five Wraiths are dead!"

Lord Drowned Souls's cloudy eyes twitched; the scythe clanged to the floor. "Impossible! The Five Wraiths together, bolstered by that Ravenousor Wraith, could fell a Top Level Wandering Immortal. Who in the Third Heaven wields such power?"

"Soul lamps do not lie," Dioz hissed, knuckles white around a clenched fist. "Worse—the token on Ghostmask's body is missing. If it falls into outsider hands, every secret of our order-every shackle we wear-will be laid bare."

The Nether Duo traded a glance, shared horror flashing between them.

Granny Deadclaw pinched her brittle fingers, divining unseen currents. Wrinkles deepened with each calculation. "Just before the soul lamps extinguished, the energy signature showed them near Bloodshadow Palace, colliding with a... peculiarly twisted force. Then nothing."

"Bloodshadow Palace?" Dioz's pupils shrank. "I know their strength. Since when do they harbor someone capable of killing the Five Wraiths?"

Lord Drowned Souls licked cracked lips. "Whoever it is, we must reclaim the token. Grand Elder Dioz, do you have any lead at all?"

"None."

Dioz slammed a fist onto the stone table; fissures spider-webbed to the edge. "Ghostmask never even managed a telepathic message for aid he died that suddenly."

merge "So it falls to you two. Take the Underworld Shadow Guards and scour every inch of the Third Heaven. Tear up the earth if you must, but bring that token back."

Granny Deadclaw's thin grin

revealed dark gums. The soul orbs

at her fingertips flared crimson. "Rest easy. Anything tainted by. Ghostmask's aura cannot escape my fen Thousand Souls Lock. But..." Her gaze slid toward Dioz. "If the token is sealed away, its aura smothered, even we may-"

"Enough!" Dioz's voice cracked like a whip. "If that token stays lost, the three of us are corpses. Find it-living or dead, I want proof. The token must be returned intact."

The Nether Duo bowed once, then swept out with a hundred Underworld Shadow Guards at their heels, a black tide rolling straight toward Bloodshadow Palace.

The wasteland Hay in utter ruin. Bodies littered the ground in grotesque disarray, and several unclothed female corpses were

exposed to open air, a sight net

made Lord Drowned Souls lick his lips in morbid delight. Granny Deadclaw shot him a glacial stare, and he hastily jerked his eyes away.

She stood upon the scorched earth, pointing a shriveled finger at claw marks gouged one meter deep into the ground. "Judging by the spacing, that's the Netherworld Earth-Splitting Claw of a Ravenousor Wraith. But the counterforce that met it..."

Bending low, she scooped up a handful of singed soil. In her palm, a soul orb whirled like a cyclone, cracking with sharp snaps.

"What's wrong?" Lord Drowned Souls asked.

He thrust his chained scythe into the ground. Instantly, countless souls clawed

their way up, howling as they pointed in every direction.

"Their auras... have been wiped clean!"

With a sudden squeeze, Granny Deadclaw crushed the soul orb as her face darkened. "This isn't ordinary soul dissolution. Even the last trace of spiritual sense and energy ripples were devoured as though something swallowed them alive, leaving not even a splinter of bone behind."

"What kind of monster could do that? Don't tell me the Five Wraiths were eaten by their own Ravenousor." Lord Drowned Souls frowned, baffled. "After all, that beast can devour anything."

Chapter 5159 I Have No Idea

"Cut the nonsense." Granny Deadclaw glared at him. "The Ravenousor Wraith isn't the only creature capable of that."

"In Third Heaven, what other spirit beast can swallow everything?" he pressed.

Ignoring him, she rummaged through the rubble, found a broken shard, and held it to her nose. A shiver coursed down her spine. "This scent... It was the Celestial Devourer!"

Lord Drowned Souls cried out, "The ancient horror said to consume all things? How could it be here in Third Heaven? That beast was Vermilion Demon Lord's mount in the Ninth Heaven!"

"Besides, he vanished thousands of years ago," he added, incredulous.

Indeed, Vermilion Demon Lord had disappeared millennia ago-no one knew his fate. In truth, he had died in the Ethereal Realm, and his Celestial Devourer had died alongside him; but a remnant of his divine soul had hid inside a cave, and the dying Celestial Devourer had laid a single egg.

"It can't be Vermilion Demon Lord himself," Granny Deadclaw said, weaving a coil of negative energy around the shard. "This is the Soul-Devouring Saliva of a Celestial Devourer cub. Ghostmask and the rest were swallowed whole-no time for their divine souls to escape."

"Could it be the demon lord's son, gifted the cub at birth?" Lord Drowned Souls swallowed, face tense. If so, investigation would be suicidal. The Underworld Shadow Guards nearby drew sharp breaths; no one fancied chasing a son of Vermilion Demon Lord.

"Stop spouting trash." Granny Deadclaw's glare sharpened. "Vermilion Demon Lord's cultivation ruined his ability to sire children centuries ago. He never had a son."

"How do you know?" Lord Drowned Souls asked warily.

"I guessed-satisfied? Now quit the rubbish." She cursed under her breath.

Lord Drowned Souls stared at the

sky. "A Celestial Devourer cub must imprint on a master to survive.

Whoever dares raise one, if not

Vermilion Demon Lord's son?

In

Third Heaven, Top Level Wandering Immortal Realm is already the

ceiling... unless-" His gaze swung back to her. "Unless it's his adopted son?"

"Get lost." Granny Deadclaw looked ready to kick him.

Had Jared heard himself promoted from to adopted son in minutes, he would

adoption million Demon Lord's

have laughed and cried at once.

"Enough guessing. I haven't detected Ghostmask's aura, but I do have the attacker's. Follow me!"

She whirled and led her band in swift pursuit of Jared's party.

Chapter 5160 Curiosity Killed The Cat

Meanwhile, Jared and his companions trekked toward the Seventh Hall. Jhaelyn suddenly pointed at a lone mountain peak. "That one looks so strange!"

Jemina followed her finger, astonished. "It's like a sword driven into the ground. Beautiful, yet terrifying."

Following their line of sight, Jared spotted, a few hundred kilometers away, a mountain rising over three thousand meters high-its massive point thrust into the earth like an enormous blade. Even at this distance, he felt the oppressive sharpness radiating from Sword-Peak Mountain.

"At the summit is the hilt," he noted, sensing its keen edge.

"Everett, where are we? How does a mountain take that shape?" Jared asked the only native of the Third Heaven among them.

Everett studied the peak, then grimaced. "Mr. Chance, Azurecloud Sect lives on the Third Heaven's fringe. The realm is vast; I've never set foot in the central lands, let alone seen that mountain. I have no idea what place this is."

Jared's curiosity burned brighter. "Mr. Flaxseed, stay here with the others. Everett and I will have a look."

Flaxseed nodded gravely. "Be careful, Jared. That peak feels wrong, and I can sense sword intent swirling all around it."

Flaxseed turned to Jared and offered a soft warning.

Jared gave a quick nod, then swept Everett up beside him and streaked toward the distant peak.

They traversed a few hundred kilometers in less than the time it took a single stick of candle to burn.

Drawing close, Jared finally noticed two enormous characters carved into the cliff face—Sword Sect.

From afar he had seen only the mountain itself; the inscription had been lost to distance.

Confronted with the words, he froze, momentarily stunned.

Everett furrowed his brow and muttered, "Sword Sect? How have I never heard that name?"

Jared replied, "There are thousands—maybe tens of thousands of sects in the Third Heaven. You can't expect to know them all."

With that, he lifted his gaze. At close range, the mountain exuded a suffocating pressure.

That aura rolled over them like raging surf, each swell threatening to smash everything in its path.

They landed at the base of the peak; looking up, they could not even glimpse the summit.

On the ground, the oppression grew heavier still, and both men found their breath hitching.

The looming crag felt as though it might crash down on them at any moment.

"Mr. Chance, t-the pressure here is unbelievable!" Everett stammered.

The strain left him not only gasping but visibly trembling.

With no Sword Sect disciple in sight, Everett already shook beneath the mountain's might.

If this is merely their aura, Sword Sect must be leagues stronger than Azurecloud Sect, he thought.

Training here beneath such weight would temper one's mind every single day, Jared mused.

"This place is anything but ordinary," Jared murmured.

"Mr. Chance, let's go. I sense no life here—maybe this sect was wiped out ages ago," Everett urged.

His voice wavered.

"We're here now, so let's look around. No need to be afraid," Jared said, then vaulted forward.

Everett gritted his teeth in reluctant pursuit.

Rounding the mountain, they spotted

a ruined great hall halfwet

to fit

up the slope-vast enough hundred football fields.

several hundred footboet

Many sections had collapsed, the stone gnawed away by endless years. "Such powerful sword intent... Is someone still inside?" Jared muttered, frowning.

"Don't joke, Mr. Chance. I can't feel the slightest trace of life," Everett answered.

He had long since spread his spiritual sense, yet found no one.

"Nor do I..." Jared admitted.

"Let's take a look." He strode toward the crumbling hall.

Everett followed, nerves taut, eyes flicking over every shadow.

Something here felt profoundly wrong, as though danger lurked in every crevice.

Before the hall, they seemed tiny,

and the instant their feet touchenet

ground, several sword lights shot from within.

Startled, Everett was about to counter when Jared yanked him back.

"Don't move."

Holding Everett still, Jared raised no defense at all.

The sword lights halted centimeters away, as if guided by an unseen
dust.

ese and then shattered into glitternes

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