

A WARRIOR UNDEFEATABLE

Chapter 5206 Their Return

"A metallic clang split the gloom. Jared's blade shaved a crimson crease across the demon general's armored arm, and oily black blood hissed into the air." Courting death!" the monster roared.

It reversed its axe in a blur and hacked toward Jared, moving several times faster than before.

Jared dodged, but the sweeping light kissed his shoulder. The golden sheen of his Golem Body shattered, leaving a bone-deep gash that filled with creeping black mist."

"Jared!" Flaxseed cried, rushing forward until the monster's aura locked every muscle. Jared, no more stalling-seal that poison inside and finish this. He clenched his teeth and summoned the Focus Technique, drawing the invading darkness into himself.

He understood that every heartbeat mattered; the fight had to end before the wound did. His gaze skimmed the giant, and at last he spotted a single white scale gleaming on its chest." That's the weak spot!"

"Instead of evading, Jared hurled himself into the falling axe, pouring every shard of spirit power into the Dragonslayer Sword. Golden light burst from the blade like a newborn sun." Ignorant insect!" the general bellowed, the axe whistling toward Jared's skull.

At the final instant, Jared twisted aside, and the sword struck like a viper, driving straight into that lone white scale."

A shriek like tearing metal ripped from the monster. Its colossal frame convulsed, fountains of black blood geysering across the shattered tiles.

"Now!" Jared shouted. He flung the wyrm's inner core to Flaxseed. "Use the core -ignite the sealing array!"

Flaxseed caught the inner core, set it into the altar's hollow, and slapped talismans onto the glowing runes.

Core and sigils answered one another. Light erupted, weaving a vast translucent dome that swallowed the demon general.

The monster thrashed, but the prison only tightened.

"No! I refuse!" it howled as its body unraveled into swirling ink, every wisp sucked into the seal until nothing remained."

The underground palace fell silent; tremors eased, and the sour stink of corruption drifted away with the dust. Only then did the two men sag to the floor, dragging in ragged breaths.

"At last... we did it," Flaxseed panted, wiping sweat from his brow while he stared at the still altar. Jared nodded.

He inspected the ragged wound on

his shoulder, the darkness was gone, yet pain burned like buried wire. "Lunaria's scheme was brutal," he muttered. "She never wanted treasure. She used us to break the seal and free that beast."

"So what now?" Flaxseed asked, glancing at the demon core pulsing atop the

altar. "Do we take it or leave the damned thing where it lies?"

"Take it-why ever wouldn't we?" Jared shot back, voice ringing in the cavern. He marched up the altar, wrenched the pulsing demon-core free, and slipped the seething stone into his pack. "The demonic aura is vile, but it may still be useful against Lunaria-and we didn't descend into this abyss for a souvenir." He

secured the inner core, then brushed dust from a black sword lying beside it. "Cursed or not, this blade hits like a thunderclap. Let's keep it before someone worse does."

Flaxseed joined him, frowning at the fresh slash across Jared's shoulder. "Your arm "Only a scratch," Jared answered, flashing a lopsided smile. Luminous energy rippled beneath his skin, weaving torn flesh together. "Time to leave. This place has lingered long enough."

Retracing their path, they met no further danger. Three days later, they climbed

out of the rift and stood once more on the wind-scoured flank of Nine Serpent Mountain.

Chapter 5207 No Evidence

Upon returning to Blackshade Demon Palace, Jared and Flaxseed crossed the cavernous main hall where Lunaria stood waiting. Surprise flickered across her face before her usual calm returned.

"You have done exactly as I hoped-returned with the magical item unharmed," Lunaria said, her smile cool, almost languid. "Tell me, brave gentlemen, what reward does your valor deserve?"

Jared tossed the glowing demon core. "Forget the rewards. We want only for you to honor your promise-find the truth behind the Flaxseed clan's annihilation."

Greed flashed in Lunaria's eyes as she caught the demon core, but it soon vanished. "Naturally," she replied. "I honor every bargain. Yet answers take time. Stay in the palace until I send for you."

Jared met Flaxseed's eyes. Both men nodded; patience, they knew, would have to be their sharpest blade.

The days that followed slipped into a quiet routine. Jared immersed himself in cultivation, knitting open wounds and refining the gains won in the Abyss of Fallen Demons. The legacy of the Flaxseed ancestors proved invaluable-his understanding of the charm arts deepened, and his cultivation soared to new heights.

As for Flaxseed, he burrowed into the Flaxseed clan's ancient records and the clan leader token, hunting any line that might whisper how his clan had been erased.

The two stayed at Blackshade Demon Palace, awaiting Lunaria's summons, unaware that a darker storm was approaching.

Blackshade Demon Palace's calm felt staged. Lunaria appeared to be honoring her promise, refraining from demanding more and even sending healing pills and cultivation resources every day. Yet, her excessive courtesy only left Jared more wary than comforted.

His wounds soon healed under the nurturing effects of the Focus Technique. He even used this setback as an opportunity, tempering his spiritual energy to an even purer state-he now hovered one step from Wandering Immortal Realm Level Seven.

When he wasn't cultivating, Jared strolled the labyrinthine corridors, appearing aimless while mapping every hidden passage.

One afternoon, while passing an artificial hill in the rear garden, he caught muffled conversation coming from behind it, like a secret not meant for other ears.

"My lady, are you truly going to spare those two humans? That demon core is the key to overcoming your bottleneck!" A rasping voice hissed from behind the rocks.

"Patience, will you?" Lunaria's voice drifted out, clear as moonlight yet carrying a glacial lilt that made the air prickle. "Those two humans. survived the Abyss of Fallen Demons-no ordinary feat. The one cuffed Jared hides depths I cannot yet plumb. Instead of turning

them into enemies, we will dangle favors before them for a while. Once I finish tempering this demon core and step into Earthly Immortal Realm Level Four, sweeping them aside will be as effortless as brushing dust from silk."

The other speaker hesitated, his voice low and uneasy. "But... that brat from the Flaxseed clan is already digging into the annihilation. Should he uncover anything

"Let him," Lunaria cut in with a cold huff. "The deed was shrouded in shadow. Even if he finds clues, he holds no proof. Besides, he's still dancing on strings we control. Whatever storm he stirs will break against my hand and fall flat."

The attendant bowed deeper. "Several factions around Nine Serpent Mountain are stirring, hoping to claim magical items from the Abyss of Fallen Demons. Shall I send troops to silence them?"

"No need," Lunaria replied, her tone light as drifting ash. "Let them make a scene. Their noise will test those two humans for us. If Jared and his companion crush the intruders, perfect. If they fail and die, they save us the trouble of dirtying our blades."

The voices receded. From behind the artificial mountain, Jared emerged, eyes narrowed to slits of winter steel. Sure enough, her promise to help was only a delaying ruse. She never meant to spare us at all.

He returned to his quarters and quietly relayed every word to Flaxseed.

Chapter 5208 Mistwood Forest

Flaxseed slammed a fist onto the table, fury blazing. "That witch Lunaria-venom through and through! We have to strip her mask off and show the world what she is!"

Jared placed a steadying hand on his shoulder. "Not yet. We still know far too little about Blackshade Demon Palace. One reckless move and she'll smell the hunt. Right now, we must strengthen our abilities and secure proof of what happened to your clan."

Flaxseed's brows knitted. "But where do we even start? We scoured every ancient record in the palace; not one line explains the truth behind its fall."

"Perhaps we could start from the forces around Nine Serpent Mountain." Jared tapped the tabletop, thinking aloud. "Lunaria mentioned some of them growing restless. They might remember whispers from that night. She wants them to test us; we will let her-while we use this as an opportunity to investigate in return."

Flaxseed's eyes sparked with sudden clarity. "Brilliant. We pretend to deal with those factions, and in the chaos, we listen for buried truths."

Jared rose, cloak swirling behind him. "Then we leave at once. But first, one last task."

Under the cover of night, they slipped into the palace's archive vault. Jared wove a thread of spiritual energy through the iron lock; tumblers clicked, and the massive doors sighed open.

Row upon row of towering shelves greeted them, each sagging beneath scrolls, tomes, and ancient records whose dust smelled of forgotten centuries.

Jared and Flaxseed split up beneath flickering light, pawing through brittle scrolls that smelled of smoke and age. Cobwebs clung to their sleeves as they hunted for any clue about the slaughter of the Flaxseed clan.

At last, Flaxseed let out a gasp, prompting Jared to hurry over. Flaxseed held aloft a yellowed war dossier, its binding ready to crumble. The ink, though faded, still screamed of carnage two thousand eight hundred years past: the Blackshade Demon Palace had marched against the Flaxseed clan after the latter uncovered their sinister plan to release the demon general from the Abyss of Fallen Demons.

"So that's the truth!" Rage and grief flashed

cross Flaxseed's eyes as

he skimmed the record. "Blackshade Demon Palace wiped out my entire clan just to bury this secret."

Jared's face went rigid. "Lunaria lied to us from the start. She may even have taken the field that very night."

Flaxseed's temper ignited. "We confront her now!" He spun toward the exit, ready to storm the palace halls.

Jared yanked him back. "Wait. One fragile scroll is not proof enough, and this palace swarms with her men. We would be cut down before a single question left our lips."

Flaxseed's fists trembled with the refusal to give up. "Then what just forget about it?"

"Never," Jared answered, his voice,

like wint

steel. "We escape first

keep this dossier safe, and strike on

our terms. Vengeance will come, but not inside her fortress."

They tucked the fragile scroll inside Jared's coat, slipped from the archive vault, and melted into the night beyond Blackshade Demon Palace's walls.

Heading east, they pushed toward the forces encircling Nine Serpent Mountain, all the while bracing for the shadow of Blackshade Demon Palace's pursuit that would surely follow.

Three days later, after dodging

several demon patrols, they reached

the outskirts of Nine Serpent Mountain. The demonic aura there lay thinner than in the depths, yet an eerie, suffocating silence pressed on every step. "Jared, right ahead is Mistwood Forest."

Flaxseed pointed ahead at the thick, white mist. According to the markings on their beast-hide map, it was the territory of Blackwind Stronghold.

Chapter 5209 Blackwind Tribe

Blackwind Tribe sat on the outskirts of Nine Serpent Mountain, ruled by a beast cultivator who had reached the Earthly Immortal Realm and made a living robbing wandering cultivators.

Jared frowned at the churning haze. "That mist is laced with bestial energy; it may hide illusionary realms." Flaxseed nodded. "Beast cultivators love their parlor tricks."

Since inheriting his ancestors' gifts, Flaxseed could feel bestial energy like heat off a forge. He gripped the dagger at his belt. "Shall we skirt the forest?"

"A detour would only draw suspicion." Jared shook his head.

He handed Flaxseed a pair of divine pills. "Swallow one. They'll blunt the illusionary realms. We pretend we're simple wanderers, learn what we can about Blackwind Tribe, and move on."

Jared and Flaxseed popped a divine pill each before stepping into the Misty Forest. Cold, silvery fog clung to them like satin, cutting sight to an arm's length. Whispers drifted at the edge of hearing as if countless unseen eyes watched. Flaxseed tightened his grip on the clan leader token-the white glow pushing the mist back just enough to steady his nerves.

"The bestial energy here is a jumble-more than one beast cultivator. Looks like Blackwind Tribe has collected quite a menagerie," Flaxseed murmured. Jared stretched his consciousness, yet the corrupted mist shoved it back, leaving him barely thirty yards to

work with. "Stay sharp. These illusions will tangle your senses. Trust only what your hands confirm."

Half an hour later, they reached a fork. A crooked stele leaned at the junction, the words "Blackwind Tribe" gouged in savage strokes that seemed to bleed malice. "This way," Jared said, pointing toward the left where the bestial energy thickened like swamp gas.

They had barely turned when hoofbeats shattered the hush. A dozen riders on black wolf demons burst through the fog, weapons gleaming and faces twisted with hunger.

The leader, a towering brute with a wolf demon's head and a slab-sized axe, bellowed, "This road is mine and so is that tree. Pass only if you pay the toll!"

"Flaxseed bristled, ready to strike, but Jared's hand pressed him still. He tossed a thumb-sized spirit stone to the wolf demon demon. "We are weary travelers seeking nothing but shelter for the night. Consider this a Courtesy."

The wolf demon demon weighed the shard, sneered, and spat. "Pocket change? Empty your packs or taste my axe!" Behind him, the pack howled and hammered steel against their shields."

"A chill flashed through Jared's eyes, but he kept his voice level. "We are wandering cultivators with little worth stealing. Show a little mercy. "The Wolf demon demon's gaze snagged on the token clenched in Flaxseed's fist. Greed flared. "Hand over that trinket and I might let you leave alive."

Flaxseed's knuckles whitened. "This is an heirloom. You will not touch it."

"Refusing will only lead to punishment!" the brute roared and swung his axe at Flaxseed. "Take everything! "The riders surged, steel ringing as they closed around the two men.

"Jared answered with action. Spiritual energy flooded his veins, and a pale-gold shield blossomed sealing himself and Flaxseed inside a gleaming dome. He called forth the Dragonslayer Sword; scythes of golden light whipped through the fog and hurled the foremost raiders aside.

Startled yet furious, the wolf demon demon hurled his axe at the shield with a

howl that rattled the trees."

Chapter 5210 Greenscale Gorge

Metal rang like a bell; the golden shield quivered but held. Jared's voice cut through the clash. "With tricks that weak you dare play highwayman?"

Jared snorted, and the Dragonslaying Sword streaked forward like a shard of light, punching straight through the wolf demon-masked brute's shoulder. The man howled, staggered back with blood pouring between his fingers, and stared at Jared in terror. "W-Who are you?"

"Only a wandering cultivator," Jared said calmly. "If you value your life, move."

The thug glanced at his injured crew, then at the sword humming in Jared's hand. Realizing he was hopelessly outclassed, he gathered his men and fled.

Flaxseed watched them go and gave a low whistle. "That lot folded faster than I thought beast cultivators would."

Jared slid the blade back into its sheath. "They're just front-line grunts. The true threat is inside Blackwind Stronghold, so stay sharp and keep moving."

"They pushed deeper into the Mistwood Forest. After roughly fifteen minutes, the fog began to thin, and a fortress loomed ahead like a slab of night. Black walls of massive stone blocks rose high above them, draped with black banners bearing a snarling wolf demon's head.

Two bear demon beasts-each easily three stories tall-stood before the gate, iron hammers resting on their shoulders, yellow eyes tracking every passerby."

"Flaxseed murmured, "So that's Blackwind Stronghold. "Jared studied the sentries. "Each bear demon beast is roughly second-tier Earthly Immortal Realm." "How do we get in?" Flaxseed asked.

"We walk," Jared replied. "Claim we want to join, then listen."

"At the gate, the bear demon beasts crossed their hammers. "Halt. State your business. "We seek a place under Blackwind Stronghold's banner," Jared said, pressing a few immortal stones into the nearest paw.

The bear weighed the payment, grinned, and lumbered off. He returned moments later. "The chief will see you. Follow me."

"Inside, the stronghold bustled with

life. Wolves bargained, tigers boasted, and serpents coiled through the crowd, the air thick with demon musk. At the center stood a vast council hall. Two fox demons-beautiful, sword-armed, and ice-eyed-guarded its doors.

Their ursine escort stopped. "The chief waits within. Enter."

Jared and Flaxseed stepped inside. A man in a black robe sat on a throne of dark wood, his features sharp, his smile colder than winter rain-Baldric Blackwind, master of Blackwind Stronghold. More than a dozen elite beast cultivators flanked him, their combined aurá bending the air itself.

"So, you would pledge yourselves to me?" Baldrie asked, his gaze cutting like steel. "We would, Chief Blackwind," Jared answered with a respectful nod. "We've heard of Blackwind Stronghold's strength and wish to offer our own in service."

Baldric reclined in his great carved chair, eyebrow arched. "Oh? And what exactly can the two of you do for me? "Jared stood tall. "We know a few spells-enough to break a path for you whenever the fort needs steel at its tip."

"Ha!" Baldric roared, laughter rumbling through the hall. "Two strays like you think you're worthy of Blackwind Stronghold? I don't shelter dead weight."

"If

f you doubt us, give us a chance to prove it," Jared replied, voice steady. "Very well-one chance," Baldric said. "We have unfinished business with Greenscale Gorge to the east. Bring me their leader's head and you can stay."