

A WARRIOR UNDEFEATABLE

Chapter 5216 Leave Me And Run

A clear metallic ring-sharp as flint striking steel-echoed as the claw struck the shield. Concentric ripples shimmered across the barrier. The impact hammered through Flaxseed's arms, flipping his stomach and forcing him half a step backward. The attacker chuckled, cold and contemptuous. "A firefly dares rival the moon?" He pressed in, tripling the force behind his claw. Fractures spider-webbed across the once-pristine shield.

Before those cracks could burst, a golden arc of sword energy whistled in from above, as though a lone star had broken free of the heavens. The black-robed man jerked back, abandoning his assault to dodge the descending glow. Jared followed in that sword energy-Dragonslayer Sword stabbing and sweeping without pause-herding the other two assailants into the melee. "The one you want is me!" the leader snarled at last. A black whip materialized in his hand, writhing like a living serpent. Its barbs glimmered an eerie green-steeped in venom-and it lashed toward Jared's face with a sound like tearing air.

Jared refused a direct block. He slipped sideways, his footwork light, almost casual, yet he seemed to become a phantom among the trees. His cloak flickered through branches as he dragged the limp, panting Flaxseed with his left hand and wielded the Dragonslayer Sword in his right. Every few paces he flicked his wrist, releasing a fan of golden energy that forced the whip-wielder to recoil. Behind them, the black-robed leader cracked his venomous whip again and again, transforming it now into a spitting viper, now into a coiling python-each strike cold enough to chill bone.

"Jared, leave me and run!" Flaxseed strained against Jared's grip, voice ragged with guilt. "I'm nothing but dead weight-both of us will fall if you keep this up!"

"Shut it and breathe," Jared snapped, never breaking stride as he threaded through clustered trunks and ducked a fresh swipe of the whip. "We walked into this together, so we leave together. Focus on mending your core, not on farewell speeches."

Even as the words left him, two black shadows vaulted through the treetops, forcing a pincer. On the left, a bone blade riddled with tiny holes-reeking of rot- swept under Jared's guard. On the right, arcane syllables poured from another assailant's lips; the forest floor burst with black vines that snapped toward Jared's and Flaxseed's ankles like shackles. Blocked ahead, hunted from behind one heartbeat from disaster.

Jared's eyes flashed. He unleashed the entirety of his spiritual energy. The Dragonslayer Sword rang—a clear, soaring note—and a tide of gold sword energy fanned out, blasting vines and bone blade alike into splinters. "Now!" he shouted. Using that instant of

vacancy, he gathered every muscle, vaulted skyward, and landed atop the broad crown of an ancient tree, Flaxseed clutched firmly beneath his arm, the world momentarily spread beneath their feet like a map of fleeing shadows.

The three figures in midnight cloaks seemed to pour out of the sky itself. Without a sound they landed upon the surrounding branches, every boot-heel anchoring the growing ring tighter around the ancient tree where Jared and Flaxseed hid.

"Jared Chance," the leader rasped,

the red glow beneath his hood

pulsing like an angry heartbeat,

"escape is no longer on your horizon.

Come quietly to face the derizon.

perhaps your

princess Lunaria, and dawn."

lungs will greet another dawn."

"Lunaria sent you merely to erase witnesses, didn't she?" Jared's voice cut through the stillness like a drawn blade.

He gave a small, contemptuous laugh, his gaze sliding across the trio. "She fears what we will uncover about the massacre that wiped out my clan. Better, then, to snuff out every last ember before truth sparks."

The accusation struck true; the lead specter's shoulders faltered an inch, a tremor rippling through the tight circle of black robes.

Red light flared brighter beneath the hood. "So you do know. That means you leave this forest in pieces!"

With a crack, the leader swung his ebon whip. It writhed like a living spirit snake, hissed through leaves, and hurled its barbed tip straight for Jared's brow.

Simultaneously, the other two attackers unleashed their own death craft-one flinging a crescent bone blade, the other weaving thorned vines interlacing steel and sap into a killing net that plunged toward the treetop cage.

Jared inhaled once, filling his frame with the Golem Body. Plates of shimmering gold scales surfaced over every inch of skin. He nudged Flaxseed behind him, brought the Dragonslayer Sword around, and carved a blazing petal of light to meet the oncoming lash

Clang! Metal screamed against sorcery. Golden sword energy collided with the black whip, spraying sparks that rained through the canopy like molten snow.

Chapter 5217 Relentless Pursuit

Barbs snapped from the whip with crisp pops. The leader's arm went numb beneath the recoil and nearly lost its grip. "What kind of power is that?" he gasped, sensing a pure, tyrannical current inside Jared's aura pressing hard against his own demonic haze.

Jared saw the hesitation and struck. He blurred forward like an arrow cut free of its bowstring, Dragonslayer Sword flashing toward the hooded specter on the right. The man raised twisting vines in panic-only for the golden arc to shear them clean and hover a whisper from his throat.

"Look out!" the leader barked, yanking his whip back to defend his comrade.

Jared's mouth curled into a frost-thin smile. He pivoted mid-swing; instead of finishing the kill, the sword swept low, detonating a thunderclap of golden light that shredded the carpet of vines below and hurled a cloud of dust into the air.

Under that swirling veil, he seized Flaxseed by the collar and vaulted from the ancient trunk, plunging toward the maze of shadowed trunks deeper in the forest.

"Run all you like!" the whip-wielder roared, leaping after him with his two companions close on his heels.

Thus began a breath-stealing chase one man shielding a friend, veering between boles and bramble; three phantoms streaking behind, boots drumming bark, refusing to relinquish their quarry.

Flaxseed, coughing but resolute, gathered just enough strength to yank talisman paper from his robe. Quick strokes birthed Wind Charms. He slapped one onto Jared, one onto himself; the pages dissolved into a cool gust that wrapped their legs and lent their flight a precious surge of speed.

"That's the spirit, Jared!" Flaxseed's shout cracked through the pines like a starter pistol.

Jared straightened, adrenaline sluicing through his veins. He surged forward, branches whipping past as the gap between him and the black-robed pursuer finally began to widen.

Yet ahead, the forest floor trembled, leaves shivering as though beneath the footfalls of some unseen colossus."

"Not good," Jared muttered, skidding to a halt.

A malignant wave of bestial energy rolled toward him-every bit as suffocating as the aura once radiated by Baldric's master.

He veered left, hoping to skirt the oncoming surge, but fate, indifferent and swift, had already closed the gap.

From splintered trunks lumbered a bear as tall as a cathedral spire, its hide obsidian, its eyes two blistering coals of hatred.

The creature's roar smashed against the canopy, a sound born to end conversations and careers alike.

"Blackshade Demon Bear," Flaxseed gasped, his face drained of color. "Records call it a sovereign of Nine Serpent Mountain's outer

ring-latile, and strong enough to rivala Divine Transformation Stage cultivator."

The truth hit Jared like cold iron. Ahead loomed the bear; behind, the black-robed assassin. He was boxed in.

The bear lunged. Air imploded beneath its descending paw.

Jared wrenched Flaxseed aside, both rolling clear as a crater erupted where they had stood, spitting stones like shrapnel.

"This just keeps getting better," Jared growled, eyes darting from the enraged

beast to the fast-approaching killer. "We either improvise or die here."

Flaxseed's eyes sparked. "I've got an idea. Buy me a minute and I'll lure the bear away with talismans. How sure are you?" Jared asked, steady but urgent.

"Call it educated optimism," Flaxseed said. "Family scrolls say Blackshade Demon Bears detest the fragrance of Calming Herb. My runic

symbols can mimic it."

Chapter 5218 Desperate Escape

"Do it-fast," Jared said.

Sword in hand, he dashed toward the bear, each stride striking sparks, every heartbeat measuring Flaxseed's dwindling seconds.

The Blackshade Demon Bear saw the challenger return and erupted, paws the size of ox-carts swiping with world-ending fury.

Jared weaved beneath the blows, streaks of silver sword energy nicking its flank, drawing its wrath away from Flaxseed.

The black-robed man arrived a breath later, hesitation flickering at the sight of the beast, then vanishing as he joined the slaughter with merciless intent.

Jared now fought inside a lethal triangle-bear before him, assassin at his back- and each misstep promised shattered bones.

Calm as a stone in rapids, he spun, parried, and sidestepped, his Dragonslayer Sword sketching bright lines that kept both foes from breaching the invisible wall around Flaxseed.

Behind that fragile perimeter, Flaxseed's brush flew across talisman paper, lines of glowing ink coiling into ancient sigils as quickly as his shaking hands could birth them.

Jared poured every last drop of spiritual energy into the half-finished talisman. The world beyond him dissolved to a blur while beads of sweat gathered on his brow, slid down the bridge of his nose, and splattered onto the parchment.

Beyond his narrow focus, the drain on his core deepened until each fresh surge of power felt wrenched from bone and marrow. Meanwhile, the Blackshade Demon Bear hammered at him with growing ferocity, its black-robed handlers moving in murderous harmony.

Thin cuts scored his arms and ribs-shallow wounds, yet sharp enough to steal precious speed.

"Flaxseed, how much longer?" Jared shouted, twisting aside just in time to let the bear's claw crash through empty air. Pivoting on one heel, he snapped his sword backward and forced a black-robed attacker to retreat.

"Almost there!" Flaxseed called back, his voice tight with concentration.

The talisman in his hands had already taken shape, faint herbal fragrance curling from its glowing strokes.

With one final flourish he sealed the last rune. Light burst outward, and a wave of cool, verdant scent rolled through the clearing.

"Done!" Flaxseed cried. He hurled the talisman into the depths of the forest.

It streaked away as a ribbon of emerald light, scattering its fresh aroma through the undergrowth like morning rain.

The Blackshade Demon Bear froze mid-lunge, nostrils flaring. The red haze in its eyes dimmed, curiosity beating back fury. After a hesitant growl abandoned Jared entirely and thundered after the drifting

scent. ne

"Perfect!" Relief spilled from Jared in a single breath, but he refused to lower his guard. The bear was gone, yet the black-robed killers still hunted close behind.

"Move!" Jared barked. He seized Flaxseed by the collar and raced deeper into the forest, dodging thorny trunks and hanging vines as shadows flickered at their backs.

Behind them the lead figure in black paused, torn between rage and

caution. A moment later, his

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decision snapped into place. "After them don't let the prey slip away!" They gave chase again, though wariness slowed their stride, no one wished to cross the bear's new path.

Using that hesitation, Jared and Flaxseed plunged so far into the maze of trees that pursuit sounds faded. At last they collapsed beside a hidden mountain stream, lungs burning, clothes soaked through with sweat.

Cold water lapped over torn sleeves and open cuts, sending bright needles of pain through aching limbs.

"We finally lost them," Flaxseed gasped. He gulped several mouthfuls of the icy water, the chill snapping his senses awake. "Blackshade Demon Palace hounds a man like his shadow. Miserable lot."

Jared leaned against a slab of rock, circulating energy to refill his drained reserves. If they dared follow us out here, Lunaria has torn every scrap of diplomacy to shreds. From now on, we're targets for Blackshade Demon Palace, Blackwind Stronghold, and every faction that helped massacre my clan."

Chapter 5219 Crimson Coil Sect

"Jared, what about that demon lord hiding in your consciousness field?" Flaxseed whispered, eyes flicking to the dark between trees. "Why hasn't it lifted a finger to help you?"

Flaxseed squinted at Jared, curiosity flickering across his pockmarked face.

Why isn't that Vermilion Demon Lord stirring? If you fall, his soul goes down with you-yet he's quieter than a grave at midnight.

Jared frowned, the crease between his brows deepening. He reached inward, voice low and tentative. "Mr. Vermilion, can you hear me?" Only silence answered. "He's playing dead," Jared muttered at last. "We can't count on him anymore." "What about your fire unicorn?" Flaxseed pressed, hope creeping into his tone. Jared shook his head. "Fire unicorn, Divine Bow-those are last-resort trump cards. I won't draw them unless the heavens themselves close in on us."

He tapped the coiled whip at his waist. "If those Blackshade Demon Palace hounds keep dogging our trail, I'll test the Demon Flogger. It was forged in the Ethereal Realm, but I've no proof it can tame celestial realm's demon cultivators. If its bite isn't fierce enough, wielding it means nothing."

Flaxseed balled his fist, frustration flashing in his eyes. "Are we meant to run forever?"

"Absolutely not." Jared's eyes snapped open, flaring with resolve. "Running solves nothing. We strike first. Baldric and that black-robed phantom proved several factions joined in wiping out our clan. We'll track them down, gather every shard of evidence, and break them-one by one."

Flaxseed exhaled, shoulders sagging. "Nine Serpent Mountain crawls with sects. We can't scour them all."

"We don't have to." Jared unfolded a weather-worn hide map across the mossy ground. "Baldric mentioned a feud between Greenscale Gorge and Blackshade Palace. The gorge's lord is already dead. We start with the remnants, follow the whispers."

He tapped a crimson mark beside Greenscale Gorge. "Crimson Coil Sect-same serpent bloodline, close allies. With their friend slain, they won't sit idle. We scout their borders; if things sour, we vanish."

Flaxseed nodded, ambition rekindled. Revenge demanded momentum, not hesitation.

They rested half a day beside a crystal stream, drawing in cool mist until strength and spiritual energy crept back into their veins.

By dusk, they pressed on toward Serpentcoil Mountain, its ridges winding like an ancient python asleep beneath the clouds. Dense jungle choked the slopes, and venomous snakes slithered through shadowed thickets, their hiss a constant warning.

Moving like ghosts, Jared and Flaxseed slipped past several Crimson Coil Sect patrols—snake demons of varied shapes, most at the first tier of the Earthly Immortal Realm, eyes sharp as blades seeking any hint of intruders.

Keeping his voice no louder than the sigh of wind through pine needles, Flaxseed leaned toward Jared. "The Crimson Coil Sect is guarded even tighter than Blackwind Stronghold," he breathed. "Word of the Greenscale Gorge lord's death has clearly reached them. They've

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doubled their watch."

"That suits us just fine," Jared replied, eyes fixed on the distant gate. "If they're focused on Blackwind Stronghold's next move, they'll never imagine hunters prowling behind their backs. We nab a tone snake demon, shake loose

the truth, and slip away before anyone misses her."

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Chapter 5220 Obey Or Perish

Hidden deep inside the tangled heart of the forest, the two men settled into

stillness. Every heartbeat slowed, every breath measured, as they waited for the patrol's rhythm to fracture. Soon a solitary figure appeared a snake demon in an emerald gown, basket swinging lightly from her arm as though she were no more than a village herbalist searching for moss. Her power barely brushed the first tier of the Earthly Immortal Realm, and she paid the shadows around her little mind.

Jared's gaze sharpened. "She's the one."

One subtle tilt of Jared's chin was all the signal Flaxseed needed. They sprang together—two blurs flickering between trees. Jared flashed in behind the woman and struck the base of her neck with a knife-hand blow. The emerald basket toppled; the demoness sagged with a muted groan and slipped into darkness.

Flaxseed caught her before she hit the ground, then hauled the limp body into a thicket so dense even moonlight hesitated to enter.

He gave her cheek a brisk slap. "Up you get," he muttered, coaxing consciousness back into her eyes.

The moment she woke, terror gleamed in her pupils. She drew breath to scream -Flaxseed clamped a hand over her mouth before the sound was born. His voice dropped to a razor's edge. "No noise. Try it, and the next thing you feel will be cold steel where it hurts most."

The threat-simple, brutal, unmistakable-drove every thought of protest from her mind. She nodded so hard the emerald pins in her hair rattled.

Jared shot Flaxseed a withering look—some habits, it seemed, the old rogue would never outgrow. Flaxseed removed his hand but kept his stare locked on the captive. "Answer a few questions and you walk away intact. Lie, and my blade will make certain you remember me forever."

"W-Who are you? What do you want?" Her voice trembled like a reed in floodwater.

"Our names don't matter," Jared said coolly. "Tell me was the Lord of Greenscale Gorge killed by Blackwind Stronghold?" She hesitated, then gave a tiny nod. "Y- Yes. He... he died horribly."

"And what is Crimson Coil Sect planning in response?"

"Our leader has summoned every expert in the sect. We'll march on Blackwind Stronghold for blood. Greenscale Gorge and Crimson Coil Sect share one lineage -his death cannot go unanswered."

"Who else is willing to side with you? Any outside powers?" She shook her head. "None. The other factions are either tied to Blackwind Stronghold or too frightened of the fallout to help us."

Jared's brow tightened. That isn't what I expected.

Could the old massacre have involved only Blackshade Demon Palace and Blackwind Stronghold? Unable to hold back, Flaxseed blurted, "Then tell me— what do you know about the extermination of the Flaxseed clan twenty-eight centuries ago?"

The serpent-woman froze, forked tongue slipping back behind her lips as confusion dimmed the lantern-green of her eyes. "I've never heard of any Flaxseed clan," she whispered, each word trembling with uncertainty. "I'm new to the sect. The old stories mean nothing to me." Jared and Flaxseed traded a silent look beneath the wavering torchlight; disappointment glittered there, brief and sharp as broken glass.

Whatever answers they had hoped to pry from her mind would not be found tonight.

"Just one last question," Jared said,

calm yet relentless. "Where is the Crimson Coil Sect's sect leader now? High on Serpentcoil Mountain," the woman replied. "He remains in closed-door meditation,

pushing for third tier of Earthly Immortal Realm. Give him a few days-then the gates will open."

Jared inclined his head. "That's all we need. Let's move."

Flaxseed lingered, scratching the stubble along his jaw. "We're just... letting her walk away?"

The serpent-woman stood shackled

by a faint shimmer of Jared's energy, eyes lowered in mute terror, Flaxseed hadn't faced a woman in far to long-his own companions had remained behind in level three, and this hard, hungry world had offered him little relief since.

"What are you thinking?" Jared asked, voice suddenly edged with frost.

Flaxseed twirled his dagger. "A quick jab or two-no witnesses."

"No." Jared's refusal cracked like flint. "Kill her and the whole mountain will swarm. We need stealth, not chaos."

"What if I make it look painless?" Flaxseed pressed, half joking, half desperate. Jared stepped away, cloak snapping. "Release her, or I cut you loose."

With a defeated sigh Flaxseed tapped the serpent-woman's temple, knocking her unconscious instead of dead. She crumpled soundlessly to the moss. Together the two men vanished into the trees, their disappointment swallowed by the night.