

## Unfathomable 311

### Chapter 311

“Ugh, what’s that smell?”

“Think that’s motor oil?”

“Motor oil?”

Beatrice asked not knowing what Zhang Dong was talking about. The hero party had ventured into the underground city of the dwarves called Kalburim. This was supposed to be the capital of innovation.

It looked quite steampunk-inspired. Which made things uncomfortable as placing a city filled with steam and smoke underground wasn’t the best option. There were large vents that funneled all this smoke outside into the volcano above. Apparently, the volcano wasn’t even active but it was this city that was generating all of the heat and smoke to run it.

Zhang Dong looked at all the strange contraptions that this place had to offer. There was even a tram system going through this huge city, even something that looked like uni rails on the ceiling.

The thing that stuck out the most were the rock and metal golems that were wandering through the city. They were mostly carrying heavy objects with a dwarf walking in front. When Zhang Dong focused he could feel that these golems were using some kind of internal mana engine to run. The dwarves that were in front of them always had some sort of control item with them that was sending signals into this engine.

‘Interesting...’

These golems were similar to puppets that cultivators created. He had even fashioned some life-like variants when he was on a crafting spree. The way these golems were constructed was different but also similar in some places. They didn’t seem to be as intelligent as the puppets he used to make and also quite bulky.

‘I’d need to get my hands on the schematics, they look less advanced but that mana engine looks useful, with a few tweaks it could expand the life of a puppet.’

“It’s something from the spirit realm”

He replied to the motor oil question.

“So, when are we going to meet the council?”

“They should have the meeting ready for today.”

The one replying this time was Isabella. She had ordered some of the people from the Duke house to go ask around. From The information that they had the dwarves were in the middle of some internal struggles.

Their king had died of old age and it was time to replace him. In contrast to the monarchs of the humans and elves, the title of dwarven king wasn’t hereditary. Anyone with enough resources and power could try to get this position if they met some prerequisites.

First of all, they needed to belong to the noble cast. Just as the humans the dwarf kingdom was split into noble houses and common workers.

It was kind of silly how these dwarves decided on their new monarch. As it wasn't the individual strength that was important but what they could create. They would actually use the golems to fight in a tournament, the winner would be crowned the dwarven king.

Zhang Dong wasn't really interested in this tournament as he just wanted to get the help of the dwarves in attacking the demons. There was a council of the main houses that was still able to make a decision.

He was hoping that they would lend him some ships, golems, and cannons that this race was famous for. The fight for the throne wasn't something that he was interested in, there was no reason for him or anyone from the hero party to get involved.

"Great, let us get this over with then."

Regretfully the party of young heroes wasn't as interested in waiting as he was. This was a once in a lifetime fantasy world for these youngsters but for him, it wasn't anything out of the ordinary. The cities back in his own world were larger and more beautiful than what any of these could offer.

Thus the party split up where the members from the royal family followed after the four heroes like little ticks. They were continually praising them just as they were ordered to. Anyone from the outside that took a second to think would know this but these youngsters were blinded by the beauty of the royal line.

"Are you sure we should leave them alone..."

Beatrice said while being concerned. She was glancing at the two sisters that were being led away by the green-haired prince and his older brother.

"We could try but I'm not sure if that would amount to anything..."

Zhang Dong could try to pry the pink-haired princess or her brothers away from Takeshi and his three friends but he feared that they would hate him for it. He could see that they were already succumbing to their lust by this point. It was as if the higher levels were magnifying their desires and making them more irrational. He was afraid that if he stepped in a fight would break out between them and they would need to put the whole expedition on hold.

"I'm not sure we should leave those heroes alone for too long..."

Isabella chimed in from the side while glaring at old moss head. She was the one hit the most by her old fiancé's infidelity. She was the one that knew him the most here, the young man had a silver tongue and knew how to speak to girls his age. She was afraid that he would charm the heroines in time, making them his puppets that he could control.

"Well, if it gets out of hand I will act, till then let us give them some space. Sometimes the best way to mature is to make your own mistakes."

Zhang Dong knew how young people operated as he had a childish personality. He knew that if a young person didn't go through a given experience they would have a hard time learning. Adults could warn

them as many times as they wanted but not many youths would adhere to that advice. They needed to burn their hands on the stove first before they would believe that it's hot to the touch.

"If Mr. Leigong thinks so..."

Isabella nodded and all of them moved further into the city. They need to get the accommodations sorted out as they were diplomatic guests from the other races. They had a certain immunity in this city as no one would want to anger emissaries from two other powerful races. The danger of war was always looming.

They had a group of well-dressed dwarves take them to a large hotel-like building. They even rode the uni rail through the city that let them behold its glory. It was about the size of the human capital which was also not even close in scope to Zhang Dong's Spirit Spring City.

The group ended up in a somewhat lush-looking hotel suite with room for the most important members. The people that weren't part of the hero party would need to wait in their ship outside. Zhang Dong's group consisted of Beatrice, Isabella, the two elven ladies that the Queen lent them, and a few bodyguards from the Hohenberg household.

The people with Takeshi and the others were a few levels above them in this hotel right at the top. With them were various soldiers from the royal guard as the members from the royal family needed to be protected.

Just like before this part of the party wasn't taken all that serious. The focus was on the four heroes and the royal family members that were accompanying them.

"I guess you two can practice your breathing..."

The two girls nodded as they were waiting for word to reach them. The council needed to give them an hour that the meeting would be taking place. At least that is what was supposed to happen but after waiting for many hours no word reached their ears.

"Did something go wrong?"

Zhang Dong called out to Isabella who had one of her bodyguards ask for the meeting. The person in question was also in this room. He shook his head and also apologized but he repeated what he knew. The noble dwarfs told them to wait while they organize the meeting and when they did they would come looking for them.

"Did they lie to us? If so for what reason?"

Zhang Dong asked Beatrice along with the other people in the room.

"As expected from dwarves..."

One of the elven women commented from the side while frowning. The other elven mage also nodded, it was clear that these two races didn't see eye to eye. From what Zhang Dong could tell this was due to elves being in tune with nature while dwarves liked using it without caring for it. Pollution and destruction of forests was the least they were ready to do to create their massive golems and machines.

"Is the Hero party still here?"

He asked as he had left towards his own soul dimension and began cultivating his soul again. The idea of the dwarf nobles pulling a fast one on them didn't cross his mind. He decided to come out next to Beatrice to perform a small scan.

'Hm?... most of them are there... but Takeshi is missing along with some of the guards...'

The three girls were there, he could feel their unique mana signature. The most important member from the hero party wasn't there though.

'This feels fishy...'

"Hey Beatrice, Isabella lent me some power."

The two girls looked at each other and nodded. They weren't sure what Zhang Dong wanted but they trusted him enough to know better by this point. They held their hands together and started channeling their mana. In just a moment the two were covered by a thin layer of golden light.

Since having time to train this soul skill they had grown accustomed to it. It didn't need to produce a large light show anymore and they could use it sparingly.

Zhang Dong's eyes glowed in golden light as he sat down in the lotus position. With the increased energy he would be able to cover most of the city with his spiritual sense. He did so in hopes of finding where Takeshi had gone.

With his enhanced senses he could really take a good look at this city. It was really mostly built out of rock and steel. Steam and smoke everywhere while the dwarfs were either busy with work or getting drunk at one of the pubs.

He went a bit further in, finding where Takeshi was wasn't all that hard as he had a unique mana signature. He found him in a large far away building and he was standing in some open hall with a couple of the royal family members.

Zhang Dong could feel that there were some old dwarves there in a circle looking down at the group of humans.

"Why would they..."

"Is something wrong Mr. Leigong?"

"It would seem that our companions have begun that meeting without us..."

"Oh no!"

Beatrice replied at this revelation.

"I bet they wish to strike a deal without us being involved!"

Isabella added from the side. It seemed that the people from the royalist faction didn't like that he was gaining so much status. He had the large elven ship and the Duke was also on his side.

"That might be the case... we should go pay them a visit before it's too late."

The group soon departed, if they would make it in time before an unfortunate deal could be struck remained to be seen.

## **Chapter 312**

Zhang Dong along with his two golden-haired summoners rushed to where this secret meeting was taking place. Apparently, his side was not informed for some reason or another.

He was more inclined to believe that the people from the royal family pulled some strings instead of the dwarf side. This race of people didn't really interact with him in anyway shape or form before this so there shouldn't be any animosity between them.

'They probably want to keep us from gathering any more power.'

For him, it was a race for time. He wanted to defeat the demon lords, get the cube parts and then go home. For the humans living here, it was different, they probably saw him as someone that could affect the status quo.

From the perspective of the royal family, he could be someone more dangerous than the demon king. He already showed that he could handle the human monarch and the elven queen.

What would stop him from taking over the world after they were done with clearing up the demonic beings? What was to stop him from doing it even before he faced the demon king? This was probably what the human King and his children were worried about now. They were on the very top of this world and would without a doubt like to remain in this position.

"Halt! The council meeting is in session, no one is allowed to enter!"

A group of heavily armored dwarves cut off their path. They had quite the peculiar-looking exosuits. It looked like they were inside of metallic golems but with tiny heads. This head part belonged to the soldier that was in this mechanical suit of armor.

"Make way for the Spirit Emperor!"

The two elven mages saw the group of mechanical golems blocking their path. They had large two-handed halberds in their hands and were blocking the way. The two women found it rude for these people to be addressing Leigong in such a way. The two were instructed to protect and follow the instructions of this Spirit Emperor by their queen. They intended to do that, even if they would need to fight.

"No wait, let us talk this over..."

Zhang Dong put himself between the battalion of dwarven defenders. They looked like they were riding some primitive mechs which took him a little bit to process. He couldn't let a fight break out, the royal members would just use this as a pretext to have him removed from this city.

"If the Spirit Emperor commands, it shall be done."

The two women bowed their heads at his request and moved to the sides. The group of dwarves didn't move out of the way which meant that Isabella would need to take care of this. She had one of her men move forward and present their case.

“You are with the heroes?”

The commander of these guards stepped forward and they began figuring things out. They had all the paperwork that identified them as part of the hero party.

“The council meeting is close to being over, was there some kind of mistake? I fear we aren’t allowed to open the doors before the meeting is over...”

The man gave the papers back to the group but there was a problem. The meeting had already started. Inside were the most influential people from this city and they were all rich and powerful nobles. They couldn’t just barge in at this point, these guards would not let them. Zhang Dong didn’t blame them as they were only doing their job.

“How could they do this to us?”

“This is unforgivable!”

Beatrice and Isabella stomped their feet on the ground while outside the large building. They were mad about the royal members not telling them about the meeting more than about the dwarves not allowing them to venture forward.

‘It’s fine... I’ll just go take a peek instead...’

He smiled and moved a bit to the side with the girls while sending them a telepathic message.

There was not much that they could do to get inside without making a big scene. It would not be hard to blast their way inside but then they would probably be banned from the city. He feared that if that happened it could take god knows how long to get everything sorted out inside.

“Okay, this will be enough girls.”

The plan was easy, he just needed some more juice from his two girl sized magical batteries. The range he could operate in had increased ever since the two had gotten stronger. He had also learned many spells and incantations that would aid him in this task.

Zhang Dong’s body flickered and soon he was invisible to the naked eye.

“Just wait here and I’ll see what those chuckleheads are up to.”

Beatrice and Isabella just waved at the floating voice while holding hands. They and their guards were sitting in a nearby cafe while Zhang Dong floated as a mana cloud towards the building where the meeting was taking place.

He might have looked like a regular person to the people here but his body was made from mana particles. These particles could take any shape that he wanted, even make themselves invisible.

While utilizing some of his knowledge he made himself undetectable to any living being or machine. Even with their advanced dwarven technology, he was able to get past the guards. In this shapeless form, he squeezed through the doorway and arrived inside the large building.

Inside there were even more guards, these weren’t in huge mechanical suits but in more traditional-looking armor. They were patrolling the halls but were unable to see or feel Zhang Dong’s presence.

'It's in there...'

He flew towards Takeshi's unique mana signature and arrived at the wide-open area. This place was the large room he saw where the dwarven nobles were looking down below at the humans. The sword hero was there along with a couple of members of the royal family.

"Eight hundred thousand coins? I will offer one million and ten of my best bottles of wine!"

'Hm?'

A loud sound of a hand landing on something rocky was heard by him the moment he slipped into this room. It seemed that the dwarves were shouting at each other and also bidding on something.

He glanced at who they were looking at and it was Takeshi. He and the others were just there smiling while looking between the dwarven nobles.

"A million? You are really going all in, you're not afraid that your house will go under if this so-called hero doesn't win?"

Zhang Dong looked at the person that was talking. It was some old fart with a long white beard, he was looking at a slightly younger old fart.

"You think I'm stupid? You just want the hero as your champion yourself!"

'Champion? Oh no, are they really going to do this now?'

If he was in his human shape his face would be showing a frown now. Previously he did find out that the dwarves had a peculiar way of picking out their king. This would only come into place if they couldn't come to some kind of agreement.

They were clearly unable to go through with that. Instead, they would go with option two, getting the king's position by trial by combat.

This didn't mean that the person that was hoping for the king's position would be battling himself. No, the dwarves didn't pick their kings by strength alone, they picked them by their resourcefulness.

The candidates had to use everything to their disposal to get the best possible champion for themselves. These champions would fight in a tournament and the one remaining would be crowned king.

'Why does it always have to be a tournament...'

Takeshi was taking center spot, apparently, these people wanted him to be their champion. He was the sword hero and also the strongest from the party if you didn't look Zhang Dong's way.

'But... can he use one of those things?'

Zhang Dong was referring to the large mechanical suits that the dwarves used. The champions wouldn't actually be using their bodies to battle, they would be using huge robot-like suits of armor that the dwarven craftsmen prepared for them.

These were quite similar to Mechs that he saw in some anime shows back in the day. Just like in the shows the pilots were quite important and could shift the tide of battle. The dwarven mech suits also used their users' mana to fuel themselves along with the mana engine.

He was only here in spirit form so he didn't intend to disturb this hero auction. The whole thing continued until one of the old nobles was able to seal the deal. Having Takeshi as their champion didn't mean that they had the win in the bag but from the point of view of these dwarves it was very probable. The legends concerning the heroes were widespread so the trust they had in them was immense.

'How can I salvage this situation...'

While thinking he continued to glance around the room. He could see the dejected faces that all the other nobles were showing. They truly believed that the person that managed to get this hero as their champion would be the winner.

"This meeting is over, the Tournament of Kingship will be taking place in a week's time, everyone please prepare!"

He floated around while not knowing what to do. Soon the place was being cleared up and he started going back to the girls. Now was the time to make a decision, if Takeshi won the tournament it could become problematic. He was entangled with the pink-haired princess and could grow a big head. It would be possible for the royal faction to start stalling and time was not something that he wanted to waste.

'What should I... wait what's that?'

While returning he noticed something, this large building was quite old but he felt a peculiar aura close by. He was attracted to it and decided to change directions. After slipping through some guards he arrived at a large area filled with books and scrolls.

'Basics of golem creation?'

'How to produce the best alloy for your golem.'

This was apparently a library filled with dwarven knowledge, knowledge that could be used to craft golems or Exo suits. If he wasn't a transparent cloud of mana he would be grinning now. A plan was formed in his mind with which he would soon go through.

'I bet not all of those nobles were able to get good champions... I think some poor sob will be very lucky...he he he'

The mist descended onto the library as he started to absorb all the knowledge that was in here. After combining it with his understanding of making automatons from his previous world he would fashion something that no one could beat.

### **Chapter 313**

Thondin looked at the large mechanical contraption that was before him and scratched his head. He started recalling how he ended up in this situation in the first place.



He was the oldest son from the Hillmane household. His father was already too old to compete for the position of a king and he didn't really want it either. Their noble house was considered to be on the lower end of the high noble families and no one was really considering them to win or even to participate.

Out of necessity, he was there during the meeting and his house would be bringing over a champion just so they wouldn't lose face. Even though he didn't want the position of the king his father that was on his deathbed pushed him towards it. His plan was to not stand out and just lose during the combat portion.

At least this was what he intended to do but fate had something different in store for him. After the meeting was over and the hero left with the winners he had stayed to discuss some business with the other noble dwarfs. It was a good opportunity to foster good relations as all the influential families were here.

Then the strange feeling washed over him, he felt like someone was watching him. Even on the trip back home, it felt like there was something in the air. He asked his bodyguards to check but no one could find anything so they just continued.

Back at home, he went over to his old father's bed chambers to disclose some information about his new business ventures. The old man was more interested in the heroes and the tournament where the king candidates would be gathering.

After a slow conversation and him lying about him taking this tournament seriously, he left the room. Thondin only used the bare minimum on the golem that his side would be using as he didn't want to get his family into financial problems. From his perspective, the power-hungry idiots could just fight for the position of the king.

In his eyes the family business was more important, he never thought that they had a chance of winning in the first place which made this the correct way to progress. With that, his family would be out in front while the others would put themselves in debt and overspend on their golems.

His well-thought-out plan didn't come to fruition as after leaving his father's bed chambers they heard a rumble. The guards were alerted to this and everyone rushed inside only to see his sickly father standing upright and filled with energy.

At first, they thought it was some kind of miracle, with a trembling voice he called out to him.

"Father... how can this be...what is that?"

While in a confused state he finally noticed that his father wasn't alone in this room. There was a small creature of about twelve inches floating around and giving off a golden light.

He wanted to order his men to capture it but was stopped by his father. With him back in the picture Thondin was put in the backseat once more. His father was still the one in the position of power as he had never given it up. Only when the family head died would the position be passed down.

"Halt, this is my saviour!"

The old man replied when asked about this being's origins.

"Saviour?"

Thondin asked while fearing that this small being could be a demon in disguise. There were rumors of such beings offering contracts with the people of the races. They would grant magical power, riches and even heal people at some cost. Mostly the person would give up their soul or give information to the demons involved.

"I know what you are thinking my son, but this is not a demon, it's a friendly spirit that is a part of the Hero party!"

"Greetings mortal, you may refer to me as Lightning Emperor, Leigong."

Right after his father finished speaking the small humanoid gave his name. This was a well-known name in this world by now and was associated with the twin summoners that had defeated many demonic beings. Thondin also knew that they were in this city at this moment along with the party of the heroes.

"Leigong?"

"Show some respect boy, he cured your old man!"

Thondin was hit on the back of the head by his own father that had surprisingly a lot of strength left behind. It was as if he had never been sick, to begin with.

"Now give me some food!"

Things went by fast as his father took over. The two golden-haired girls that were the supposed twin priestesses arrived soon after. They were all allowed into the dining room with his father and himself.

"Thondin, The Lightning Emperor will help us achieve victory in this coming tournament, you will be the Dwarven King!"

Thondin after hearing this, promptly spit out the red wine that he was drinking.

"Me? The king?"

"Yes, I'd do it myself but these old bones don't have much life left in them. I can at least see this through while I have the chance!"

The old man's eyes shone brightly as he talked about putting his son on the throne. This would be a great honor for his own house. His name would be remembered as the father of a dwarven king, immortalized in the history books.

"H-how would the honorable Emperor help us? The tournament will be starting in less than a week."

"Don't worry young one, just show me your machine and I'll bring you victory!"

The small appearance of this Leigong had shifted into a tall white-haired man after the party of people arrived. He looked a lot more imposing than he did before and was radiating magical power.

"Thondin, show him your golem. The costs don't matter, give them all the resources that our house can offer to make it the strongest golem the world has ever seen!"

He wanted to cry as he specifically used the least amount of coin to have the golem built. Now his father wanted to bankrupt him by spending all of their money on this venture with no future.

“Well, what are you waiting... go! There is no time to lose!”

After being forced to go into the building where the combat golem was stored he was met with stares of disdain. The stare was coming from this Emperor of Lightning. He had gone through the golem that he prepared and had apparently looked through the outer shell.

“What is this? Who put this nonsense over this last-gen crap? This won’t do at all!”

Leigong shouted out while rubbing his chin. Thondin knew what he meant as he had gotten a cheap old model of a golem and made it look next-gen. The outer shell made it look modern and strong but the power that it could output would be far behind the competition that spent a fortune on their models.

“We need to remake the internals... replace these joints... update the mana engine... this could take a while...”

He could hear the spirit mumbling while looking over the large battle golem. After moving around it for a few minutes he arrived at where Thondin was standing.

“I have looked over the schematics here, I’ll need these, please bring them over within two days.”

When he looked at the list of parts that this Leigong spirit wanted his eyes almost popped out of his eye sockets.

“Orichalcum and adamantium?... Spirit silver... how many liters of mana fluid?”

The items and materials that were listed here were all from the top shelf. If he bought this all he would have to expend most of his estate’s reserves. This was not something that he could allow to happen.

Due to this he hatched a scheme of stalling, if he told them that he couldn’t get the materials they would not be able to go through with the golem renovation. This plan didn’t go into fruition either as the white-haired spirit did something peculiar.

Leigong started to shine in white before splitting into many round balls of light. These balls of light then turned into miniature versions of himself similar to his previous chibi form. They looked more humanoid in shape and had better proportions than the old versions.

There were about a hundred of them, they all started moving towards the large golem and taking it apart while also working very fast. It dawned on him that this was how this spirit was hoping to hasten the changes on the machine. He could split into many smaller versions of himself that could customize this battle golem in just a few days.

“Okay, let us go get those materials then.”

One of the smaller versions appeared next to him while floating. He started sweating while rolling up the scroll with the list of items. It seemed that he would not be able to stall him as one of the small Leigongs would be going with him. A few members from this side of the hero party also stuck close. They all made sure that he got all the expensive stuff that Leigong wanted.

After two days he was looking at an empty treasure room that only had a couple of golden coins left. It all went into the blasted battle golem that he wasn’t even being allowed to see. His plans had already been ruined by this point and if they lost during the tournament the only thing left would be to sell

those golem parts for some profit. He had no trust in this spirit but was forced due to his father recovering from his sickness.

Time continued to go by and no one was allowed to enter the building where the combat golem was being reconstructed. All that the people could hear were thunderous sounds as Leigong was utilizing his lightning to construct this golem. Only at the crack of dawn before the tournament started was the machine finally completed.

“This should do it...”

Zhang Dong looked at the ‘golem’ that he reconstructed. It was a lot less bulky than what the dwarves liked to build due to him implementing some puppet technology that he was familiar with.

“Now let us perform a little test girls, fire it up!”

The thumping sounds of something were heard by the people from this noble house. Thondin and his father awaited outside the closed building while the golem moved towards them. They were shocked by the sleek appearance of this combat golem, it was not a design they were very familiar with.

Zhang Dong being himself had taken inspiration from the many mech-focused anime he had seen. The golem was mostly white with its feet having a red tint to them. The chest part was blue at the top with red at the abdomen area. This machine had clearly a humanoid shape, the head part looked like a samurai helmet with wide yellow fins coming out of the forehead.

In one hand the golem had a large shield while in the other he was holding a tube of some sort. When activated this tube would turn into a sword of light akin to Zhang Dong’s thunderlight sword skill.

“It’s time to have an old-fashioned robot battle...”

Zhang Dong’s voice could be heard from the robot’s head as it moved forward. First, they need to perform some tests and then the time for battle would be upon them.

## **Chapter 314**

Zhang Dong performed a grasping motion with his hand. Instead of seeing his own hand form a fist a large one made from metal did it for him.

‘Good, the response time is far greater than what the dwarven golems can output...’

The large golem that he created was now moving around while he was piloting it. There was no cockpit for him though, he was actually spreading his mana molecules through the whole large robot. It was as if this golem was his own body that he could move more freely around.

“How are you two feeling? Is everything okay?”

“Yes Mr. Leigong, we are fine.”

“Yes, this is actually quite comfortable!”

Beatrice and Isabella’s voices could be heard from inside the large robot’s chest area. In it, the two girls were sitting together on two comfy seats. They were holding hands while channeling their magic into Zhang Dong. He used this mana to power this golem and to also pilot it at the same time.

Having both of the girls inside this mecha that he created was also allowed. A golem could have up to five pilots at the same time. Some of them were quite hard to control with just one person inside of them.

From the outside it would seem that having only two people on the inside would be a bad decision. In reality Zhang Dong could move this robot like an extension of his own body. The size was comparable to his avatar form so he was also used to the higher point of view.

“Will this be enough?”

Beatrice asked while looking at a monitor that showed her and Isabella the outside. There they could see Zhang Dong swinging a saber of light around. The lack of time didn’t let them produce many parts so they had to go with this generic sword and shield combination.

“Has this mighty Leigong ever let you down!”

Beatrice chuckled while Zhang Dong replied in a haughty voice. The young girl had gotten used to the way that he talked already and knew that he was mostly only being half-serious.

“I’m sure that we will win, we can’t let them win this!”

Isabella wasn’t laughing though, her face was showing a frown and her eyes were burning with passion to fight. She really didn’t want her old fiancé to get the win here. Zhang Dong was glad that he never did make any women mad at him in this way. Sticking to only one was the correct decision. He could not understand his grandfather or Huo Qiang and how they could just have so many wives.

After some tests, it was finally time to leave. Zhang Dong while in the robot walked over to the transportation vehicle that would transport this golem to the arena. While in it they would conserve their mana.

Zhang Dong had nothing to do other than meditating. Before that, he thought back to how everything came together to this moment.

After he went through all of the dwarven books that he came across after the council meeting he noticed Thondin. He had already started contemplating on a plan of action that would force him to win the competition instead of Takeshi.

He was worried that more bureaucracy would be involved and the expedition could be stalled if the royal members had their way. He needed to enter the competition but he wasn’t sure how to go about it. But at that time Thondin entered the picture.

From some conversations that he had with the other noble dwarves, he figured out a couple of things. One that he was from a house that would be participating and also that he had a father on a deathbed. This sparked the plan of action that made him create this mecha-like golem. The design was lifted from a popular show that he used to watch and was more or less a carbon copy of it.

Zhang Dong put his faith in the dying dwarf. He figured that if he managed to heal him that this person would allow them to participate in the tournament. After following Thondin and performing this task they found themselves here.

The plan was a bit lackluster but there was not much else that he could do besides competing for one of the noble houses. He was also sure to make the old man that was now back to being the head of the estate, to sign a contract. After they won, he would have his son that would be the new king give them support in their venture.

‘That kid didn’t look too happy about that part... but sometimes those ones that don’t want to be kings make the best ones...’

Zhang Dong looked at Thondin a bit and how he acted. He seemed to prioritize his own family over status and greed. This would be a good quality that a king should have. Being too stuck up while making decisions based on things like noble status and pride could spell disaster.

The golem was covered in a large thick cloth and strapped to a large trailer that was being pulled by a smaller golem. The dwarves didn’t seem to have made cars yet as they were using various-sized golems for everything instead. This one looked more like a large horse made from metal and was clearly made for pulling heavy objects.

After a bumpy ride, they finally arrived at their destination. They were allowed to go in from a side entrance while the people gathered. Zhang Dong couldn’t really see the arena from outside but he could clearly hear the dwarves cheering outside. Soon the cloth was removed and through his mech’s eyes, he could finally see again.

They were in a large underground area and he could hear the sound of tinkering. Other golems were gathered here with them of various shapes and sizes. The one he was inhabiting was ten meters in height. It wasn’t as large as its anime counterpart but this was the limit of this world’s technology.

If he wanted to make it larger he would need to change its shape. Zhang Dong preferred to make it more mobile and all-around strong than to go to either extreme. This coupled with his current cultivation would give the machine quite a boost in power.

This underground hangar was huge and he could feel that there was a large number of people right above them. The golems that were gathered here were divided by large walls of metal that didn’t allow others to peek at what the craftsmen were doing. These walls even had strange runes on them that were blocking out magical scanners.

Luckily they weren’t able to block out Zhang Dong that was above such little tricks. He could clearly see all the golems and their pilots.

‘Those are some exotic designs...’

He noticed that the machines varied in size, weight, and even in pilot count. It was clear that some of the participants went all in, while others that were similar to Thondin showed up with cheap knockoffs. He could tell that some of these golems were meant to take a few hits before crumbling before their enemies.

‘Can’t blame them, no use to put yourself in debt if you are convinced that you can’t win.’

Zhang Dong continued to scan the large hangar to see how many real threats there were. He spotted Takeshi’s golem and could tell that it was quite advanced. It was larger than his own model and a lot bulkier.

'I see that this guy went all in... though not sure if putting Takeshi in that machine will be a good idea...'

He felt that due to the fast training that he put the heroes through they wouldn't be fit to enter this competition. Takeshi might have been strong from a stat point perspective but he lacked combat experience. Even if they gave him the best golem around he could easily fall into a trap.

'They even roped in the girls I see...'

"Mr. Leigong, they announced our number, we are going to be in the first match!"

Zhang Dong was busy scanning the area so he wasn't paying attention. Beatrice's voice snapped him out of it as it seemed that they would be showing off their mech right from the start.

"Is that so? Well, you two just relax and leave everything to me."

"Sure thing!"

The two girls didn't really have to do anything besides acting as human batteries. They had a large screen that showed them what Zhang Dong was seeing through his eyes. The compartment they were in was well protected and could be ejected outside if anything bad happened.

At first, he thought about placing both of the girls outside this robot just like when he battled the demon lords. But this proved problematic with how this golem devoured mana energy. It was quite inefficient and the two girls had to be placed inside of it to counter the drain.

He was still there so if anything happened he was ready to eject the girls into safety. Winning this tournament wasn't worth the lives of Beatrice and Isabella. He would figure out a new plan if they lost but after looking through the golems the only one that could provide a challenge was the one being used by Takeshi.

'I guess it's going to be us against them. I hope they can take a loss as I'm not intending to lose'

"Okay, you are up."

One of the mechanics that had helped them reconstruct the old golem called out. Zhang Dong moved his large mechanical foot forward and began walking. After leaving their 'garage' they were led over to a wide corridor. There was enough space in here to stack three golems on top of each other and five in width.

He continued walking through the dimly lit corridor while the murmurs got louder. At the end, there was a large metallic door with strange dwarven inscriptions. Before he could look at them carefully the door started to slide into the ground while revealing the light outside. The moment it opened he was greeted by many cheers from the audience members.

"Let us welcome the candidate from the Hillmane household!"

The moment he stepped out the dwarves stopped cheering. The shape of his golem was quite unique if he compared it to the bulkier models the other dwarves used.

His opponent seemed to be one of those golems. They were about the same size but the golem standing on the opposite side was wider. He was mostly brown-gray in coloring, one hand was a claw while the other one had a large spiked ball with a chain attached to it.

If you compared the two at first glance, Zhang Dong's mech looked to be the weaker one. It didn't look like something that could take too many hits or even deal enough damage to get past its enemy's defenses.

'Well, time to show them my seed mode!'

Zhang Dong cackled on the inside while getting out his laser sword, it was time to show these people how a mech battle looked like.

## **Chapter 315**

"That Hillmane household golem looks strange..."

"Yes, it doesn't seem like they are taking this seriously..."

Two nobles that were sitting in the VIP booth conversed with each other while staring at the two large golems in the even larger arena.

Zhang Dong's mecha-inspired golem was not in line with the esthetic perception of the dwarves here. Its design was sleeker and less bulky while also having more radiant colors of blue, red, and white. It made some of the old nobles uncomfortable to look at, some of them were even thinking that the Hillmane household was making a mockery of this serious day.

"I hope the Blackhelm house makes quick work of those fools, truly a disgrace to the noble dwarves!"

From everyone's perspective, the side Zhang Dong was fighting for looked to be not taking things as seriously as the rest. He could clearly hear some of the antagonistic shouts of the masses that were coming his way.

'I guess I should have gone with a different design...'

The outer shell didn't matter to him that much as what was on the inside of this machine was the important part. If he knew that the dwarves reacted like this, he would have made a more grayish golem.

"Let us begin the first match, Hillmane vs Blackhelm!"

A large gong resounded throughout the arena and indicated the start of the battle. The golem on the opposite side started swinging that chained spiked ball with its hand and began charging towards Zhang Dong's direction. Each step it made caused the earth to rumble and the people to cheer out loud.

Then the opponent's side that hailed from the Hillmane house did something strange. Instead of using the giant shield to defend themselves, the golem threw it to the side. The light sword remained strapped to the golem's hip while it took on a strange position.

The golems palms were moving forward while its legs spread out into a wide stance. The people didn't know what was happening as the golem looked a bit too light to be a close-range brawler.



“What are they doing... is the operator an idiot?”

The noble dwarves asked while scratching their heads. The operator was how they called the main golem pilot and in this case, it would be Zhang Dong. They didn't need to wait long for a resolution though as the two machines collided with each other.

While charging forward and gaining momentum the golem from the Blackhelm house swung its weapon. The chained ball flew at its target with force and it looked like it was over for house Hillmane.

Then it happened, the white golem's palm started glowing in a blew light and with amazing speed, it collided with the hardened spiked ball. Instead of the hand exploding into tiny chunks of metal the heavy ball was slapped to the side while also losing some of its spikes in the process.

This wasn't all as the white golem moved forward and stepped into melee range. The way it stomped its foot created spider web-like cracks in the arena floor. While using the momentum of the step-in, Zhang Dong's machine delivered a clean palm strike to the other golem's torso. This was also backed by an energy-filled palm which caused a large amount of damage to the opponent's machine.

House Blackhelm's golem was sent flying while chunks of its armor peeled off. A massive palm print was embedded in the chest while the robot fell backward. The technique that Zhang Dong performed was a basic one but thanks to how this golem was made he was able to utilize the combat techniques from his own world. This golem was like an extension of his body with which he could perform most of his own battle techniques.

“Impossible!”

The nobles called out, their eyes bulging at the sight of the larger golem being damaged by just one hit. It didn't look like the golem from the Hillmane household would be able to produce this much force but somehow it did.

“You see that you old coots, Hillmane will be victorious!”

A loud voice was heard by the nobles which caused them to look back. The man that was cheering and happy was the old head of the household that Zhang Dong had healed. He was ecstatic while looking at his side winning over a house that he didn't like that much.

The other nobles looked in surprise at how energetic this old man was. They all heard rumors of him being on his deathbed but now he was here. The old dwarf was even throwing punches as he looked at his golem approaching the downed opponent.

“That's it, finish him off!”

Zhang Dong could hear his 'sponsor' getting into it which made him chuckle inwardly. The golem that he was fighting against didn't give up quite yet as it started to slowly stand up. It used a last-ditch attack by launching its clawed hand towards him.

The giant claw connected with his forearm while he pulled it up. The claw was still attached to the rest of the golem's body. The opponents were now trying to pull him in for a close-range grappling battle while probably thinking that they had the strength advantage.

‘I will have to disappoint you but this golem I created is a lot stronger than you might think.’

Everyone outside expected to see Zhang Dong be pulled in and squashed by the larger golem but instead the one being pulled in was the Blackhelm house machine.

Even when it used its larger frame and legs it slid towards Zhang Dong's golem. He was just using his hands to pull it in as if he was in a tug of war contest. The golem he was using was glowing in a dark orange light. He was utilizing another technique that increased his strength and allowed his smaller golem to win out over the bulkier model.

With one last pull, the damaged golem was lifted off the ground. Almost at the same time, Zhang Dong jumped into the air while leaving a hole in the ground. The people were stupefied by this display as jumping at this weight class was almost impossible.

A swift kick was delivered to the Blackhelm house golem which turned it into scrap metal. He could only do this as the pilots decided to eject themselves to safety. Otherwise, he would have had to lower his kicking power.

A scrap of parts descended on the ground after Zhang Dong's perfectly placed burning flying kick. His whole foot looked like it was covered in plasma and the moment it collided with the opponent it exploded.

"T-the victory goes to... the Hillmane house! Please give a round of applause!"

The announcer called out and was met with crickets as no one expected a turnabout of this magnitude. The opponent Zhang Dong was facing was even highly rated in this tournament and not someone that was trying to lose.

The white golem lifted its arm up into the sky while making a fist. The moment it did the people in the audience burst out in cheers.

"That was a stunning show of power!"

"What is that golem design, what were those peculiar movements!"

They cheered him on as he returned to the place he came from. A lot of the craftsmen that were gathered here were already trying to analyze how this golem operated. There was clearly more to it than what met the eye. Its reduced size didn't make it any weaker than the other machines.

Due to this, the old man that was proudly holding his hand up in the air and mimicking the golem was now being barraged with questions. All the nobles were interested in the new design and how it operated.

This was something made by Zhang Dong though and he didn't leave any crafting schematics behind. Even if he wanted to make a profit from this golem he wouldn't be able to do it in this way. It would also be impossible for other people to pilot it as it was made for Zhang Dong and his two summoners.

"I think that went well for a test ride, how are you two feeling?"

Zhang Dong asked while slowly walking back to their hangar. There wasn't much damage done to the golem he made but he still needed to check it before the next battle.

"I feel fine, how about you Isabella"

“Yes, I feel like we could have continued for a bit more.”

The two girls inside chuckled at each other while Zhang Dong gave them a scan. They were his power source so after this battle he had an idea of how long this golem could operate.

‘Not that bad, the use of puppet technology and this mana engine is working wonders. I wonder if my sect could utilize this technology when I return...’

He started imagining an army of large mecha golems that were even larger than his model. With the better alloys and materials that his world had to offer he would be able to improve on this design even further.

“That’s good to hear.”

They managed to return to their garage and only heard the other golems leaving after they closed the door behind them. There weren’t that many fights as there were a limited number of golems.

This was also the only day that this tournament was taking place. Due to this people needed to take the longevity of their golems into consideration. They needed to last till the very end and if they broke between fights it was over.

This was also seen as part of the king’s test. Only a wise king would be able to think ahead in this kind of situation. While this was a nice notion in reality the one that had the best technology or most funds won.

“You two relax while I perform some diagnostics.”

While waiting for the next match Zhang Dong split into many tiny versions of himself. He started performing all kinds of tests while ironing out some battle scars. Even though he wasn’t hit even once he delivered some hard hits with his feet and hands. These spots needed to be rechecked for any breaks and then fixed accordingly.

“How many opponents will we have to contend with?”

Asked Beatrice while looking at the small group of Leigongs.

“Not that many my lady, there are only about thirty contestants in total and the fights never take that long.”

A dwarf from the household answered while the work was being performed on the mech. The two girls had some time to relax but not for long as soon they would need to go into battle again. Thankfully the other fights would be taking a while, there was enough time to rest and even see all the other opponents that they would be facing later.

## **Chapter 316**

“Hillmane household takes the win again, let us give a round of applause for the king candidate! With this, only one match remains! Who will be our next king!”

A large white golem strode back below the arena while the people cheered. This was the semifinals and Zhang Dong’s side had managed to clear them with suffering only minimal damage and tear.

The combination of cultivator automaton and the technology of the dwarven race proved quite effective here. The only real problem was the limited time of operation due to Isabella's and Beatrice's involvement.

"How are you two doing?"

"W-we are fine Mr. Leigong."

Answered Beatrice while sweating a bit.

"Yes, just one more match, we can handle it!"

Replied Isabella while also not looking especially rested. The fights started taking longer the more advanced golems they thought and Zhang Dong was also getting the hang of piloting this mech. Due to the long tournament, the two girls that were used as batteries were slowly running out of juice.

"Conserve your power, only the last match remains."

He could only cheer them on and have them drink some mana potions. Those helped slightly but prolonged use had diminishing returns. The mana that people used in this world was connected to the soul and the longer you drained it the harder it was to recover.

Zhang Dong powered down for the time being and returned to his own soul dimension to give the girls more time to rest. While they were doing their breathing exercises outside the golem the earth rumbled above them.

The last pre-final match was taking place above them. On one side was Takeshi and the hero team, on the other some rich dwarven noble. He had seen the golem that the kids were using and it was quite a beast.

It was clear to him that the person that built this was banking on the heroes piloting it. This golem was huge and required people with high mana capacity to boost the mana engines that it was running on. While most golems only had one this possessed multiple. Clearly, they used some secrets to construct it as most golems were stuck with one engine. Adding multiple ones was dangerous and could end in an explosion.

From what he knew the household Takeshi was fighting for was called Runefall. It was the most influential family in this city and even before the heroes arrived they were said to be the favorite.

Zhang Dong even believed that this family had other backup golems depending on the pilots. Probably if they didn't get the operators they wanted they would go with a different design. With the heroes on board, they were in the strongest position to win it all.

"Dang, Is it over already?"

There was a signal that the fight above them was over in an instant. The other house that was qualified towards the semi-finals didn't even last a minute against Takeshi and their golem. Now they would have an hour to rest before the main event took place.

Without much to do, they waited. From the distance, they could hear some kind of large machine lumbering down through the corridor. The tremors that followed the footsteps indicated that this golem was much heavier than the rest.

The hour passed fast and it was finally time for the last bout. Only one side would be walking out victorious. All the families that had failed to achieve victory would be put through hard times. Without the king title the loss of money could not be regained, they would need to tighten their belt as it would take years for them to recover.

This was the same for the Hillmane household, but the old head of the family was already glad that his family reached this point. From his perspective being the runner-up was already an honor. Everyone would know his house name from this moment. Gaining new trade partners would become easy as their name became famous.

“Fellow dwarves, this has been what you have been waiting for. The birth of a new king! Soon we will know who will have the honor of leading our race into the future!”

The announcer started rattling on while one of the gates opened up. A mostly white humanoid golem walked through it, shield in hand.

“Let us welcome the Hillmane household, the dark horse of this king tournament! No one expected them to come this far, can they finish the deal and become immortalized in history? Or will they be a stepping stone for the true victors!”

After Zhang Dong came out on the other side the other slab of rock started sliding down. There stood quite the large metallic contraption. It was barely able to fit through the frame with its multiple legs.

“It’s no surprise that House Runefall has made it this far! Their golem innovations have been known throughout the lands by all. Will they be cemented as the greatest golem manufacturers in our dwarven history and take the crown?”

Everyone looked at the marvel of engineering that was before them. This golem’s bottom part looked like a spider. The many legs were a must to support this machine’s large frame. It looked a bit similar to an Arachne-type monster that was wearing heavy dwarven armor.

The spider-like legs connected to a large abdomen on which some cannons were placed. Then it all stretched into a bulky humanoid torso that also had two sets of arms. This thing dwarfed Zhang Dong’s mecha more than a head’s length in height and was several times longer as well.

If you looked from the outside there was no possible way for the Hillmane house to win. Their golem looked to be very lightweight and built for mobility. It didn’t look that it would be able to produce enough power to damage it in the first place. That is if it didn’t have a certain cultivator piloting it.

“Well then, let the finals begin, only one champion can remain!”

The start gong sounded and the crowd cheered.

“Go Hillmane, show those pompous Runefall fools that money isn’t everything!”

“Yeah, go Hillmane!”

To Zhang Dong's surprise, his side had garnered praise from most of the dwarves. They seemed to prefer the smaller Hillmane faction over the other to win. It was a classical David vs Goliath scenario, though he wasn't sure if he would be considered David as he had far more up his sleeve than these people realized.

'I should probably end this fast...'

He could tell that his two partners wouldn't last through a prolonged battle. It wouldn't be hard to slowly grind away on this monstrous golem. He had seen it fight and it was rather slow, most of its wins were due to how the other golems were designed.

The dwarves by nature build slow and lumbering creations. Speed was never their forte and it seemed that they fully abandoned that notion. They invested everything in power and defense. He could see a fast machine with ranged potential being able to destroy this thing in a prolonged fight.

The biggest obstacle with that plan was the limited battle area, there were no places to hide or take cover. The golems had to directly clash with each other, thus the bulkier ones came out victorious. The only one that was going against the grain was him.

Finally, the battle started off with a bang. The cannons that were on the large golem started firing while Zhang Dong dodged to the side. His shield was used this time around, it was glowing slightly and producing a thin layer of mana that didn't let the large bullets through.

This was Takeshi's tactic in the other fights. Spam massive amounts of bullets at his target while slowly advancing forward. He was clearly forcing a win without caring about damaging the mech in the process.

The problem was his opponent that was able to dance around the massive golem without suffering any damage. If Zhang Dong had enough energy to burn through he would have preferred to wait out till his opponent was out of ammo. Alas, he needed to charge in as he had limited time. The golem with the many mana engines would surely outlast him and the girls in a battle of attrition so he needed to strike.

Thus he used his advantage, which was his mobility. The body of the white golem started glowing in blue light. Following this light was an increase in speed which Zhang Dong used to close the gap between him and the golem.

This time he utilizes his entire kit, the sword was pulled out and activated. The energy beam sprung into life and made quick work of one of the spider legs while Zhang Dong quickly backed off. The spot that he previously occupied became riddled with holes.

He didn't stop at only this one leg though, he mercilessly continued to attack. Slicing each leg off while evading all the enemy attacks that came his way. The crowd cheered as they were surprised by the speed advantage that the white golem had. It was as if the defensive capabilities didn't matter at all. A speed and attack-focused golem was clearly a valid option if you wanted to go with a cheaper variant.

Due to the large golem's limited mobility it suffered. Soon it was left on three legs that couldn't support the increased weight of that abdomen. The cannons kept firing and Zhang Dong had to even evade a spider leg being thrown his way by one of those large golem arms.

It was clear that Takeshi wasn't used to tactics like this. He mostly overpowered his opponents with sheer strength but Zhang Dong had used a simple tactic to get under his skin. This was done at a cost, he could already tell that Beatrice and Isabella were running on fumes.

‘It was all for this moment, time to ignite the engine and finish this.’

He did this all so that his enemy would be unable to evade his last-ditch attack. He tossed his shield towards his enemy while grasping the light sword with both hands. While Takeshi focused on the incoming bulky projectile he charged forward.

The white body began to glow in gold color. With the boost of his holy element, the golem looked as if it was made from pure gold. Arcs of lightning traveled towards the energy sword and caused it to become longer and wider while also causing it to produce more light.

Everyone was blinded in an instant, right after Takeshi’s golem batted the incoming shield to the side his vision became blurry. He could see his opponent coming and quickly reacted by swinging his own weapons forward. The large golem has swords in each of its hands, now was finally the time for Takeshi to use them.

It happened in an instant, it was as if time had stopped for everyone. Zhang Dong’s mech appeared on the other side of the arena with a missing head while kneeling down. While the large golem on the other side seemed to be undamaged.

Before the people could gasp and before the cannons could shoot at the damaged white golem a strange sound was heard. It was as if two plates of metal were rubbing against each other.

“Look!”

The golem that Takeshi and the heroes were in began to split apart as it was cleaved by Zhang Dong’s laser sword. It was perfectly sliced into two halves that slowly parted to the sides revealing the bewildered pilots inside that were now able to see the outside world.

No one was injured as Zhang Dong was sure not to aim for any living beings inside the machine. The fight was over and the headless golem stood up again, its fist raised high while the crowd clapped and cheered for the winner and birth of the new king.

## **Chapter 317**

“Ugh...”

The sound of coughing was heard while four youths with darkened faces crawled out of a wreck of a golem. They were the party of heroes that were just defeated by something that was very familiar to them. All of them came from the country that the design Zhang Dong used his inspiration for.

“D-did we really lose?”

“Using that is cheating!”

Takeshi cough into his hand while trying to rub out the dark sludge that was on his face. He remembered the surprise when he first saw the mech that Zhang Dong created. Instantly he was regretting joining this side and being stuck in this huge golem that he couldn’t even pilot himself.

He needed to keep the promise with the princes though which he was unable to do. Now he wouldn’t be receiving that kiss as a reward due to his failure. The girls from his party also seemed distant lately this whole hero experience wasn’t feeling so good lately.

“The tournament is over, all hail the new dwarven king, Thondin Hillmane!”

While the youths were crawling out of the wreckage the dwarves had forgotten about them even being there. They were all far too busy cheering for their new king, finally after a long time of arguing there was a new king.

Even though Thondin was only the oldest son and the father was still alive, he would be taking over. While registering for this competition every side had to fill out the person that would become the new king.

This was one of the rare occasions where the leader of the household gave away the rights of kingship to a son. This was good for the Hillmane house as the younger Thondin would be able to hold on to the title for a lot longer than his old father.

“Are you okay?”

Takeshi looked up to the person that was calling out to him. He could see a rather cute golden-haired girl reaching out her hand towards him. The arena lights that were directly behind her made her look a bit otherworldly.

“An angel?”

“Heh, look at this sweet talker.”

A voice that he knew called out from the side. When glancing at it he noticed it was Zhang Dong in his smaller form looking at him. After further inspection, he also noticed that the girl that was reaching out to him was Beatrice.

“Sweet talker? I d-didn’t...”

He blushed a bit after noticing that he was staring at the girl for a prolonged time. Due to the pink-haired princess hanging around him for so long he wasn’t able to notice the other girls around him. Now after getting a good look at Beatrice he could see that she was quite charming. She didn’t have the assets that the princess had but her face was somewhat gentler.

“Let me clean you up lover boy...”

Zhang Dong called out in a mocking tone. After this Takeshi and the three girls found themselves being submerged in large bubbles of water. These bubbles quickly absorbed all the dirt from their bodies. The water then flowed back while having a dark color, surprisingly Takeshi felt rather dry after this strange spell was finished.

“Takeshi, next time you should discuss things with us before doing something like this...”

Zhang Dong said while floating back towards Beatrice.

“Otherwise Beatrice here will be very sad.”

He quickly pointed to the girl that had appeared. At first, he wanted to shout back that he didn’t need to listen to Zhang Dong, but after his attention was brought back to Beatrice again he held his mouth shut.

“Interesting...”



Zhang Dong mumbled.

“What’s interesting?”

Another golden-haired beauty appeared from the side while everyone gathered.

“Oh nothing, we should head back these dwarves will be holding a big feast for a few days after the new king is chosen. We must discuss the side of our contract and get ready to depart. I bet the demons won’t just sit on their asses and let us attack them without putting up some defenses.”

“Also you four... you need to stop trusting those royals...”

This was the last thing that Zhang Dong said before the group from the royal family showed up. The pink-haired princess was there with her three brothers that moved between Zhang Dong’s side and the Hero party.

“Oh no, Lord Takeshi are you alright?”

The girl was clearly acting all cutesy while rubbing all up into Takeshi. This was painfully obvious to Zhang Dong and the two girls that were standing next to him. Both of them had a look of disgust on their faces as this transpired.

For one reason or another Takeshi was quick to straighten up. He even gently pushed the pink hair ditz to the side while glancing between her and Beatrice.

“Oh no, I’m fine!”

Zhang Dong on the other hand just chuckled while sending a telepathic message to his summoner.

‘I think you have a new fan. Maybe you can talk some sense into him while using your womanly charm?’

The blond girl was confused and also started looking at this hero while also glancing at Zhang Dong. She also went red in the face the moment the womanly charms were mentioned. She was still someone that never even had a boyfriend before in her life.

‘Hey, what are you two doing?’

Isabella jumped into the conversation. Due to the telepathic transmission, she couldn’t hear them talking but she knew that something was fishy. What she did was hug Beatrice while pulling her away from the situation.

‘Leave her out of this!’

Zhang Dong started rubbing his head at the scene. Everything was getting pushed back into the rom-com genre. It seemed like some strange love square was being formed. With two of the girls, Takeshi and the pink-haired princess being involved. If it expanded further due to the three girls from Takeshi’s world was also a possibility. All of them were glancing here and one girl, in particular, wasn’t amused.

“Hey, what are you doing Takeshi!”

This girl was Ami who now abandoned her prince and started pulling Takeshi by the arm. The pink-haired princess did the same but from the other side. The youth in question on the other hand was still sneaking glances at Beatrice that was getting pulled away by Isabella.

‘So Beatrice really is the true main character? Is it the main character aura that is attracting so many people towards her?’

Zhang Dong thought while also being okay with Isabella winning Beatrice over. The rest of her suitors seemed to mostly have underhanded motives while this girl was a bit purer.

“Okay, I think we should go back, let us return to the hotel!”

There was a lot of talking as Zhang Dong surrounded almost everyone with a thin layer of his spiritual energy. He carried exactly six people out towards where the father of Thondin was celebrating. The four members of the human royal family didn’t seem amused as he yanked the hero party with him.

“Didn’t I tell you, my son is going to be the king!”

The old man looked quite chipper, it was hard to believe that he was someone that was on death’s door just a week ago. He had his hand locked around some other old noble and the two were in beard rubbing proximity. The person he was holding hostage didn’t seem that happy about this but also unable to push away someone that was now the father of the new dwarven king.

“It’s time for you to keep your end of the bargain, dwarf.”

Zhang Dong didn’t really want to wait for too long. He got right to the point as he approached the merry man that was also quite drunk.

“It’s the spirit! I’ll be sure to make my boy build a big statue for you! Whoever said that spirits can’t be trusted should be hanged!”

The man seemed quite grateful which would probably speed things up. Surprisingly the man of the hour Thondin was spaced out. He was also here in this VIP booth. He was stuck looking down at the golem parts in the arena with his mouth wide open. It was clear that he never expected something like this to ever happen. Now he had to be king even if he didn’t like it.

“Don’t mind him, the boy will come around.”

The old man grinned while moving over to where Zhang Dong was. He gave Thondin a hard smack to the back which sent the new king tumbling forward.

“Get a grip of yourself, you are the new king, start acting like one!”

After the hit, Thondin seemed to snap back to reality. He looked at his old man and instantly straightened out. Even though he wasn’t ecstatic about this turn of events he also knew that this was a great honor. With this, his family’s future was secured. Even though the king’s title wasn’t hereditary there were certain things a royal house would receive even when he died.

There was not much that Zhang Dong and his companions could do for now. They needed to wait a bit more for Thondin’s coronation. This also never went down as seeming less as people might think.

Jealousy was still there, the houses that spend all of their money now had someone they could point their hate at. Before this dwarf actually was presented his crown he was not the king. It wasn't odd for the king candidate to be killed before they went through with the ceremony and it was also a part of the test. Only a person that survived till the end would be seen as the proper ruler.

With this, the next few days Zhang Dong and the Heroes were placed on guard duty. Now with a winner that was on their side they had something in common. Surprisingly now Takeshi was all for spending more time with their side. Beatrice was probably the main reason for it.

Due to the kids being preoccupied with each other it was on him to guard Thondin. Luckily he had vast detection skills and the dwarves didn't make for good assassins. A few incidents happened but they were all quickly resolved by him. During this time Isabella was mostly trying to peel Takeshi off her friend.

After a few days the festivities were ramping up and the date for the coronation came. Thondin was now all dressed up and ready to take the plunge. When he was walking down towards the throne a strange sound was heard. When he looked to the side he noticed Zhang Dong holding a poison arrow that was a few inches away from his head.

The perpetrator was apprehended and this signaled the last assassination attempt that would befall this house. After the coronation was through any further acts would be seen as treason. The houses involved would be burned down and all its members down to the relatives killed without mercy. This was the law of the land and the other houses would keep to it.

'Finally... we can finish this damn quest...'

Zhang Dong gave out a sigh while looking at the crown touching Thondin's head. With this, his task was over and he would finally be able to leave this underground city.

## **Chapter 318**

"Uh, finally we are leaving... I need to get new clothes..."

A rather annoyed Isabella was looking at the entrance of the seemingly active volcano. After Zhang Dong's victory, a week had already passed. The dwarves were celebrating for a few days and everyone was drinking themselves stupid.

The young members from the royal family nor the hero party were safe from this. Everyone got drunk with the exclusion of Zhang Dong, Beatrice, and Isabella that were safe thanks to their scary lightning chaperone.

Neither the dwarves nor the humans were willing to cross his path as he had proven himself in being a great wall that could not be breached. Some of them tried, like Takeshi that for some reason or another had changed his target from the pink-haired princess and was now trying to court Beatrice.

This resulted in some strange encounters that mostly ended with Isabella shouting at everyone. With him backing her up even the royals couldn't do anything. Their side had now both the elves and the dwarves, the golems had been brought on the large elven ship and were now part of the crew.

'This actually looks like a competent fighting force...'

Zhang Dong thought to himself while looking through the people that were on the current ship. They were given a large battalion of golems with experienced operators. They also had many flying ships with the super large one in the middle.

This flying ship on its own possessed magic power that could rival a demon lord. It could even deliver a more devastating strike similar to the Argonaut that he made back home. Just like with his own model it needed some time to charge.

"I wish victory upon you all!"

"Thank you, my king!"

An old-looking dwarf with many battle scars on his face was saluting to his new king, Thondin Hillmane. The new monarch looked like a proper king with his crown. It looked like he had made peace with his new position and was willing to take this task on.

The old dwarf was the commanding officer that the kingdom was lending him. This man was supposedly the best man for the job. With him around, there would be no problem in organizing some strategies.

"Great Spirit Emperor, we are ready to depart."

"Let us depart then, let us go to the dark lands, time for the final battle to commence!"

The dark lands were a dark place covered by a gloomy forest. It was a spot on this continent where the barrier between the lands of demons and the other races was thin. Through it, lesser demons were able to slip in.

It was not something that anyone was willing to venture towards. The armies of the three main races remained outside the danger zone and could only observe. Any expeditions that they attempted were unfruitful.

The expeditions were never a combined venture, this was the first time that a large force of this size would be attempting it. Together with the heroes and the famous Lightning Emperor things were looking well. Three of the five demon lords were dead and now it looked like humanity would regain its footing at the top of the food chain once more.

"Will we really be able to defeat the demon lord?"

Beatrice asked while looking out through a window that was in the large ship's interior. They were now flying through the air on the course towards the lands that were still occupied by the demons.

"Of course we will and we must."

Replied Zhang Dong that was awaiting this day with desperation. Some months had passed by and he was still here. Even though he didn't want to put these people in danger there was no other way of getting the rest of the cubes.

He also wasn't willing to use the one that was used to bring Takeshi and the three girls over. Without it, the three would be stuck here as he took it away and the teleportation array that brought them over here was not in a working condition.

“Don’t worry, just leave it to me. Takeshi might not look that reliable but he isn’t weak either.”

The heroes were also at a high level compared to the people in this world. If they worked together they should be able to take out a demon lord. What they lacked was experience but gaining it would prolong everything.

Thus he didn’t put much faith into them instead, he used the time to improve on the golem designs and also shared some magical knowledge with the elves. By strengthening his own forces he hoped to mitigate the weakened state of the heroes.

‘But still... I think it might be bad to let these kids take out a demon lord instead of me...’

Zhang Dong had a little theory that he couldn’t test out. He had taken all the corrupt cubes for himself but he believed that they might have been intended to fall into the heroes hands. Maybe by absorbing their power, the hero party would gain enough strength to be able to take on the last boss.

He feared that if they killed one or two of the remaining lords that he would lose the nuclei in the process. The question was if it was better to increase the strength of the hero party or to believe in his own power. He had stayed busy and cultivated his own soul constantly.

Its size had increased which would translate well if he ever reached his old cultivation level. He even felt that he could use it to battle against masters at the great circle level.

“Great Spirit, we are approaching the dark lands, what are your instructions.”

With him now having both dwarves, elves, and a chunk of the human faction on his side he was turned into the commander of this expedition. It seemed like things were coming together but he knew that this was just the time when something usually went wrong.

“Tell everyone to stop, I will head out and examine the situation.”

After giving the standby order everyone was instructed to wait for further instructions. The dwarves quickly entered their golems and the elven wizards prepared for battle. The other ships stood a bit behind the main elven one while they waited.

Zhang Dong in his adult form floated forward towards the dark lands. Just as they were described it was an area covered by grayish fog and darkened forest. This reminded him of the thick fog that the Cthulhu-like monster was occupying.

‘Is this fog blocking my perception as then?’

Even while he focused with all his might the fog was somehow blocking his spiritual sense. It was similar to that one time back in his own world, he was unable to peek too far. His range was at about three hundred meters in all directions. The only things that he could feel were some animals and insects.

‘These life forms... they have been altered by the demonic energies of this place...’

He could feel that the animals were twisted by the evil energy that resided in these lands. They had grotesque demonized appearances that were ghoulish in nature. Even the insects were corrupt, any stings by them would result in poisoning.

'I guess we'll have to venture into the unknown...'

Zhang Dong returned to the ship, the party of heroes was here along with his two summoners.

"How was it, did you see anything."

Takeshi asked with some concern in his voice.

"Yes but not much, the corruption runs deep. The fog that covers this place is filled with demonic energy; it will slowly deteriorate a person's psyche if they breathe in the fumes. I believe that any regular person would start changing into a grotesque creature after a few hours."

"Grotesque creatures?"

Ami flinched at that notion along with the other girls that were here.

"So, we will become like one of the royal family members?"

Isabella slid in a little joke while the other people gathered here chuckled. Lucky for them the people in question were on their own ships and not very willing to lend their men.

"Don't worry, this ship has a protective shield that can block out this miasma. You four will be okay, something like that will be unable to harm your bodies. It will only affect untrained people anyone versed in magic should be fine."

Zhang Dong reassured everyone that this fog would not affect them. They also had the elven flying ship that possessed a giant barrier that would not let anything through.

"Let us move in but remain vigilant, it's still some time before we reach the edge of the barrier."

The order to move forward was given, every ship that was here possessed some kind of magical barrier. With it out the dark fog would be unable to move in and claim any victims.

Magical barriers in various colors started to appear and the hero party entered the demonic territory. Every magical device that could detect demons was activated but due to the fog, the readings were all a jumbled mess.

Zhang Dong stood at the front of the ship while looking forward. This demonic forest spread for a couple of kilometers and at the end would be the point that they would need to strike. The plan was quite straight forward but if it came to fruition no one knew.

Most of it relied on Zhang Dong's capabilities. Some people still had the misconception of the heroes being the ones that they needed to rely on. The ones that could see the bigger picture knew that Leigong was the pivotal point of this operation. He had already proved himself to being stronger than a demonic lord.

"Mr. Leigong..."

"What is it, you both should return to the protective cabin."

While slowly gliding through the thick fog a worried Beatrice arrived. She was alone but he could tell that Isabella would probably be arriving soon. The two had become inseparable since becoming a good team.

"I've been meaning to ask you..."

"Hm, yes?"

"A-are you going to be leaving after the demon king is destroyed?"

"Huh?"

Zhang Dong almost tripped over his feet as he was asked this question. Somehow Beatrice had figured out that he was not here to stay. He had never mentioned this fact to this girl or to anyone else. Somehow she must have come to this conclusion herself.

"What makes you think that?"

"You seem awfully set on battling the demon king... as if you don't have enough time..."

"Ah... was it that obvious?"

He was indeed rushing it, this was a half-assed plan brought on by him worrying about his family. For all that he knew they could be getting attacked by some other sect at this very moment.

"I... I was right? You are really leaving?"

Beatrice flinched back as Zhang Dong didn't even try to hide it. He felt like at this point he owed his summoner an explanation. He felt that if she stuck to Isabella her future would be assured.

But before he could give her a proper explanation he noticed something.

"Damn, Beatrice, return to Isabella, I need you both to lend me your power... a demon lord has appeared!"

He turned to the fog while squinting with his eyes, there he felt a surge of demonic energy coming his way and there was more than one.

"Everyone prepare for battle!"

## **Chapter 319**

"Line up the cannons... Fire!"

Explosions filled the air as many bat-like creatures filled the sky. They all came from the fog and were now trying to bring down the shields from the flying ships.

"Ghouls and Vampires, it must be the Lord of Blood!"

Someone from the elven race called out while defending the ship. Most of the members from the elven race that were here were proficient barrier mages. They were placed in certain strategic locations on the ship and fueling the mana shields with their magic.

The Ghouls looked somewhat like giant bats while the Vampires had a more humanoid shape and could float without the use of wings. The so-called Lord of Blood was slowly hovering in the background.

He looked like a cross between the two. His all-around shape was humanoid with giant bat-like wings attached to his back. His arms were elongated and his hands looked like giant claws. His skin was grayish-white which made him look like a living corpse.

His face was a mix of human and batlike features, when he opened his mouth a clear view of dagger-like teeth greeted anyone dumb enough to fight this being.

This was not the only monster that the heroes needed to face off against. The demon Lord of Blood wasn't the only archdemon that was here. Below him, a massive being was slowly treading towards the group of flying ships.

It was the Lord of Destruction and the last archdemon that still remained. Somehow two of the mighty demons had gathered here and were waiting for them all along.

This being was truly humongous, each time one of its large elongated appendages descended on the ground, massive tremors spread throughout this dark forest. It trampled everything that blocked its way.

Its appearance was more grotesque than that of the vampire-like being. The shape that this monster took was similar to that of a spider. The biggest difference were the eight legs that instead of being fully arachnid-like had large humanoid hands.

The creature looked like three massive humans fused with each other. The front consisted of just the chest part with its arms extended. It had three heads that consisted of only mouths and no eyes. The eyes were instead embedded in its strange fused torso and were constantly blinking while looking for new enemies to attack.

Above this massive creature and the Lord of Blood Leigong the Lightning Emperor was floating. He was now glaring at the vampiric lord before him, his body already covered in golden radiant holy energies that caused the lesser vampires to flee.

"I don't think you will let me through?"

"You shall not pass filthy astral being, this will be your grave. I will absorb your might and the king will descend to cover these lands in the blood of the filthy mortals!"

The demonic lord entered the monologue stage. Zhang Dong was familiar with this defect that these demons had. Thanks to this he had ample time to power up and think about a good plan of attack.

While this monster that he was facing looked to be the more speedy arial type, the one below was clearly a slow tank. With it being stuck on the ground it was safe to leave his flying army to take care of it. He had already passed on the order to engage it from afar with a kiting strategy. If everything failed the dwarves were to utilize their golems and try to stall it till he was done with this monster. The heroes were also going to help but only with range support.



After being cooped up in the elven and dwarven countries Zhang Dong hadn't had the opportunity to let loose. This overgrown vampire lord looked like the perfect sparring partner to release his frustrations and stress.

Even then he waited, the moment the monologue was over the monster charged up and attacked. It was very similar to the one the lord of pain fired off. The monster's mouth opened up and a beam of crimson energy flew forward.

Zhang Dong didn't dodge but instead extended his hand forward. His finger started glowing in blue light. A set of pentagram-like magic circles extended from the spot his finger was pointing at. There were ten circles and each one was larger than the previous.

The red beam of dark light collided with the outermost ring and shattered it into many tiny lights. It continued forward while causing all of the rings to evaporate into nothingness. When it passed the sixth one it stopped, unable to travel further before blinking out of existence.

'These magic spells are the real thing.'

This was actually one of the spells that he learned from this world. Together with his own cultivation knowledge, he was now able to utilize some of the magical skills the elves used. Due to being in this magical world, using mana attacks was more efficient than sticking to his spiritual energy-based attacks.

'They also lower the strain on the girls...'

He pointed out with his finger once again. Behind him, magical circles of similar shapes and sizes started to appear. To non-mages this wouldn't look like anything special but to the experts, this was something mind-boggling.

"Take this, mass elemental arrows!"

With a twitch of the same finger, a surge of arrows made from various elements descended on the large vampire monster. There were thousands of them, their colorful lights filled the sky and rained down on the flying archdemon.

The demonic lord covered his whole body in its giant webbed wings and surrounded himself in dark red energy. He was quick to notice that he would be unable to dodge this attack, instead, he decided to enforce his defenses and block it.

With a more stationary target, the many magic arrows had a point of focus. From rain, they turned into a flood of magical energy that descended on the encased demon. The black sphere that formed around the demon became bathed in rainbow-like light and vanished within.

'I don't think it will be that easy?'

Zhang Dong thought while his attack continued and finally subsided. He was greeted by the Demon Lord of Blood, or at least half of him. His wings were damaged and half of his body seemed to have melted away during the magical downpour.

It might have looked like he was done for but in a matter of seconds, his whole body started glowing red. From the damaged parts of his body blood started gushing out. This blood quickly reformed into his lost body parts and formed a complete form again.

'He is a bit stronger than the other demon lords...'

It was clear after the exchange that this monster's main forte was the regenerative ability. The other demon lords could regenerate fast but not this fast. He didn't worry though as he didn't quite use his usual trump card against the demon. This trump card made going against these beings easy from the start.

"Foolish Astral being, my body can not be seriously damaged by the likes of you! Now die!"

"Is that so? How about this though?"

Zhang Dong clutched his fist together and a bolt of golden lightning appeared in his hand. Without giving the monster much time to feel this new spell out he threw it at him. The attack produced a thunderclap while descending on its foe.

This time around the monster's black pearl-like eyes bulged out in fright and he quickly propelled itself to the side as it attempted to evade this attack. This bolt of energy was not something easily dodged and it connected with the demon's leg.

This appendage was then quickly sliced off by the monster itself. It knew that this attack carried holy energies in itself, the cut of leg crumbled into dust almost instantly while the cut of wound regenerated into a fresh leg.

"You're a bit smarter than the other demons... but also less resistant..."

Zhang Dong was a bit surprised at how quickly that leg disintegrated into dust after taking the hit. The other demon lords didn't succumb to the holy energies as fast as this one. He wasn't sure but this monster was a vampire. Vampires seemed to be quite weak against flames and holy energies alike. It seemed that this monster had high regenerative abilities but was also super susceptible to the type of energy that he exudes.

"Well then... try to evade this..."

The same massive amount of magical circles was produced, this time around instead of the various colors of the rainbow the magical arrows were golden.

"You... lower being!"

The Demonic lord of Blood looked to be panicking after seeing the magical arrows again. He didn't bunker up this time but instead spread his wings widely apart. Many dark crimson magical circles of heresy magic appeared behind him. It was a very similar spell to his own with the difference of the different dark coloring.

In a flash, a battle of holy vs evil commenced. The many magical arrows of Zhang Dong connected with the multitude of bolts of crimson. The demon was over his head though as the golden arrows continued on their trajectory even after bumping into the demonic crimson bolts.

Soon the overgrown bat found itself running away from the holy arrow attack. Whenever it got hit it would slice off its body part that was affected. Even with the continued rain of energy, this tactic seemed to be working for it as it was able to survive right till the end. Its body sliced up and regenerating even now.

“I will bathe in your blood, you damn astral creature!”

“Yeah... yeah...”

The demon lord glared at Zhang Dong but was only greeted by his after image. The Lightning Emperor on the other hand appeared behind this creature while holding a massive sword of light in both his hands.

With a practiced swing, he cleaved the monster into two perfectly symmetrical halves. From the spot that he had sliced it the creature’s body started cramping and burning apart. He was sure to inject as much holy energy as he could but even then he knew that this might not be enough.

Before the body crumbled into dust a part of it escaped. It looked like a pitch-back heart that was slowly beating and spitting out some dark fumes to mask its trajectory.

“Do you think I was born yesterday?”

He was waiting for this to happen and he pointed down with this finger. A bolt of energy that was hovering above the clouds and out of sight descended onto this very heart. It collided with it while causing a massive explosion.

Zhang Dong had already faced a multitude of demonic beings in this and in other worlds. They always had some underhanded way of playing dead and escaping. So he made a backup plan to strike it down when it was most vulnerable.

‘One down one to go...’

After grabbing the cube fragment he turned to the massive demon lord that was to the side. It was in the process of being pelted by the ship’s magical cannons and also the people that were inside.

‘But maybe I won’t even need to act this time around...’

It didn’t seem like this demon lord had anything going for itself besides its huge size. It was like a sitting duck against the many flying ships that kept their distance. It could only throw trees and massive boulders while also firing beams of dark energy from its three mouths.

Which were mostly deflected by the elven barrier technology and also with a little aid of the heroes that were using their own ranged spells as support. It seemed like the path forward would be open and they would soon be facing what was on the other side...

## **Chapter 320**

“Hey.”

“Hey...”

“Is something wrong, you look a bit down?”

Isabella called out to Beatrice that was leaning against the railing of the large elven flying ship. The battle with the two remaining demon lords was now over. They were resting right outside the barrier to the demonic continent.

After Zhang Dong had taken care of the Demon Lord of Blood, the larger Demon Lord of Destruction went down with ease. There was no need for Zhang Dong to get involved as Takeshi and the rest of the heroes were enough.

The large monster only had size but was clearly not very intelligent. It was unable to contend with all the firepower that the people of the races threw at it. Takeshi only needed to utilize his magical sword to slice off the monster's head after it had been weakened. The whole battle took a while but it wasn't that dangerous thanks to the flight advantage that they had. Zhang Dong was sure to snatch the last cube fragment before it was absorbed by the group of heroes instead.

Now the elves were making preparations to get this barrier out of the way. The dwarves and humans slowly set up the perimeter around here to block out any demonic monsters that might want to disturb them. The fog was still there and it was thick. Even though the demon lords were dead, that didn't mean that the lesser demons wouldn't try their luck.

"Oh it's nothing, just thinking about the future, everything is going so fast. It feels like the summoning ritual was just yesterday, then Mr. Leigong appeared..."

Beatrice lowered her head and slumped against the ship's railing, it was clear to Isabella that was right next to her that something was wrong. The girl decided to place her hand on Beatrice's shoulder as she moved right next to her.

"It's going to be fine, we'll be fine. I'm sure that Demon King will have no chance against your great spirit!"

"I know that... it's just..."

Beatrice gave out a sigh while looking out in a random direction, there she saw the dwarven golems moving some magical equipment closer to the barrier. This barrier looked like a giant mirror, it reflected whatever was on their side. Due to this, it was impossible to know what was on the other side. The possibility of monsters being there was quite high.

"It's going to be fine, we are going to make it through this together!"

Isabella placed her hand on Beatrice's while moving closer, she could clearly tell that her friend was getting emotional but she wasn't sure why. Beatrice looked at Isabella's hand that was placed on her own and then up which caused the girls eyes to meet.

"You know, I used to hate you..."

"Oh...."

Isabella didn't pull her hand away and Beatrice didn't seem like she had anything against this treatment either.

"I wasn't the nicest person before, this journey opened my eyes up to many things. I used to think that people were below me, that nothing else mattered than noble status."

"I remember how angry you looked whenever Prince Ludwig gave me attention."

Beatrice replied while chuckling a bit. The two girls thought back to their old relationship, if it wasn't for their common dislike for what the prince did they might not have been friends now.

"Well, that idiot did one thing right."

"Oh, and what would that be?"

"He opened up my eyes..."

Isabella started leaning up towards Beatrice, the two girls were looking into each other's eyes. Time seemed to slow down for the two, it was as if all the noise disappeared and only the two remained in place.

"Beatrice?..."

"Huh?"

The two finally snapped back to reality and looked to the side. There, a Takeshi with a confused expression on his face was standing.

"What were you two..."

He asked as Isabella jumped back as her face was really close to Beatrice's.

"Oh, she had some dirt on the shoulder..."

Isabella coughed into her hand once before moving to the side. Beatrice just nodded while laughing nervously.

"Is there something you wanted, Lord Takeshi?"

"Oh, The elves were asking for Leigong's help. He seemed to go away after the battle between the demon lords."

Zhang Dong returned to his soul dimension to conserve energy. He was taking his time to cultivate so he didn't really notice what the two girls were doing. Beatrice knew this as well, whenever Zhang Dong cultivated he needed to be called out several times before he noticed.

"Ah, I'll call him over now."

With a little crackle of thunder Leigong the Spirit Emperor was out and about.

"Hm... what's with this mood? Did something happen?"

Zhang Dong was greeted with uncomfortable silence. Beatrice and Isabella were blushing for some reason, their heart rates were also through the roof. After a quick checkup, it didn't seem that they were affected by any kind of illness.

"N-nothing happened, the Hero just wanted to have a word with you Mr. Leigong."

"Alright..."

He removed himself from the scene, him being there seemed to make everyone even more uncomfortable. His thoughts were more on the mission before him as this was almost the end of the journey.

“Great spirit, we have made the preparations, we can open up a gap in the barrier but it won’t be enough to get our ships through...”

“Oh, is that so? Let me take a look.”

He floated over to where the magical devices were placed. Many dwarven golems were stationed outside with their cannons pointed at this very spot. This was the section of the barrier where all of the known demonic beings came from.

Now with the eradication of the five archdemons, the people of the races could take a knee and relax. Even if the demon king wasn’t destroyed their future was assured as the demonic armies could not advance into their lands.

Some felt that invading the demonic continent wasn’t a smart idea. No one knew if any more powerful demons resided on the other side of this barrier. It was unwise to poke the hornet’s nest but Zhang Dong needed to go forward. The last cube had to be there where the last boss was. He was now in control of this expedition so even when the princess protested they were quickly silenced by the others.

“It does seem that the entrance size will be limited...”

After scanning the mirror-like barrier he could see that the elven assessment was true. It seemed that even if he was in his most powerful state he wouldn’t be able to destroy this barrier.

The entrance was about two meters in height and one meter in width. It wouldn’t even allow any of the golems to pass through just regular human beings.

‘It looks like this was purposely made like this... Probably to have a small team of heroes enter. I wouldn’t be surprised if the barrier closes instantly after Takeshi and the others go through it...’

He didn’t like the looks of this. There was a big possibility of not being able to turn back if something went wrong. It didn’t look all bad though, all of the demon lords were slain and he had recovered the cube fragments himself.

Sometimes in situations like this, the old boss monsters would return for another fight. He had their power sources though so this was an unlikely scenario. Due to him being here things had changed, the possibility of the demon king on the inside being weaker than he would normally be was also high.

He was banking on this being true, nothing in this world had really been a challenge to him. The girls were constantly pushing their own mana capacities up and he was also getting stronger.

‘I think I should go in there alone...’

Even with that, he didn’t feel like he should endanger the girls or anyone that came with him. He would not risk other people’s lives to get what he wanted. He would rather try getting home with the current number of cubes than have Beatrice or Isabella pay the ultimate price.

“Okay listen up, I need you to do something...”

With this, he called out to the elven magicians that came along with him. Now was the time to use all of the extensive knowledge from both of his worlds.

"I came to serve, great spirit!"

"Good, get everyone, I will announce the plan. Have all the ships come together, we will need to take them apart for this to work. Also, get me some paper to write on."

He rubbed his chin while thinking about how they would be progressing. Within an hour he had all the people of the races gathered. Beatrice, Isabella and the party of heroes were here. The members of the royal family were also here but they kept their distance.

"The entrance to the demon continent is far too small for a large force to enter. Thus I have decided on..."

"Yes, we will gladly go in!"

Before Zhang Dong could proclaim his plan Takeshi jumped forward with his sword raised. Zhang Dong could see the youth sneaking glances at Beatrice while trying to seem gallant and heroic.

"Be quiet you idiot."

Before this could get out of hand he received a smack to the head.

"None of you will be entering the demonic continent, I alone will face the demons."

"You alone? We know that you are strong, but how will you face the demon king alone and without the help of your summoner?"

The one asking the question was one of the older princes. The other people gathered here also started mumbling with each other. Everyone knew his strength but they knew that he required Beatrice and Isabella to power him constantly.

"Don't worry about that, even you will be able to help out, we will do it like this..."

With that said Zhang Dong took out a large piece of parchment that had a strange spell formation with many magical runes on it. This was of course a greater version of the spell formation he utilized during the fight with the first Archdemon that he faced. He expanded on the design which would allow him to draw his power from even the ship's mana engines.

"That is?"

"This is how I will defeat the Demon King, now listen up..."

He quickly explained the gist of his plan. Just like before Beatrice and Isabella would need to sit in the middle of the formation while everyone else was used as sub energy sources. This time around though there were proper powerful mages and machines he could draw his power from.

For some, the plan seemed too good to be true. Sending in a summoned spirit to take out the demon king while everyone stayed behind and was safe sounded outlandish. Most of the people and soldiers here were ready to give up their life for the cause but it seemed that they wouldn't get a chance for that.

“W-why were we even summoned here if it ends like this...”

Takeshi grumbled while sitting down, he was still hoping to show off his fighting form in front of the ladies.

“Isn’t this fine? We’ll be able to go home if this is over.”

Ami commented while trying to calm down Takeshi. The people from this world were already working. The ships were being taken apart for their mana engines and the golems as well. Zhang Dong had the last say here so the plan would be going through.

“Playing hero isn’t all fun and games Takeshi, leave it up to me. Sometimes you should rely on the adults.”

Takeshi looked a bit down, probably not finding that he wouldn’t get to be the big hero this time around.

“With that, I’ll be leaving the girls up to you. I bet the demons will figure out this plan sooner or later and send a strike force over. Protect them with your life while I’m gone.”

He gave Takeshi a small smack to the chest which seemed to reinvigorate the youth.

“Leave it to me!”

“Okay, let’s get this over with!”