

Unfathomable 321

Chapter 321

“So this is the demon continent?”

A man radiating golden light entered through what looked to be a crack in the mirror-like barrier. This rift in the demonic barrier quickly mended itself as if it was never there before.

‘Good... I can still feel the connection even with this barrier here.’

He had examined it beforehand, it seemed to only bounce the energies that were from this world. His soul energies were something slightly different, thanks to this and his connection to Beatrice he could be powered remotely.

On the other side were the whole group of dwarves, elves, and humans. They were all gathered together in the grand formation that he created. This formation was even absorbing the demonic fog that surrounded the forest along with any mana that came in contact with it. It then routed this energy towards Beatrice and Isabella that powered him.

‘They aren’t using their whole power now... but I’m already in the nascent soul stage...’

Zhang Dong picked up a larger rock and crushed it with his hand. He felt a lot stronger than he ever felt before since coming to this world. This was much closer to his original power level but was still somewhat behind.

‘Nascent soul early-stage... maybe slightly less.’

After stepping forward he felt that something was off with this place. The demonic energies weren’t all that strong. He expected to be attacked by armies of monsters that were waiting for his arrival but instead he was greeted with silence. When he spread his senses he could feel some monsters hiding but they wouldn’t even pose a serious threat to anyone above the core formation level.

‘Hm, what’s that?’

He suddenly felt the demonic energy spike higher when he examined further into this demonic continent. It seemed that the dark mana was gathering in one certain location. With this in mind, he headed forward, taking his time while going on foot. It didn’t seem that anyone had seen him entering this place, the demons might have actually not been as prepared as he might have thought.

After taking some quick strides forward he started examining his surroundings. He was in a dark forest, all of the light was coming from a large purple moon that was hanging in the sky. There were no old texts describing the demonic continent, this barrier had been here for quite a bit and what was on the inside was long forgotten.

‘I guess that’s the spot?’

After taking out some kind of flesh-eating plant with a little lightning bolt he came out to a clearing. There in the distance, he saw it, a massive dark castle that stretched all the way up into the clouds.

It was dimly lit and there was only one path heading towards it. It wasn't much of a castle beside a few towers here and there. The rest looked like it was carved out of the mountain it was on. Everything was spiked and there were some window openings that were glowing in purple.

When he focused on the path leading up to it he could see some monsters patrolling around. All of them had three eyes and their skin was dark crimson like the demons he met on the other side. These demons were much larger and clearly stronger though, none of them were there to hide their presence.

'If I take the long path I'll have to fight my way through all these demons...'

He felt that this was the way this place was structured. The heroes would probably need to fight their way up to the summit. From down below he could even see a large open balcony at the very top. It seemed to be the last level and probably where the demon king resided.

There were many aerial monsters flapping their wings around this castle. They were there to probably keep the hero party from using any flying artifacts to hasten the journey. Regretfully for the demons, they weren't dealing with the hero party but a cultivator that had long since mastered the art of flight. A creature that required wigs to maneuver would be quite inferior to something like the flight technique that a nascent soul cultivator used.

'I guess I'll be skipping the tutorial...'

Before moving forward he used his connection to Beatrice to look at what was happening on the human side. There he could see the formation that they build working nicely. There didn't seem that the demons had taken notice of any of this.

'Beatrice, I will be advancing towards the Demon King's fortress.'

'Mr. Leigong... please be careful.'

'Don't worry, you just sit tight and don't worry about anything. Leave this to this Grand Lightning Emperor!'

He could feel that Beatrice was acting strange lately. The closer they got to the endpoint the more gloomy she became. There had to be a proper reason for this but he wasn't sure. His focus was on the task at hand, after the demon king was defeated they could always have a conversation about it.

'Okay... let me try this the slow way this time around...'

While ducking behind one of the trees he activated his old disguise technique. His body got larger and lankier and his face and demeanor changed. In a matter of moments, he turned into a certain large vampire that he fought not so long ago. He chose this form as it did possess flight capabilities.

With his new disguise now on he took up into the air and headed towards the large gates. Thanks to it he was able to recreate the original demon's blood energies. When the lesser demons looked his way they didn't see anything out of the ordinary, they even bowed after realizing that he was an Archdemon.

He used his flight to get over the massive gate that led towards this giant mountain-high castle. This wasn't as much of an outlandish sight to him as he came from a world with much larger structures.

Behind this gate, he saw more red demons. Some of them were patrolling around but it didn't seem that the defenses were taken that seriously. The protective walls didn't have any lookouts nor any siege weapons. It didn't seem that these demons were afraid of any counterattacks from the humans.

'Strange... I expected a welcoming party. Do they not see the people of the races as any kind of threat? or is there something else going on here...'

It felt strange, all of the demon lords have been bested in battle by him but it didn't look like the devils here cared that much. Most of these monsters looked bored out of their mind, most were even leaning up against walls and sleeping.

'Does this have something to do with this world being similar to a game?'

If he looked at it from the perspective of this being a game-like world then it did make some sense. Unless the heroes entered the designated area the demons wouldn't be 'triggered' to act. He was perfectly disguised as one of them so they weren't reacting to him much.

He looked up to the large balcony at the very top of this mountain-like castle. While floating up he was again ignored by the flying creatures that were here.

'If this world is a game... what does that make my own...'

Zhang Dong started to slow mid-flight. The world he was inhabiting had similar issues to this one with the biggest difference being the genre. The people there mostly did act like their counterparts in the novels that he used to read.

Young Masters with no thought for others, their parents not even worried if their offspring offended some old monster that could flatten their whole clan with one snort. A strict power-based structure where the one on top was revered as a god.

While his thoughts were wandering towards these questions the face of his daughter and son appeared before him. His strange stressful feeling washed over his chest and took him over.

'No... I must focus.'

He shook his head and pushed his concerns to the side. There was no time to have an existential crisis right before attacking the last boss. It was time to end this and go home, his family was waiting for him.

With a burst of speed, he propelled himself up. The other demons still didn't pay attention so he was able to arrive right at the top. His foot touched the edge of the balcony and he was finally able to see what was behind it.

This balcony took out quite a bit of space, more than a football field. To the side, there seemed to be a staircase that headed down. This was probably how the heroes were supposed to climb up here without the ability to fly.

The ground was made from uniquely shaped slabs of obsidian. There was a certain path laid out before him from slightly lighter slabs pointing him forward. Many huge pillars of hard rock guided his gaze towards the throne composed of bones at the end.

'Is that the Demon King?'

On this throne composed of human skulls and various other bones sat a man. His legs were spread apart and he had a bored look as he rested his head on his fist. The person sitting on it was fully hidden behind a dark and spiky set of armor. The only thing that made him look alive where the two purple glowing flames coming out of the helmet's eye sockets.

When Zhang Dong's eyes met with this man he could feel a small amount of pressure but for just a moment. It was similar to his spiritual sense.

"Why have you come here, being from the astral realm?"

A strong demonic voice escaped from this being's mouth which sent slight shivers down Zhang Dong's spine. He had hoped his ruse would work for a bit longer until he was able to get closer for a fatal strike.

"I see, it won't be that easy then..."

He didn't stop while turning back into his original form. Bright light filled this dark world as his form was revealed. The Demon King that he was seeing before him that seemed bored straightened himself out while also covering his head.

"Wretched light..."

The demon stomped his foot on the ground which caused a strange dark barrier to appear around him. This barrier absorbed all of the holy light that Zhang Dong was giving off and somehow contained it.

"Begone from this world!"

The King let out a burst of demonic energy that headed his way. In retaliation, he did the same with his holy energies. The two opposing forces clashed with each other and canceled themselves out.

'Beatrice get ready.'

Zhang Dong called out while charging forward, it seemed that this monster was indeed stronger than the Demon Lords he had battled. He knew that his opponent was still hiding some of his capabilities before he got serious he would go straight for the kill.

The Demon King reacted rather quickly. He grasped a large obsidian mace from the side and quickly delivered an attack. Zhang Dong's sword collided with this mace, golden light washed over the darkness which tried to extinguish it. The two combatants found themselves being forced backward by the ensuing shockwave without a victor.

'This might actually take a while...'

Zhang Dong looked at his hand that was slightly shaking. Some of the dark energies were wrapping around his sword of light even now.

“So that’s the Demon King? He looks strong...”

A small group of people were looking at a slightly blurry crystal ball. In it, they could see the Demon King dressed in black armor clashing against Zhang Dong’s light sword. They could see the battle from his point of view thanks to this magical device that was created by him.

These people were the group of four heroes that were sitting outside the large formation that was created to fuel Zhang Dong during this fight. The four were left outside in the case that the demons attacked them. Only if Zhang Dong sent a message that he needed more juice would they enter into the formation to give him more.

“He looks like one of those dark knights, but much bigger.”

They could tell that Zhang Dong was much smaller than the person that he was fighting. The mace the monster was holding looked at least two meters in length and the Demon King was easily swinging it around with one hand. Each strike caused the platform the two were fighting to tremble and also caused the video to be quite shaky.

“I hate shaky cam footage...”

One of the girls commented while squinting a bit, it was quite hard to make anything out.

“Sakura please take it more seriously.”

Ami scolded the youngest girl while trying to get her to pay attention.

“Yes, Mr. Matthew is just trying to get us home, thanks to him we were able to get this far.”

Yua the older sister petted Sakura while keeping an eye out for any demons that could have attacked from outside. She was all for leaving this place, the strange people from the royal family were quite pushy and she stopped enjoying their presence after a while.

“Home huh?”

Takeshi placed the crystal ball down while looking out into the fog. He on the other hand was not so sure about going back. Like most young men in his position, he was hesitant to give all this power up. He was finally getting attention from beautiful girls and respect from others that many young men dreamed of.

“You don’t want to go back to your family?”

“Well... I.... I don’t know...”

He replied truthfully as he was not sure what the right choice was. Matthew had disclosed his real name with the group as they all came from a similar or maybe even the same world. He had promised to get them back home but also that he would give them a choice. He told them that he had no right to make the decision for them and that he could see why someone would like to remain in a world like this.

“Wait... what’s that...”

Before a proper conversation could happen Ami saw something.

“There is something coming from the fog... get ready guys!”

The party got their weapons ready. They weren't the only ones on defensive duty as the ships had been positioned to act as walls. On them, the cannons were all manned by the minimal number of people required.

Soon they saw them, a small army of demonic beasts emerged from the fog and charged in a blind rage towards their encampment. They were greeted by cannon fire and by various magical spells.

“It's just as he predicted, luckily for us we are prepared!”

Takeshi smirked a bit as he saw one of the monsters stepping in a certain spot. The moment it did its body was engulfed in a large fireball. Zhang Dong had ordered the dwarven craftsmen to place all of their mines around the ships.

“I don't think they will hold them off for long...”

Ami replied while looking at all of the explosions that were happening everywhere. That was the problem, the monsters didn't seem to halt their advance. When one of them exploded two others took their place and charged as if they were in a berserked state.

“Damn how many are there...”

Takeshi flinched a bit as due to the thick fog that was still there they couldn't really tell how many of these demons there were. They could only wait and try to last through this wave while not allowing them to touch the magic formation.

The four heroes jumped into the fray themselves soon after. The monster hordes seemed endless but it was their task to defend the people fueling Zhang Dong. If the monsters were allowed inside they would easily massacre the people that were put in a trance-like state.

“Wretched cur, tremble before my might!”

“You guys sure like to stick to your script, don't you?”

Zhang Dong dodged to the side as the Demon King swung his mace. The mace that connected with the obsidian slabs on the balcony trembled but somehow resisted it.

The two had been fighting for a few minutes and Zhang Dong was trying to feel out his opponent. He was glad that he decided to leave the girls out of this as this monster was far stronger than he anticipated, quite close to the nascent soul level of power.

‘Close... but not close enough that is...’

After his evasive maneuver was successful he saw his chance to strike. His body turned into a streak of golden lightning that appeared to the side of this armor-wearing monster.

Zhang Dong's fist was surrounded by an aura of golden plasma and it lodged itself into the Demon King's side. A sound of bent metal was heard by him as his fist connected with his opponent.

The Demon King was sent flying to the side after the well-placed liver shot. His armor in the spot started to crumble apart while the holy energies invaded the unprotected insides. Like many times before his

holy energies proved the bane of any demonic being. Even this Demon King wasn't immune to this Dao that he had enhanced with the soul cultivation.

"Arghhhh."

The monster cried out in pain as it slammed into one of the giant pillars that were placed on this very balcony. This wasn't the end for it though as this seemed to anger this monster more than cause damage.

The dark armor began rearranging itself into place as a dark aura covered Zhang Dong's opponent. It looked like no damage had been done to the monster but he knew otherwise.

His holy energies were now causing widespread chaos inside of his opponent's body. The only way to get rid of them was using up a lot of saved up mana. This was the real truth when fighting opponents with regenerative capabilities.

These types of powers always put a strain on the body and would not last forever. The biggest problem was just how much reserve mana this Demon Lord had. He himself was running on borrowed time, the longer this battle lasted the less energy Beatrice and her helpers would send to him. Thus each hit had to count.

Head, heart, solar plexus, the liver, and even the genitals. He aimed for all the critical locations that a humanoid body would have. Punch after punch rained down on his opponent that sent him crashing into more of those large pillars. After a certain point, he could tell that the monster was having a hard time healing its wounds.

With each hit, its four-meter large demon body started to shrink. It looked to not be able to sustain its full-powered form anymore, shrinking as it conserved energy.

Zhang Dong didn't really use any flashy moves this time around. It was a slow grind and methodical beat down that caused slow long-lasting damage that piled up on top of each other. Only when the chance presented itself did he go for the last hit.

"Let us end this, hand over that cube."

He put both of his hands together while producing a blade of light. This blade of light was quite condensed and had an actual sharp edge to it. With the help of his swordsmanship that was backed by his sword heart, he sliced forward.

The hit came almost instantaneous without giving the Demon King much time to react. The whole place rumbled as along with the demon's head the tip of the castle-like mountain was cleaved.

'Was that really it?'

As the tip of the castle was sliding down to the ground and making a lot of noise, he approached the monster's body. He had severed this being's clean off and the moment he did he could feel its demonic soul start to dissipate. While approaching he could still feel it trying to heal itself but soon even the body started to turn into dust.

As he got closer he could see the demon's body shrinking in size. Its armor was the first to crumble away into particles of dust. He was aware of how these things worked out, thus he kept a fighting stance while

looking around. Mostly at this time, the demon would go into his second more powerful form or the actual real last boss popped out from the side.

But even though he waited and waited nothing seemed to change. The whole body of the demon crumbled into dust while leaving his armored helmet behind. It was a bit strange that the body withered away before this head but soon it was its turn to disintegrate.

‘Is the cube in the head?’

A certain energy signature started coming off from the head. He could feel that the last nuclei was there and it was indeed resting in the demon king’s severed head. Zhang Dong had also checked his map previously and he couldn’t see any dark spots that were hiding anything away. This seemed to be it, the last part of the puzzle that would allow him to return home.

“Huh... why does he have that guy’s face.”

The metallic helmet finally evaporated into dust and revealed the face under it. It was of a three-eyed monster with a tint of red to its skin. This wasn’t the odd part, its face was similar to a person that he had met before. It was someone from the human side who caused Zhang Dong to space out for a moment.

Due to this little blunder, he was unable to react in time to what happened next. The head exploded revealing a large crimson crystal that was a lot larger than the ones that the demon lords had. This crystal shot off into the distance almost instantly when it was revealed and headed towards the barrier between the two continents.

“Shit...”

He snapped out of it and gave chase, the crystal went right through the thick obsidian plates of that balcony it was on. Almost instantly after this the whole castle began to shake and crumble as if this crystal was keeping it together.

‘It’s going towards the opening I came from...’

The flying monsters reacted to him wheezing by in his human form and gave chase. Luckily they were limited in their speed and started trailing behind. He wasn’t really able to contact the people outside as Beatrice and Isabella that he was connected with were still in the soul resonance trance.

“Get back here!”

While inserting more energy into his flight technique he bolted forward. The monsters behind him started to trail behind even more and he wasn’t even looking at the demon’s castle crumbling away into nothingness.

Almost instantly he and the crimson gem collided with the thin exit to the other side. The crystal stopped for a moment but in a matter of seconds, it managed to pierce its way to the other side. He as well collided with this opening and had to force his way to the other side yet he did it much faster than this gem.

When outside he reached his hand out, the red demonic crystal was right there. After going through the opening it lost some of its momentum. This was the best time to grab it so he propelled himself forward.

His fingertips touched the crystal and he was quick to start the absorption process but then it happened. He felt some kind of sharp pain. It was as if a thousand tiny needles were being pierced into his heart at the same time. This caused him to flinch while the partially absorbed crystal sped away into the distance.

“W-what...”

He instantly clenched his chest while looking to the side, there he saw it. A large man, his face covered in scars and wearing the Duke of Hohenberg crest. His hand was holding a long sword, this sword pierced through the chest of a golden haired girl...

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An older man with a somewhat gray beard and scars all over his face was glancing over to a pillar of light. He could see two young girls holding hands together with their eyes closed.

He turned to the other side, there explosions and sounds of monsters being killed greeted him. The whole place was a warzone with many lesser demons trying to get to them. Everyone was busy with the fight so he was sure that no one would block his way towards his mission.

The man's armor had the crest of the Hohenberg of Dragonridge noble house. He continued advancing while thinking about what he was about to do. His feet stopped directly before the golden light that signaled the beginning of this magical formation.

The man had observed other people entering this circle and after a short time, they would succumb to it, becoming nothing more than batteries. He knew that he didn't have much time but with his skills, he knew that it was possible.

“Please forgive me but this is all for the house's future!”

From his side, he pulled out a somewhat strange-looking lacerated dagger. Its shape was unusually bent and it gave off an eerie light. The spirit was on the inside, battling with the demons and that is where it would remain.

His instructions were clear, kill the girl when the possibility presented itself. The old man didn't believe that this demon king hunting plan had any merit. Leigong would be trapped in the demonic realm and the five demon lords were gone, there was no reason to fight anymore. The only thing important was that the kingdom remains peaceful and that his noble house survives.

He took a step towards the magical circle that was not made to repel humans. After the first step forward he began his charge. This was all done while being unaware of the red crystal that flew through the previously closed opening to the demonic continent.

The familiar feeling of flesh being pierced filled his hands as he delivered the killing blow. The girl before him didn't even know what had happened. Her body slowly slumped forward against the lady that this man was sworn to protect.

“It is done...”

“What did you do!?”

The old man turned to the voice, there a maddened Leigong was seen charging. Before he could react two hands grasped his head and lifted him up. He could feel massive amounts of energy getting injected into his body that instantly went limp.

His body lit up like a Christmas tree and his screams filled the air. His hands and legs promptly exploded into chunks of charred meat before he was tossed to the side like a puppet with its strings being cut.

“Beatrice...No...”

Zhang Dong acted fast, after taking care of the old man he started injecting his healing energies into Beatrice’s body. The dagger was pushed outside while he was able to mend her heart back into shape. His advanced cultivation level at this moment allowed for him to use more advanced techniques but even then there was something off.

“Something is wrong... her body is healed... but her soul is crumbling apart...”

It was a bizarre thing, normally a soul would not receive direct damage or crumble before the body fully gave out. He reacted fast so the damage was minimized, the blood flow returned to normal but for some reason, the girl was not waking up.

“B-beatrice? W-what’s going on?”

Due to Beatrice being taken out of the grand formation, Isabella also found herself regaining her senses.

“I don’t know... we were betrayed by one of your men...”

Zhang Dong glanced to the side, the man that he roasted was close to being dead. His body was almost all black.

“Why would you do such a thing...”

“I... I did it for the... I-long live house Hohenberg of D-dragonrige...”

Zhang Dong gritted his teeth. While pointing with his finger at the dying man.

“What did you do to her, what is this dagger! Answer me!”

“It’s too late... it’s the soul slaying dagger... p-please forgive me lady Isabella...”

Isabella looked down at the bloody dagger on the ground and picked it up before speaking out herself.

“N-no... this dagger belongs to my father... it can kill a summoner and cut their connection to their summoned beast instantly... it was purposely made to kill summoners...”

“Cut the connection?... is that why...”

Zhang Dong could feel it, he was being pulled away into his soul dimension. He was losing his connection to this world and even Bob his AI was raising an alarm.

There was also the problem of the demonic beings surrounding the whole encampment from all sides. He was somehow maintaining his form thanks to this formation but his power was being diminished. If he didn’t mend Beatrice’s soul before it faded away, he would be forced to leave this realm. He would be fine in his soul dimension that was between the worlds.

'I need to mend her soul but...'

Zhang Dong had a lot more knowledge of how souls worked now but it might not be enough in this situation.

"Bob... can I mend Beatrice's soul with my own..."

His first idea was to lend her a part of his own overground nascent soul. His cultivation level would regress slightly but this would be something that he was willing to do.

"The probability is... 0%... the user's soul is not compatible with the souls of the residents of this world. "

This was something that he was aware of, even if he wanted his soul that was being rejected by this world was no good. Souls were also different, even close family members would mostly not be compatible with each other.

'There is only one person here with a comparable soul to Beatrice's but...'

He looked to Isabella who was crying. Beatrice was surrounded by a thin layer of golden light that was slowing down the decaying process of the soul slaying dagger. There was a possibility of healing when he used Isabella but there were also huge risks. He would be risking her life in the process that would probably shorten both of their life spans.

"Please Lord Leigong, save Beatrice! There must be a way!"

"I..."

Zhang Dong hesitated, he knew that these two were close friends, maybe even more than that. He knew that if he proposed the healing procedure that the young girl would instantly agree.

Before any decisions could be made, something else occurred.

"Bravo..."

A sound of clapping echoed through the whole battlefield. The group of defenders and heroes that were fighting the swarms of monsters was surprised by a strange occurrence.

The monsters stopped in their tracks and started backing off while the fog dissipated. The loud sound of clapping then intensified and brought all eyes to a certain man. He was floating up in the sky, this was someone that a lot of people here knew well while others to a lesser extent.

"You..."

Zhang Dong looked up to the man that was floating their way. He had met this man before and even then he never liked him.

"Father came to save us all!"

Ludwig the prince cheered while holding a bloody sword up that was covered with black monster blood.

"The king? What is he doing here?"

Takeshi and the others weren't as ecstatic to see this person arrive. There was something strange going on, the man was just slowly floating forward with a strange crimson gem right next to him. The monsters were also parting to allow this man to land on a spot in front of the makeshift base that was created for the defense.

"Father? Ah yes, I guess this shell is your father."

"Get away from him, that's not the human king, it's the true Demon King."

Zhang Dong called out from the distance while glaring at the person from afar. He knew this fact after battling the Demon King on the demonic continent side. The face that the monster had was strangely similar to the one that this king was wearing. It was clear to him that the Demon King that he faced was some kind of clone and the real one had already been living among the humans.

This was clearly some farce, all of the demon lords could have easily invaded the human lands and taken them over. There was no way that the people of the races would be able to resist them. Not when the supposed strongest person in the lands was actually the Demon King in disguise.

"The Demon King? How is that possible?"

"Demon King? No, the Demon King died by the traveler's hand already, I'm something else entirely."

While saying this the 'King' looked to the crimson gem that was floating next to him. The stone started moving towards his hand and slowly entered his body through it.

"Stay with Beatrice, I'll handle this."

Zhang Dong floated up into the sky and towards this new foe that he was not familiar with. The man that was supposed to be the king was acting off-script.

"Did you call me the traveler?"

"Ah yes you, why are you still here? You got what you wanted, you don't need to be here, no?"

The two looked at each other from afar. Zhang Dong was taken aback by the words that were spoken.

"The traveler?"

"Yes, traveler. Why are you still here, there is nothing more for you to gain. Do you wish to receive the last nucleus? You don't need it to leave this world, you should have enough."

The king continued to speak as if he knew who Zhang Dong was and what his main purpose was. He wasn't wrong, with the current cubes that he had absorbed he would be able to go home. This would only be possible if he didn't send Takeshi and the three girls home though. Without the last nuclei that this fake king had absorbed he would need to utilize the one that he received after the dungeon collapsed.

"You look surprised. I thought you knew more but it seems that you don't..."

"Shut it! We don't have time for this, call back those demons. We don't have time for this."

He looked from the corner of his eye to where Beatrice was. Isabella was still crying and holding her hand while he was slowly losing his connection to this world. His power wasn't decreasing as much but if Beatrice's soul faded away he would just disappear from this planet altogether.

"Oh? So it wasn't an act? Do you really care for these creations? Why would someone that managed to escape the system have feelings for these things? Are you still not aware?"

"Shut up, what are you even talking about? Call back those monsters and give me the nucleus! I don't have time for this"

Zhang Dong's face contorted into rage as he approached the true Demon King. There was no time, he needed to act. If he defeated this person then surely he would receive the cube.

"This won't do, you have broken the cycle. The world needs to be reset, I am unable to go against the system, everything must return to zero..."

The king proclaimed while his body began to turn crimson. His body started expanding and he revealed his true form, one battle was over but the next one was upon him...

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The human was no more, it was replaced by a shadowy figure that was ever-expanding.

Ten...twenty...fifty... the ground rumbled as the many monstrous creatures flew towards the darkness within.

The mirror-like barrier that protected people from the demonic continent started to break. Many thin spider-like web cracks appeared before everything shattered into pieces.

People gathered here gasped out of fright but instead of an army of demons attacking them a massive surge of demonic energy flew towards the growing demon king. In this dark light, Zhang Dong could see many of the creatures that he had seen before.

'He is absorbing all of the demons from the demon side?'

Everyone backed away, stunned by what they were seeing. The human king that was the strongest man alive was the actual Demon King and now he was revealing his true form.

His children were here, they all dropped down to their knees with their eyes looking at the creature that was their father. Was he a demon from the beginning or did he replace him through the years? While the royal family members were having an identity crisis their father's form started taking shape.

Before Zhang Dong and everyone else stood a giant being. It was similar looking to some of the previous archdemons. Its body was darkish red and he had quite a bulky humanoid-shaped demonic body.

Around the forehead area, there were many protruding horns that surrounded a crown made of flames. Its face was truly demonic and the usual three eyes that the demons from this world had were there.

From its spine and shoulders, massive spikes were expanding, and where its abdomen should be there was a secondary face with quite the toothy mouth.

It was quite gigantic with hooved legs and a long spikey tail. The moment its transformation was complete a certain lack of any other demonic being could be seen. This monster somehow absorbed all of the demonic energies from this place along with any demons that were here.

“The cycle was broken but the cycle must continue!”

The demon roared while everyone grasped their heads. Everyone was forced to the ground with the exception of Zhang Dong. He could tell that this was some kind of strange attack that only affected the people from this world which he was not a part of.

“Damn, what is that bastard even talking about... what cycle?”

Zhang Dong grasped the air with his hand and a golden bolt of lightning appeared in it. After a short charge-up he chucked it towards this demonic being. The spear of light made a beautiful arc and headed right towards the massive creature’s head. Before it could connect it collided with some kind of dark barrier of flames which it couldn’t pass through.

“What?”

Zhang Dong saw the holy energies being erased by this barrier and the demon not suffering any kind of damage. He could still feel that this was a demon being like all the rest of them before it. It was just many times stronger than them, even than the early stage of nascent soul that he was in at the moment.

The monster didn’t even flinch but before it advanced forward a large amount of magical energy headed its way.

“Don’t forget about us!”

Takeshi shouted out while all the other people with ranged capabilities throughout various of their attacks at the large monster. The golems used large cannons, the elven mages combined their mana to form a large lance of pure magical energy, and even the people that were in the taken apart ships used their weapons to fire away.

The large monster’s whole frame became bathed in fire and explosions. Even though it was so huge its whole body became covered by all of this magical and technological energy.

Zhang Dong didn’t just remain in place either. He noticed that this monster wasn’t taking a step forward but neither was it backing off. It was clearly showing off like every evil enemy that thought that they were superior. This critical lapse in judgment was something that these boss-like monsters had and he would use it to his advantage.

“Takeshi, lend me your sword!”

In a flash of lightning, he appeared next to the hero that was performing some ranged slashes with his sword. Even before the young man could reply his sword was snatched away by Zhang Dong that quickly flew towards his enemy.

This was the strongest weapon that he could use and even though it wasn't quite of the heaven grade it would have to do. Zhang Dong's strongest attacks applied to swordsmanship, with his power fading fast this would need to do.

Together with his sword heart, he put everything he had into his swordsmanship skills. He grasped this longsword with both his hands and pushed all of his soul into it. He needed to destroy this demon down to his very being, damaging its body would not be enough.

Zhang Dong's body glowed once more but the glow soon faded as the golden light shifted towards the hero's sword in his hand. He pushed it up, holding it above his head. The light that he produced pierced the clouds above and revealed the shining star that lit up this planet.

"Sever..."

The demonic being suddenly moved its hand but it was too late at that point. Zhang Dong cleaved forward, both his hands moved down in a clean slicing movement. The moment the sword was pointing down the attack had gone through and it shattered into many tiny pieces, unable to last through the massive amounts of energy he was pushing into it.

The explosions that were covering the creature's body were pushed to the side. It was a clean cleave through the middle of the monster's body. It was a clean hit that managed to pierce through the demon's defenses and even its large hand that he threw forward to defend itself.

Earth parted beneath the monster and a giant fissure that went on for kilometers was created in the wake of this attack that Zhang Dong put all of his power behind. A massive shockwave tossed everything to the side of this parting earth as the ground rumbled. The earthquake could be felt by anyone on this continent and even reached up to the elven island.

Silence ensued as the monster's body started parting. It was a clean-cut that produced two symmetrical parts that were now opening up. While these two sides continued to part, Zhang Dong could see a large crystal inside, it was even bigger than the one that he received from the fake demon king.

"I...is it over?"

People stared at the monster and as it continued to part. It seemed that the monster had been dealt a critical blow but it wasn't so.

"The crystal..."

Zhang Dong eyed that corrupt gem and quickly flew towards it. There was something wrong, even though the monster was falling apart before his eyes this gem had not been sliced by his attack.

"I have to commend you on your perseverance, traveler."

A voice escaped from this gem and it sounded like the late human king. In a flash of light, the gem radiated power, a power through which Zhang Dong was sent flying backward from where he came from.

"Alas, you don't belong to this world anymore. Your connection to it has been cut, you can not harm this body!"

The red gem began giving out dark red light. Many strange dark tentacle-like whips shoot out from all directions. They embedded themselves into the large red demon's body and quickly started pulling it back together.

At this time Zhang Dong's body collided with the ground and he started bouncing like a ball. When the dust was cleared he found himself in the middle of the encampment, almost at the same spot from where he took off.

'What the hell, that should have been enough to kill it...do I need to be connected to a summoner to harm it?'

He wasn't sure what this was about but for some reason, this world would not allow him to kill this being. It seemed that only a person that was directly born in it would be able to achieve this feat.

'Is this some countermeasure about people from other worlds?'

If this theory was true, then even if the Hero party got strong enough they would not be able to kill this monster. Maybe that's how this whole thing worked, the demon king would just play dead and regenerate itself later to play this game once more.

It would lie dormant in the background allowing the heroes to win only to return later to do the same. For what reason this cycle of demons vs heroes continued was still unknown to him. One thing was clear, this demon here was not playing around anymore. The farce was up so now it needed to eliminate everyone that saw through its scheme.

While the red gem was pulling back the body together everyone else resumed their attacks. Even though they were connected no damage was being done. This was obvious as the monster was clearly something that was at the nascent soul level and close to its maximum.

'What should I do... what can I do?'

Zhang Dong looked tired standing up but the moment his foot had to support some weight it crumbled into tiny mana particles. He fell forward on his face and he finally noticed it, his body was fading away. The energy that he was left with had run out, soon he would fade away and be forced back into the soul dimension.

There was no real danger that he himself was in. He had enough energy to flee this world and this demon here would probably be unable to follow him to the space between worlds that he resided in.

He needed to make a decision as well, due to him losing his connection to Beatrice he would need to leave immediately. That would mean that he would need to leave everyone here to die. There was no time to send the four kids back to Earth, nor could he save anyone here with no energy left. Making another contract with someone else would also not give him enough power to defeat this demon.

"Leigong... please...I'll do anything... just bring her back..."

Zhang Dong snapped out of it and looked up. There Isabella was holding Beatrice in her hands and still crying. The girl had not moved from the spot at all and remained by the side of her close friend.

"Bring her back?..."

There was a way to do this, but it was a gamble. He was not sure what would happen if he fused these girls souls together but at this point, there might have been no other choice.

While crawling towards Isabella with his upper torso still in place he thought back to how things played themselves out. He had made many mistakes, he was hasty, he didn't think things through and how they would affect these youths. There were several things he could have done to prepare but he chose his family over the people in this world and now these two girls would have to pay for it.

"There is a way Isabella but..."

"I don't care, just bring her back!"

Zhang Dong nodded while giving out a sigh, the reply came fast and without any hesitation. He could only answer this resolution by reaching out with his hand towards Beatrice's forehead and touching it with his index finger...

Chapter 325

"Cold...everything...so...cold..."

A naked girl was floating around in a dark place. She was curled up in a ball as she tried to conserve the warmth but the more time passed the colder it became.

"D-did we do it? Are Isabella and Mr. Leigong okay?"

....

Beatrice remembered a haughty spirit that she met. He was sometimes overbearing while other times quite peculiar and hard to get along with. There was a certain light radiating from him, she knew this as their souls were connected with each other.

Then there was her new friend, a girl that she used to envy. Somehow the two were connected thanks to this odd spirit. Along their travels, the dislike turned into a friendship that she thought could last forever.

This only increased her anxiety, she knew that this wouldn't last. Her spirit was pushing them forward and she knew why he wanted to leave. At the end of this journey, the only thing that was connecting her to the new friend would go away. She would lose two of the people that could be relied on.

She didn't make it seem obvious and the spirit never asked about it. The world was relying on them so she pushed her selfish thoughts to the back of her mind. If everyone else was happy that would be enough, she was used to it.

"Leigong? Isabella? Who are they? I don't remember... I just want to sleep... It's cold..."

Soon the old memories started fading away, even when she tried to remember they weren't coming back. The bright light that was brought into her life started fading away and she started losing herself in this void.

....

....

"There you are..."

A voice called out to her, it belonged to a man but who was he. She felt like this was someone that was close to her but she couldn't recall. The girl could barely open up her eyes but when she did a radiant golden light filled her blurry vision.

"I'm sorry that I've made you wait..."

She could feel sadness coming from this voice. The light continued to get closer and soon she felt warmth returning to her body once more.

"Are you ready?" "Yes."

She could hear another voice that belonged to a girl. This voice was also very familiar even more than the one that belonged to the man.

Then she felt it, someone was right next to her. The girl opened up her eyes and saw a bright smile before her. A smile that she was very familiar with, it was her friend that was dear to her.

"Isabella?"

"Yes, don't worry, you're not alone..."

Zhang Dong looked at the two young souls before him. They were floating between his palms, he could feel that Beatrice was regaining her lost memories thanks to being in close proximity to someone that she resonated with. This wouldn't last for long so he needed to act fast.

"I need to start... please forgive me."

"It's okay Mr. Leigong."

Isabella replied while looking up to the giant made of lightning energy before her. The giant hands that were hovering between them moved together. Soon a strange feeling washed over both of the girls as everything faded to white.

Zhang Dong looked down at his hands, in his left he was holding a small wisp of light that was slowly fading away. In his right, he could see a much larger orb that was radiating warmth.

He slowly brought these two lights together while focusing. The larger ball of light that constituted Isabella in soul form slowly made contact with Beatrice's fading one. Soon the two light sources started to intertwine while the corruption subsided.

The darkness that was dimming Beatrice's soul started fusing itself with Isabella's. It looked like a yin and yang symbol that was battling for supremacy. The darkness was trying to push its way towards the light that was defending itself from the corruption.

This was the time to act, he used his own energies to attack this corruption by strengthening Isabella's soul. He couldn't overcharge it as too much would burst poor Beatrice's soul like a soap bubble. The corruption needed to be slowly filtered out while the other soul mended itself back.

The process was working but it was slow. On the outside things looked bleak. Zhang Dong's body had mostly evaporated into mana particles and only part of his arm remained. It hovered with its finger outstretched and still poking Isabella's forehead.

In the background, the bombardment continued but the first casualties of this expedition started to arise. The true Demon King had reformed itself and with a swipe of its large hand, it destroyed one of the flying ships that was used as a barricade. The soldiers that were manning the cannons and flinging the spells at this creature didn't even have time to react before they were engulfed in dark-colored hellfire.

Some were lucky enough to be close to some of the stronger combatants like the group of four heroes or the two elven mages that came along for this trip. Even then, all these people could do was defend themselves for a short period of time. Everyone retreated to the grand formation that had been broken already.

"There is nowhere to run, the cycle has been broken, all of you have to perish."

The monster proclaimed while the large toothy mouth that was at his abdomen area opened up. Dark flames and heretic energies along with miasma were discharged into the surroundings burning everything to ash. No one was safe, human, beast, or even insects; they would all need to be cleansed in this demonic fire so that the cycle could begin anew.

The survivors gathered looked up to the behemoth. This really seemed like it was the end but before the dark flames could singe the remaining people a pillar of light shot up into the sky. Dark demonic flames collided with this light, the two forces surprisingly repelled each other with the light managing to hold its own.

This didn't stop the demon from charging up a second attack, it leaned back and opened up both of its mouths. While holding its hands outstretched a mass of demonic energy formed in front of its body. It was spherical in shape and looked like a miniaturized sun made from dark flames.

"Perish within the cleansing flames, let everything return to the beginning."

As the demon lord was speaking he moved this dark sun up and over his head. It continued to expand into massive proportions and ready to singe this world into nothing but ash. The people of the races could only go down to their knees while looking at the massive ball of energy.

Then from within the small pillar of light that had blocked the previous attack a man in a white robe emerged. His form was familiar to everyone here yet in his eyes there was a certain sadness.

He pointed with his finger towards the large dark ball of flames. Right in front of him, a large magic circle appeared on it, with many runic symbols and strange writing. This magical circle expanded into a certain size before it split up into another one in front of it.

These magical spheres continued to pop up right in front of each other while pointing at the demon and the miniature star it was holding. It didn't look like the demon was agitated in any shape or form by this display of magic as it continued with its own technique.

Finally, with a loud roar, it threw this massive globe of demonic energy down on the people below it. Almost at the same moment, Zhang Dong looked up, from within his fingertip a tiny bubble of white energy emerged.

It was the size of a marble and moved rather sluggish towards the large descending ball of energy. Then when it seemed that Zhang Dong's spell was a fluke it touched the large magic circle in front of it. In a flash of light, this circle churned with power as it activated its effect.

The tiny bead of light shot forward and dramatically expanded in size. It turned into a beam of white light that continued to increase in thickness each time it passed through another of the previously produced magic circles.

In a fraction of a second, it matched the gigantic demonic sphere of energy and collided with it. To everyone's surprise, the Demon King's attack halted in its descent. A battle of two repelling energies commenced once again as the earth rumbled down below.

"Grab my hand!"

Takeshi called out to Ami as he held up a shield to protect the survivors. The party of heroes gave it all along with the elven ladies they produced the best shielding magics that they could.

Darkness and Light collided with each other and for a moment it looked like the dark sun would engulf the earth. But with a burst of energy, the magical circles began to turn. They span around while crackling with golden lightning energy.

The beam of white light expanded in size and into a cone shape outwardly. It engulfed the star of doom that was descending onto the survivors and started to push it back.

"How could this be... you should not have this much power..."

The demonic voice of the Demon King sounded out as it tried adding more of its black flames to his powerful attack. It didn't seem like it was much use as he was pushed back. The golden beam of light shot up into the stratosphere while also erasing this demon's most powerful attack.

"You had your fun, but this is the end..."

Zhang Dong appeared next to the large monster that only noticed that he was hovering in front of it the moment he got there. He was now directly looking at the massive jaws of the demon's second mouth.

The Demon King opened his gullet wide and quickly chomped towards the small being in front of it. The sword-length teeth descended onto its prey as the mouth closed around Zhang Dong's body.

"Foolish traveler you could have left this place but now.... ugh?"

While being assured of its victory the Demon King grinned but suddenly a strange feeling washed over his body. He could feel something moving inside of him.

A large opening in the back of this demon was created as Zhang Dong shot out. He was surrounded by his holy energies and looked slightly injured with clothes cut up.

“W-what did you...”

“Nothing, I just took your power source...”

In Zhang Dong’s hand was a large darkened gem. It was radiating strange energies but soon it started to diminish in size while revealing its true form, a cube.

“I-impossible...”

Without its source of energy, the large demon started faltering. Like a deflated balloon it started to shrink down in size all the way till it was the size of the human king.

Still alive the Demon King attempted to flee but before he could even flinch a torrent of golden light descended onto his body. It singed him to ashes rather quickly while Zhang Dong watched on with vacant eyes.

‘It’s finally over... but at what cost...’

Zhang Dong looked to the cube in his hand and then glanced behind him. There, Beatrice and Isabella were on the ground, both collapsed while holding hands.

Chapter 326

“Ahh....huh?”

The young girl opened up her eyes only to see the white ceiling above her. She still felt a bit drowsy and had trouble keeping her eyes open. She tried to move but her body was quite stiff and weak.

“Ugh... what is this?”

After managing to raise her top half from the bed she noticed something. She felt that something was tugging on her left arm. When she saw a strange golden chain of some sorts was there and it was attached to someone.

“Isabella?”

Beatrice moved her hand up slowly, the chain was only a meter long so Isabella’s hand was pulled up as well.

“Mmm?”

The other blond girl gave out a little grunt before she started to wake up.

“B-beatrice?”

Isabella felt almost exactly the same as her friend that was to her right side. Both of them were now in some kind of large and expensive-looking room. Both of them were wearing white pajamas that looked the same.

“Beatrice!”

Before the young girl could ask Isabella about what had happened she found herself being hugged. Both of them almost tumbled down the bed together after the quick attack.

Isabella started crying while Beatrice just continued to pet her head without really knowing what was going on. It seemed that the battle was over but she couldn't recall how. The last thing she remembered was Zhang Dong fighting the Demon Lord, then everything went blank and she woke up here.

“Isabella... you're choking me...”

“Ah excuse me...”

“What happened... what is this chain?”

Beatrice looked at her friend that's face was all red. But when she mentioned the chain that was attached to their wrists Isabella didn't really have an answer for it. Luckily for them, a certain person quickly appeared to answer this question.

“Good, you two are finally awake.”

A normal-sized Zhang Dong materialized out of thin air and appeared before the two girls.

“Mr. Leigong! Did we win?”

That was what Beatrice asked while also trying to get out of bed. The moment she did though a strange sharp pain appeared in her chest area which made her lean forward.

“Beatrice!?”

Isabella called out worried.

“Try not to move, your body isn't fully healed... I'll need to explain a couple of things to you two...”

Just like Beatrice, Isabella was knocked out during the process of soul merging that Zhang Dong performed on the two. After he managed to fuse both of their souls together his power level skyrocketed, it even reached a new height. Thanks to this he could take out that presence which was later given the name 'watcher' by Bob his AI assistant.

This was achieved after absorbing the last nucleus. The name was a dead giveaway, this person was here to watch over this world. If the people called Overseers were more akin to admins then this watcher could be something like a moderator. His power was above what the people were capable of.

From the conversation, it looked like this watcher was not supposed to act. Zhang Dong forced his hand after beating the false Demon Lord and doing it himself instead of the heroes. The balance was broken and he even absorbed all of the nuclei himself to gain more energy and information.

He did pose Bob this question, it seemed strange that the Overseers didn't become suspicious. His AI reassured him that the signal was blocked due to his system being severed from the source. He was a person that was now outside of it while also being able to use some of its features to his advantage.

"So I died?"

"I'm sorry Beatrice it was due to my father..."

Zhang Dong started off by informing Beatrice about the initial stabbing. The wound from it wasn't fully healed and it would take some time for the girl to make a full recovery.

"It's not Isabella's fault, it was probably just a ruse! Right, Mr. Leigong?"

Beatrice wasn't mad at her friend, it looked that from her standpoint the one at fault was the man and not the noble house he was attached to.

"... Regretfully, it was something ordered by Isabella's father... but the real culprit was the king..."

Zhang Dong looked mad when talking about the man that almost killed Beatrice. In his eyes, both he and the Duke were equally guilty of this deed. He knew that the king had given the order and also that there was more at stake than one girl's life if he refused the order. Even then, he felt disgusted even thinking about it.

"Father...where"

"Your father? For now, he is in the dungeon, I've put him there, he already confessed. About this and other things..."

Zhang Dong looked to the shocked girls that probably didn't know what to think. The Duke had also been responsible for killing Beatrice's grandfather and with the things being like this he could be sentenced to death.

"Dungeon? W-what happened?"

"First let me talk about the condition you two are in, I'm sure that you've noticed the chain and armbands..."

The two nodded while pulling on the chain gently. It looked to have been made with some precious metals and there was a small lock on each armband. The chains radiated some magical power while also being covered in strange runic symbols that the girls weren't very knowledgeable about.

"I had to merge your souls together... The soul slaying dagger's effect proved too much for my healing capabilities. The merging process was successful but there were certain drawbacks."

"What kind of drawbacks? Will we be okay?"

Zhang Dong gave out a sigh while also moving over to the large king-sized bed.

"I won't lie to you, I'm not certain myself. I fear that your lifespans have been lowered, by how much I don't know..."

This was somewhat a lie as Zhang Dong knew that their lives were halved. Due to the corruption, Beatrice's soul had to be strengthened by Isabella's. The drawback was that the other girl's own soul was diminished and shrunk down in size.

What was left were two souls that could not function correctly if they weren't in close proximity. He wasn't sure if the process was reversible, there was a small chance that with time the souls could return to their previous size. There were no cases like this recorded in any books and he also lacked the knowledge himself.

"Ah..."

The two girls reacted in silence at the mention of their lives being shortened.

"It's all because of me... if not for me Isabella's life wouldn't have been shortened..."

"What are you talking about?"

"But..."

"Don't be an idiot, it's natural for a friend to help their friend! I would have gladly done it again!"

Isabella smiled at Beatrice but then the two were brought back to reality due to the uncomfortable chain.

"This chain though..."

"Yes, you'll have to wear it for now. Your souls have shrunk down and normally they would have ceased to be. Luckily for you, your souls are very similar so they compliment each other. As long as you remain close, you will be fine."

This was the reason for the chain being there. With time the distance would increase but Zhang Dong didn't know if the two would ever be able to live apart from each other.

"I'm sorry if I didn't rush this..."

He dropped his head down while looking at the two girls. The blame was on him, at least that is what he felt. Due to his situation, he was more concerned about returning to his own world than with his new partners. They were all forced to hastily push through all the dangers with a half-assed plan.

If he thought things through more, waited for the heroes to get stronger this might have never happened in the first place. At least the assassination could have been averted but now the two would be stuck together and live shorter lives.

"What are you talking about Mr. Leigong?"

"Huh?"

Zhang Dong looked at Beatrice that was shaking her head and actually smiling.

"You saved us all, didn't you? No one else will have to get hurt now and the demon lords are no more. Isn't that right?"

Beatrice proclaimed while looking at Isabella.

“That’s right, it’s unbecoming of a Great Lightning Emperor to sulk! Everyone knew that there would be consequences, we can’t ask for more of you!”

He expected the two to cry, he even expected them to blame him or plea for help. Instead, they acted like mature adults and could see the bigger picture.

If you looked at it from the outside the expedition was a big success. All of the demonic lords had been killed and the true demon king was also dead. The king that controlled the lands from the shadows was revealed and the barrier to a whole new continent was also open.

For the common people, this was the time to rejoice. For thousands of years, they lived in fear of the demon invasion, never knowing if the barrier would fall one day. Now on the other hand they were finally free, it was time for them to reclaim this world for themselves.

“Is that so... think you two might have matured more than me...”

Zhang Dong raised his head while moving over and placing his hand on Beatrice’s head. His connection to this world was now even stronger than before. The unification of these two souls was boosting his powers.

“You should rest now, I’ll have the servants prepare some food, then we will have to talk about the future...”

After some pleasantries he left the room, leaving the two girls alone to talk things out. They didn’t seem that depressed by the fact that they would need to remain close to each other. He could even feel Isabella’s joy the moment he explained what the chain was for.

“Bob, how are those calculations going?”

“94%...”

“Good...”

The time was almost here, Bob was doing the last bit of calculations for his world travel. What was left to do was to create the magical formation through which he could send the heroes home. The same portal would also be used by him to leave this place but before that, there were some loose ends to tie up.

One of them was rotting in the dungeon below the castle they were in now. After the battle was done they returned to the human kingdom with the remaining forces. Without the king and with Zhang Dong being powered up there was no resistance and they established a somewhat new order.

Now came the real question, what would happen to this world if he left. Without him, there would come trouble. He felt that a civil war would take place now after the ruling monarch was gone. His children were there and they were not part of the system but could he leave it up to them to be good rulers?

“Well then, did you decide?”

“Ah, welcome Mr. Matthew.”

He arrived in a certain room where three girls and one young man were sitting. They were the party of heroes that weren't able to shine much due to his involvement. After the battle, he managed to sever their connection to the system thanks to Bob and now they needed to decide.

"Will you be staying, or will you return?"

Chapter 327

"Well then... are you really sure about this?"

"Yes Mr. Matthew, we have all talked this through."

Zhang Dong was in the human kingdom and in the capital city where he first met the King. He was standing with the group of four heroes. Takeshi and Ami were standing on one side while the two sisters were on the other side.

"I left you the knowledge required for crossing over worlds but without a nucleus, it's not usable..."

"Yes we know but you won't change our minds."

Zhang Dong gave out a sigh while rubbing his head. Takeshi and Ami had decided to remain in this world while the two sisters Sakura and Yua would be going back home.

He knew why Takeshi wanted to stay, a lot of young men would have done the same. The youth was now one of the most powerful people in this land and would soon become the Hero-King of this country.

With the death of their previous monarch, the country was destabilized. The other races might hold it against them that the human king turned out to be a demon. Thus the only person that could take his place would be the hero who defeated it.

Everyone agreed to falsify the information slightly. Beatrice and Isabella's contribution would still count but the hero party would be shown to have taken a more active part as well.

After everything was settled Zhang Dong with the help of Bob tweaked Takeshi's system. It would not be connected to the main one but he was able to keep his leveling system.

There was also the danger of the Overseers and lack of magical cubes. Luckily Bob had some answers this time around. What they left was an empty shell that would send a signal showing that this world was working as intended.

Zhang Dong wasn't sure if it would work but not like he had any other choice. He had already absorbed all the cubes that this world had to offer.

Normally he would smack Takeshi over the head and toss him back home but there was also Beatrice. He felt it would be better if the young hero remained here to protect everyone. Even though the five demon lords were gone that didn't mean that the entire demonic race had perished.

They weren't as strong as before but would be more or less equal to the other people living in this world. With the barrier being gone more conflict would arise, the people would need someone as strong as the heroes.

Ami was staying mostly due to having a crush on Takeshi. The two somewhat came together at the end of the journey and the members of the royal family were forced out of the picture. Due to their father being the demon king they had lost all of their political power.

They were still just regular humans as he had checked. No one would trust them to lead the country, without Takeshi taking the king's place there would be no peace. For now, all of them were thrown into the dungeon, at least the ones that they could find.

Some of the people from the royalist faction had already fled the capital before they even arrived to bring the news of their victory. It was clear that they would attempt some moves to regain their standing. Thus he was all for having someone like Takeshi remain here and protect Beatrice. The youth needed to work on himself but his heart seemed to be in the right place.

He only hoped that the romance geometrical figure that was created wouldn't get out of hand. It looked like Takeshi was still interested in Beatrice while Ami was gunning for her childhood friend. Then there was Isabella that was really close to her as well, while Beatrice remained a bit oblivious to everyone's approaches.

"Okay, everything is ready. Are you prepared?"

"Ah wait a moment..."

The two sisters moved over to Ami and the three girls started hugging it out. All of them were crying as they knew that they wouldn't be able to see their friend anymore. Some of the people that went on the journey with them were also here. The two female elven mages, some dwarves, and also Beatrice and Isabella.

After some heartfelt goodbyes, the two stepped onto the transportation circle. This one was prepared by Bob and Zhang Dong by reverse-engineering the original one. With the cube that operated it being absorbed it was ready for activation and there was no danger of it going wrong or at least that is what Bob was assuring him of.

Zhang Dong opened up his palm and a little holographic cube appeared there. It started shifting directions as if it was made from liquid metal before settling on some symbols. The moment it did the grand magic circle activated around the two girls.

They were surrounded by a large pillar of light that pierced the heavens just like the time they arrived here. This beam connected with something in the sky and a fissure opened up, through it a city appeared. It was the same one that the girls came through and soon they were blasting off into the air.

"Are you sure they will be okay..."

"Yes, if they happen to appear in the air they have the parachutes."

Due to the way the fissure looked, always showing a large city from far away in the sky Zhang Dong was a bit worried. For this reason, he had some of the craftsmen make two parachutes for the girls. After

some studious testing and training, it was safe to place the two back home. Even though Bob assured him that the probability of this happening was really low, it was better to be safe than sorry.

The hole in the sky soon mended itself back and the two were gone back home. This was the only thing that he could do for them as going there himself would be impossible without another world tether. Even if that could have been his world of origin, his body could be long dead.

“They are really gone...”

Ami said while grasping onto Takeshi’s arm, the girl continued to look up into the sky along with her childhood friend. Zhang Dong on the other hand walked over to the two blond girls that were now strong enough to walk around.

“Are you leaving as well Mr. Leigong... no is it Mr. Matthew... or was it, Zhang Dong?”

He laughed as he had disclosed to the two that he wasn’t a real summoned spirit but a person from another world. The two didn’t really get it as even there he went by a different name.

“Call me however you please.”

“Think Leigong suits you better, the other two sound strange...”

He could only laugh about his original name sounding weirdly to these two.

“It’s a very popular name where I come from!”

They all laughed but soon the girls looked sad once more. It was time to say their farewells to him as well. He had already prolonged his stay here and waited for the two to somewhat recover. His family was still waiting for him and he had no way of knowing where and when he would arrive if he made it back to his world.

The formation here had the coordinates for the homeworld that the hero party came from but not for his. They would limit the search though but he needed to leave this world before Bob could triangulate his destination.

“Do you really need to go...”

“Yes, my wife and children are waiting for their father...”

“Father...”

Isabella dropped her head down after the word father was mentioned. Her own dad was now trapped in the dungeons. Even though it was the king’s order he organized the assassination. The only reason that Zhang Dong didn’t punish him more thoroughly was that he was Isabella’s dad. Beatrice had forgiven him as she knew that he only did it to save his own daughter but it was not something that could be easily downplayed.

Zhang Dong placed his hand on Isabella’s and Beatrice’s shoulders each. He felt their souls one last time before stepping away.

“You’re getting better, but continue to stay close to each other. Before I go there is one last thing...”

He concentrated on his own soul. It was many times larger and denser than it was before he entered this world. Even though he was trapped here he would be taking new knowledge and power back to his own world. Before he left there was another gift that he wanted to give to the two girls, now after resting they would be able to receive it.

While concentrating on his soul he started yanking. He felt the strain and horrendous pain but he continued, in a moment a tiny fragment from his oversized soul started to loosen up.

"Here, take this."

"What is..."

The girls saw a small white bubble of energy escape from Zhang Dong's hand and float towards them. It started out slowly but soon the bubble split into two and each of them shot towards the girls and their dantian.

"What was that energy... it feels warm..."

"You'll see... try summoning me... both of you..."

"Summoning you, but you are right here?"

Asked Beatrice while confused.

"Just do it."

The two nodded and concentrated on the summoning spell. They could feel Zhang Dong still there but each of them could also feel something else, there was another smaller Zhang Dong there.

"Guohhh..."

"Gao..."

Soon two small creatures appeared. One was mostly black while the other was white. The two creatures seemed the same with the coloring being the only thing that was different. They both looked like miniaturized versions of his soul beast and now they would be tied to their souls.

"You didn't think I'd leave you without one last gift, now did you? Grow them well and they will become your greatest strength."

The two small dragons looked at the blond girls. The white one started floating around Beatrice and dropped on her shoulder while the black one did the same on Isabella's side.

"Dragons?"

The two were quite ecstatic after receiving the gifts which resulted in a big hug which caused Zhang Dong to rub the back of his head.

Soon it was time to return, Zhang Dong walked over to the spot that the two sisters occupied and took one last look at the new friends that he made. He wasn't here long but he would remember this place and the people he met here.

“Beatrice, Isabella. This is not a farewell more of a see you later. I will find a way to cure you and return, until then, stay in good health you two!”

He gave the two girls a smile while waving. The last thing he saw before the pillar of light appeared was their sobbing and snot-covered faces.

‘Bob get ready, we are leaving, next stop... my world!’

“Please wait, gathering data for the interworld jump...”

The teleportation formation connected to his soul world and through it, the opening to the tunnel that went between all the multiple worlds started opening. The gap opened up and after taking one last glance at the planet he was leaving he jumped, it was time to return home!

Chapter 328

“Hey! Come back here!”

A young woman was seen running through a forest. Her hair was messy and her clothes didn’t seem like they had been washed in weeks. Calluses had formed on her bloodied feet as she was bolting into the distance. She kept looking back while hearing angered shouts that were getting closer with each moment.

“Damn slave!”

“What?”

The girl was preoccupied with looking behind her while escaping but suddenly she heard a voice from the front. The moment she turned her face she saw a fist coming her way.

“UGhhh...”

She was struck down during her attempt to flee and crumbled like a deflated balloon onto the ground. Soon another man that was following her came out from the bushes.

“Stupid slut, making me run!”

The man looked maddened by the unruly slave and quickly took it out on the young woman. His foot was planted in her abdomen which made her tumble into some bushes.

“Hey, be careful. The Lord wanted her alive for the big event.”

“Tsk...”

The angry man clicked his tongue while going over to where the woman tumbled towards.

“Come here... hm?”

The young woman was barely moving at this point and the man grasped her arm. He leaned down to do this but while there he also noticed something out of the corner of his eye.

"Hey, what's that?"

"Where..."

He pointed to the shrubs, there he could see a foot sticking out. The other person that was there pulled out a large saber and slowly approached.

"Huh? Did another slave escape?"

What he saw was another person down on the ground. It was a man this time, it looked like this person had been through a lot. The robe that he was wearing was all cut up and his body had also many small wounds all over it.

"No... is he still alive? Was this bastard attacked by some beasts?"

The man with the saber moved closer and gave a poke to this man's foot with his weapon. The moment he did he could see it twitch slightly.

"Still alive? Must be a tough bastard but he doesn't feel special..."

The two men looked at each other. One of them grabbed the man and slung him over his shoulder.

"Take him, the more stock we have for the event the better."

The other slaver looked to the half-dead man and grinned.

"This is your lucky day, you'll help us please the clan lords."

The man that was covered in a mix of soil, blood, and leaves was grabbed by the other man and dragged back to where they came from.

"Took you long enough, who is that?"

"We found this one in the bushes, he is half dead but should prove as a nice addition to the 'event', Boss."

The two large burly men returned to what looked to be a caravan of people. There was a row of slaves all tied up in shackles with a couple of muscular men surrounding them. They were holding whips and when anyone got out of line or slowed down they would deliver punishment.

"For the event?"

An old man in a robe moved his hand over to the passed-out man. He yanked his hair up to look at his face, his eyebrow was raised instantly after examining.

"Not bad... if we cleaned him up he could go for some spirit crystals."

This man was wearing an expensive-looking robe. His long skeleton-like fingers were adorned with many rings and gemstones. He was quite lanky and tall and was clearly the owner of this slave caravan.

"Alas there is no time, toss him in the cage with the others, we will use him. Don't let the girl escape, if we lose her the lord will have our heads, is that understood!"

"Yes, boss."

The half-dead man and the young woman were then promptly tossed into a large carriage. This carriage was just a big cage with a lot of shackled people in it. All of them were wearing metal collars around their necks and the same collar found its way onto this man's neck as well.

"Young lady..."

The moment the girl was tossed into the cage a few people moved over to her.

"I'm sorry... I wasn't fast enough... I just didn't have enough strength and this slave collar."

Most of the people from this cage gathered around the girl that was caught. They were all wearing similar robes with the same emblem. They all had seen better days, everyone was beaten and bruised. The food and water rations were minimal and everyone was barely holding up.

"Save your strength Lady Yanmei, there is still hope... if we can survive through that..."

An old man commented from the side while looking out through the cage bars.

"Do you really think that if we survive they will keep their promise?"

"The White Tiger Clan isn't known for their mercy... but if they go back on their word then they will lose face... They will let us go but I'm sure their assassins will be sent soon after, that will be our chance to escape..."

"I'm sorry... if I just accepted the White Tiger Clan's young master's proposal this wouldn't be happening..."

"It's fine young lady... no one expected them to poison the lord so swiftly..."

"But we need to look towards the future..."

The man tried to reassure the young lady that there was still hope but soon he looked to the side. There the half-dead young man was lying, barely breathing while also bleeding.

"Who is that?"

"I don't know... they picked him up from the forest, I think he was attacked by some beast... an unlucky bystander..."

"Truly unlucky... he would have a bigger chance surviving in the forest than here..."

Some weak chuckling escaped from the people in this cage. They all knew that they were more than likely heading towards their demise. This person that had barely lived through the beast attack would soon meet his end as he wasn't in any condition to survive through what was coming next.

"We should help him..."

Lady Yanmei called out while moving over and having trouble turning the man around. The man's face was covered with dirt, blood, and grass even with that it was clear that he was quite handsome. There was no water that they could use to clean it. At most what the slaves could do was bandage up the wounds with ripped cloth parts.

Soon the trip continued and lasted a day till they arrived at a large city. The carriage with the slaves was covered up by a thick cloth so they couldn't really see what was happening outside.

Xia Yanmei was a young lady from the Snapping Turtle clan. A month ago her life looked bright, her clan was prospering and everyone was living their lives to the fullest. Then she met him, the young master from the White Tiger Clan.

He demanded that she became his concubine but she refused. Their clan wasn't much weaker than the White Tiger Clan but their parents told her to reconsider as they all knew how vicious those people were.

She knew that her refusing the offer was just a pretext to strike. There were already spies among them within a short amount of time her grandfather the strongest cultivator was poisoned and she was captured. A war was started which left her clan decimated, no one knew how many members were still alive or even if there any remained.

No one would come to help out. This was a fight between two small clans that didn't account for much. Even this city was at the sidelines of the empire. Not many bigger factions showed up here and even if they did no one was counting on any help.

"All of you get in!"

The sound of a rusty metal door closing was heard by the captured clan members. They were all forced into one cell that clearly didn't have enough for everyone.

"Is this the end..."

"Are they really going to do this to us?"

"Calm down everyone, there is still hope!"

"What hope? We are all doomed... we will all die tomorrow!"

The people from the Snapping Turtle Clan lamented while pushing against the metal bars. They would learn the hard way about why they shouldn't be doing that. After a few seconds, the person that was yanking on the metal bars found himself being shocked. He dropped down to his knees with his hair standing up, not dead yet unconscious.

"Idiots, don't touch the bars if you know what is good for you!"

The guard that was on duty laughed after seeing the first person being shocked. This wasn't the first time a slave did this, he could never get enough of seeing people get electrocuted.

Xia Yanmei slumped against the cell wall and slid down onto her posterior. She curled her knees up all the way to her chest while hugging them. Everyone was dead tired, the lamenting and cursing stopped as no one had enough stamina to keep up.

“Is this really the end... father... mother...”

Tears started pouring out of her eyes while she tried not to sob. If she knew that this would be the outcome she would have accepted the proposition. Even then there was no guarantee that her clan would be left alone. In this cruel world, only strength prevailed and the weak were snuffed out like candles in the wind.

“Ugh...”

She heard a grunt to the side, the man that was dragged along with them was still here. She placed her hand on his forehead and could feel that he had a fever. There was not much that she could do for him though. No medicine herbs, no water, and no food. The only thing she could do for him is to place him in a comfortable sleeping position with her lap as a pillow.

“This is the real world huh...”

The girl lived a sheltered life so this was a first. The man before her looked weak but he was still struggling to survive. She wished that he would manage but even if he recovered, tomorrow his death would be assured.

During the night she couldn't really sleep. The man continued to mumble strange things while tossing and turning. He mentioned a few unknown names of people and families that she had no idea about.

“I... I need to go b-back...”

He continued to mention these words while stretching out his hand as if he wanted to grasp something. She could only grasp it instead, the man's grip was quite weak and she couldn't feel an ounce of cultivation in him. The only thing she could think of, was him being crippled or just being one of the unlucky mortals that walked this world.

“Get your asses in gear, it's time for the big show!”

An obese man with yellowy teeth greeted them in the morning along with many guards. It was time to go towards their demise, still a little bit of hope remained as they were led through a corridor. The man that she spend the night nursing was pulled along, it seemed that he was close to waking up but not like the slavers would give him much time to recover.

When outside she was blinded by the bright sunlight and cheering people. All of them were led up to the outside, their shackles were quickly removed and the doors they came from closed behind them as they found themselves in a large arena, the people around them calling out for a good show and blood.

Chapter 329

‘Ugh... what's going on...’

‘Where am I?’

Zhang Dong slowly opened up his eyes, his vision was blurry and he could feel himself getting dragged by someone. His arms were spread and two people were supporting him from each side while treading towards some destination.

He tried to remember what happened after he crossed into that interworld tunnel once more. Slowly it started to come back to him. The moment he jumped through that fissure he was flung into it once more. Not much had changed since the first time he came there with one tiny difference, this time he knew of Bob's existence.

During his stay in the previous world, he gathered up many cubes which he used as energy sources. These he used to triangulate his home world's location. His Ai activated and the search started while he tumbled through the tunnel.

This place was bright and from time to time he could see flashes of other worlds. Some were similar to the one he came from with knights and wizards, others on the other hand seemed bizarre with strange creatures living in them.

Bob finally came through and was able to find the way back home. This would use up all of the conserved energy that he had stored behind. The moment he gave Bob the okay he felt a strange pulling sensation yanking him in one direction.

It wasn't anything pleasant as he was flung through this tunnel just in the opposite direction than before. The speed kept increasing and the worlds that he was able to see before became just a blurry mess.

He could barely stay awake as he slammed into some kind of wall. Instead of another fissure opening up, he felt like a piece of meat getting pushed through the grinder. It seemed he was forced here by Bob's triangulation, the rest was just a flash. He felt his flesh and soul being ripped apart and he was unable to keep himself awake as he passed out.

'Did I make it back? ... Why do I feel so weak...'

While trying to ascertain his location he felt a cool breeze and some light hitting his face. There was a sound of a gate sliding open before the walk forward continued. He was soon let down to the ground by the people that were carrying him. Soon shouts of many people made his hurting ears ring.

'Bob... what's happening...'

'System rebooting please wait...'

His inquiry was ignored and when focusing on his system screen he only saw a small pixelated hourglass slowly moving around. It seemed that while passing through the world's barrier the system used up almost all of its energy. It might have even saved his life from the way he felt. He was barely alive and there was another big problem, he couldn't feel his cultivation.

'It's gone... it's all gone?'

Nascent soul, core formation, foundation establishment, and then Qi condensation were the realms he was familiar with. Now on the other hand he could not feel an inkling of Qi in his body, it was totally dry as if it was used up during his journey back here.

“Uff...”

He felt his face hitting some dirt, the people that were helping him previously moved away. Zhang Dong could feel that there was a small group around him. They were standing close to each other while the shouts of the audience continued.

‘Is this some kind of arena?... why would they carry me here...’

Not knowing where he was and why he was here he started to panic. Without his cultivation, he wouldn’t be able to handle even a teenager that had some Qi in him. The only thing bringing him back to reality was the small hourglass on his system window.

‘Wait... maybe it’s not fully gone...’

He realized that his system was still there, it was just rebooting. When it came back on he might be able to recover all of his cultivation or at least some. With a plan in mind, he stopped squirming and tried to assess the situation.

His body was in a world of hurt, it was burning up due to many small cuts that have not yet healed. Someone had clearly mended him somewhat back to health. There were cloth bandages around his chest, arms, and legs.

Soon he could also see that they were all quite dirty and dark from his blood. When his vision became less blurry he could finally see his surroundings. He was indeed in some sort of large arena, there were many people looking at them.

‘... the clothes... they are similar...’

The first thing that he noticed is that the people were wearing robes. The dress sense was identical to what he was used to in his old world. He was also not getting any warning signs about not being tethered to this world so it was probable that he had returned.

“Xia Yanmei, you should have taken my proposal, now you will die like a dog!”

He heard a haughty voice from the distance, it was backed by cultivation so he could hear it clearly. This tone, this way of speaking, it was something that he was familiar with. When glancing up at the person that was speaking out, one thing sprung to his mind.

‘A young master... I did make it back! Now I just need to make it out of here alive... what is this about anyway...’

It was time to listen in, maybe he was even in his own territory. If this was one of his subservient clans they would surely help him out. The biggest problem was his cultivation level though, if he said that he was the United Element Sect’s Patriarch while having no power to back it up they could just slice his head off.

“Please young master Dai Rong, show mercy, my clan members have not done anything wrong...”

“They have done nothing wrong, you say? They are related to your Snapping Turtle Clan, that’s enough to make them guilty!”

‘Snapping Turtle Clan?’

“Please, the White Tiger Clan and us can still coexist with each other it’s not too late...”

‘White Tiger Clan?’

While the young girl named Xia Yanmei pleaded for the lives of her people Zhang Dong noticed something strange. The clan names were not what he was used to. Normally they were run by families, so the clan named White Tiger Clan should have been the Dai clan instead. The Snapping Turtle would have normally been the Xia clan.

‘Did I end up in another cultivation world... or is it just some far away province...’

There were a few possibilities. One was that he was in a similar world to his old one but it wasn’t quite the same. Another option was that he just ended up in some faraway land where the naming sense was just different.

With that thought in mind he calmed down, the first thing was to get out of here. The conversation continued between the two sides. It looked like the girl refused to get married to this young master type and he saw to it that her clan collapsed. This was quite the overreaction but it was in alignment with what a young master would do in his old world.

“Enough, you had your chance, now someone else has taken your spot!”

The young man named Dai Rong was hugged from the side by a jade-like beauty while laughing. The girl called Xia Yanmei just dropped her shoulders as it seemed that there was no way of talking her way out of this.

“But, I’m a magnanimous lord, you will have your chance of surviving. You just need to stay alive and you may live as a slave for the rest of your life!”

The young master laughed while dropping back onto a large chair. The girl that was with him landed in his lap and also started laughing. The two were in some VIP booth with other people in it, some were old and some were young and no one felt familiar in any way.

“Begin!”

The signal was given but Zhang Dong still felt terrible. A large gate opened up in the distance and something walked out. It looked like a silverback gorilla with strange white stripes running over its dark fur. There were three of these beasts there while the group that Zhang Dong was part of consisted of about twenty people.

“Thunder apes? Aren’t those as strong as a middle stage Inner Aura practitioner?”

‘Inner Aura realm?’

A big question mark appeared above Zhang Dong’s head. He had never heard about a cultivation realm like this one before. The notion that he was pushed into another world altogether was a possibility and without his system going online he could not ask Bob to confirm this either.

“What will we do...”

“W-we must fight, it’s the only way... look there are weapons there!”

The young lady called out to her people and pointed to a pile of weapons that was in the middle of the arena. It seemed that these people had left them some items to protect themselves with. Soon everyone from this clan rushed to the middle to pick up those items while also leaving him behind to his own devices.

He finally decided to get up as this was no time to play dead. Even then he felt like he was about to cross to the other side as standing up was already hard enough.

With all his strength that he could muster he forced himself to stand up. Now he was finally able to get a good look at everything and everyone. The group of twenty people was holding onto some rusty swords and spears. It was clear that these items would not do much to their opponents.

The trio of monsters beat their chests loudly while releasing small amounts of electricity. Soon a small skirmish between the cultivators and the beasts broke out. The people from the Snapping Turtle Clan used the old weapons but they snapped apart or didn’t have enough sharpness to do much damage to the monster apes.

“I’m scared...”

“Huh?”

Zhang Dong looked behind him. There he saw another group of people right up against the wall. It was composed of children, the elderly, and women. The group of twenty people that was fighting the monsters was clearly protecting this equally large group of non-combatants.

Then it happened one of the monsters spotted the people in the distance, him included. It broke out of the fight and started charging towards the people that could not protect themselves.

He found himself between a rock and a hard place. The monster was charging towards him but he was the only thing standing between these kids and their death.

Without thinking much he took up a battle stance, the monster charged quite fast and swung its large fist towards his position.

He knew that if he got hit, he would die. Even though his body was beaten up and tired, his eyes were still working. He predicted the trajectory of this hit and slipped to the side before it arrived there.

While the creature was confused about missing the weakling before him a fist descended towards its face. It burrowed itself into its cheek and did absolutely no damage. The monster didn’t even flinch while Zhang Dong felt his knuckles almost breaking apart.

The maddened monster raised its thick arms up into the air and started beating its chest like a drum. Electricity started shooting in all directions while hitting Zhang Dong straight on. He was sent flying by this small shockwave to the side, the monster snorting as if it just took care of some bug.

‘...External energy source detected... absorbing energy... system reboot complete...’

Chapter 330

Name :	Zhang Dong
Affiliation :	Zhang Clan, United Element Sect
Spirit Points :	0
Cultivation Base Qi :	Qi Condensation [4] [True Divine Golden Lightning Qi Scripture]
Cultivation Base Body :	Qi Condensation [Early Stage 0%] (Bronze Body)
Techniques :	True Divine Lightning Path Cultivation Art, Golden Body Arts, Thunderlight Sword, Thunder Movement Art...
Dao :	Dao of Heavenly Lightning, Dao of Smithing and Crafting...
Other :	Senior Aura, Impartation of Knowledge, Mentor's Eyes...

'W-what is this...'

Zhang Dong staggered forward and onto his knees. He was now looking at his status screen that he stopped using after achieving the nascent soul level.

'System has been rebooted.'

After getting jolted by the large gorilla he heard that his system was finally restarting. The moment it did he felt power rushing back into his body. He thought that this meant that his nascent soul cultivation would be restored but it wasn't so.

The feeling subsided quite fast while the system gave him a new red alarm. There was a big prompt with 'insufficient spirit points to restore cultivation' before him.

'Bob, what is the meaning of this? What happened with my cultivation? Is this even my old world?'

While rubbing his forehead and trying to get past the headache he consulted his AI.

'This is the user's homeworld. An error occurred while passing through the world barrier. To protect the user more energy was required.'

'More energy? Did you use my cultivation as the power source?'

'That is correct.'

'Great...'

He finally stood up and looked at the situation before him. This was apparently the world that he came from, it was also giving off the usual cultivator vibes but there was something strange. Zhang Dong felt that the spiritual energy was very similar but somehow different.

The monster gorilla that was moving towards him was also a bit peculiar. After the exchange, he could tell that the way this beast cultivated differed from the beasts back home. Before this question could be answered, he needed to get out of here.

He was weaker than ever, even when he popped up in the world of summoners he wasn't this weak. He did have superior cultivation methods so that did put him on a higher tier than anyone at his own level. Even with this, he would not be able to defeat a foundation establishment cultivator at the early stage.

"GUAHHHh."

'Damn it's coming... middle stage Inner Aura, was it?'

He focused on the creature that knocked him to the side with an electric shock. Luckily for him, he cultivated lightning. This left him immune to all lightning-based attacks that were weaker than his own DAO. He could even absorb the energy and use it to cultivate, which put an idea into his head.

"Hey ugly...what are you looking at?"

With a swift kick, he sent a fist-sized rock flying towards the Thunder Ape. The beast was hit right on the nose but didn't flinch, the rock was unable to cause any damage to this strong monster.

It did make the monster mad though, its eyes homed in on him and it started beating its chest once more. Small arcs of electricity started appearing on its large frame and it charged forward.

This was just what he was aiming for but he also needed to figure out how well he could handle this ape.

His opponent was quite fast all things considered. It jumped into the air when it was about ten meters away from him and raised its massive muscular hands up. Zhang Dong jumped back almost instantly while covering his face.

When the creature connected with the spot that he was previously on those two massive fists struck the ground. The earth cracked and small bursts of electricity were discharged into the surroundings.

Even though he was successful at reading his opponent he could feel that he was weaker than this creature. If he got hit by those two fists, he would have been critically injured. Then this monster even had passive attacks in the form of electricity bursts.

The moment this ambient lightning touched his body he quickly absorbed it. The energy that he absorbed felt weak, it was nothing compared to his own Divine Lightning but it would have to do.

'I'll need more than this...'

The little jolt of energy got his body pumping, it felt slightly revitalized but he needed more. Even though this beast was stronger than him in almost everything there were two things that it was lagging behind.

Zhang Dong jumped into the fray, which was also noticed by some of the people in the audience.

"Hey, what is that madman doing? He is trying to fight the Thunder Ape at close range?"

“That idiot, he is going to be turned to meat paste!”

A few of them cheered while looking, they wanted to see some blood but instead were surprised. The monster continued to attack but the strange man that was covered in dirt and blood kept avoiding each deadly strike. It was as if he knew where the monster would throw its massive fist and at the exact time dodged to the side.

This was Zhang Dong’s big advantage. He had already gone through many fights where his life was on the line. His mastery of predicting where his opponent would strike was something that he focused his time on. Even if the creature could take him out with one hit, it wouldn’t matter if it couldn’t actually deliver a blow in the first place.

“Hm... that movement... interesting...”

Up in the VIP booth where the young master was sitting there were other people. One of them was an old-looking cultivator with a long red beard. He was an elder that was tasked with keeping the White Tiger Clan young master safe.

Even though he found this whole event in poor taste he was unfit to comment on it. His job was to watch this young lord, if he stepped out of line he would surely be punished by the young master’s scary father.

He thought that this would be a quick slaughter, not much to watch. Now on the other hand he was looking at a peculiar young man. This man looked like he was one step in the grave but for some reason, he wasn’t giving up.

He continued to evade the ape beast’s strikes with grace while sometimes throwing in some of his own attacks. These strikes were hardly effective as they didn’t seem to be able to get through the monster’s thick hide nor were he able to inject any spiritual energy to damage the insides either.

‘He is getting faster and stronger...He isn’t from the Snapping Turtle Clan... where could someone like this be from’

The old man started to get worried, from what he knew a few people in this arena were just tossed in together with those Snapping Turtle Clan members. What if there was someone from a more influential clan or even sect pushed into a death game? What if that clan or sect found out about the whole predicament.

‘Am I worrying too much? What would a powerful sect member be doing here in the first place? Can he even defeat that Ape with his meager strength?’

The old man moved his head to the other side, there the group of twenty or so combatants had shrunk down to fifteen. The two remaining Thunder Apes had crushed them easily while also suffering minimal damage.

This senior had seen the low graded trash that those slaves called weapons. None of them would be able to help them through this battle. They were all useless and just bounced off the monster’s skin.

Then in the other corner was a smaller group of about ten people. It was composed of children and women. These women were all in front of their offsprings while looking terrified. They were focused on the stranger that was battling the Ape beast.

The old man leaned back in his chair and continued to look. The young master that he was tasked to protect wasn't even looking to this side. His gaze was on the young missus from the Snapping Turtle Clan.

Even though the girl was fighting well it wouldn't matter, they were facing off against a beast stronger than them and with low quality weapons. Then there were the slave collars that were ready to deliver a shock whenever the young master wanted. This old man didn't believe that this young master would keep his promise of letting these people go.

Cultivation Base Qi :

Qi Condensation [5] [True Divine Golden Lightning Qi Scripture]

'I'm getting stronger...'

Zhang Dong lodged his fist in the Silverback Gorilla-looking creature's abdomen. It felt like he was punching a hard wall. He was then shocked by the beast's residual electrical aura once again.

The people that looked at his fight were quite baffled. It made it seem that he was someone that didn't want to give up. He always jumped in to attack the beast but was constantly knocked back by the small lightning bolts. They didn't realize that this was his plan as with every shock that he took, he was gaining more power.

'Is there a way to get more energy out of this thing at once...'

He was getting a bit tired of the goose chase. This monster didn't use the lightning attack unless he closed in. It also had no range to speak of so he needed to constantly risk his life by getting closer to its massive arms.

It might have looked like the punches that he was delivering were useless but there was something that he was doing. With each punch, he injected a tiny amount of his spiritual energy to weaken the beast and also to find the source of its lightning.

After a few exchanges, he discovered the place where this organ was. It was somewhere around the lung area which might have explained why the Ape always beat its chest to release these shocks.

Now armed with the knowledge he could do two things, either continue his sluggish approach which was safer or go in for the kill. He knew enough about beasts to theorize that if he damaged that organ it would overload. Then it would release all of its stored power in one fell swoop.

'I should not dwindle too long...'

Out of the corner of his eye, he could see two other large Ape beasts. They already took the lives of many and the longer he fought the one here the more people would die.

The monster charged after him once more. Its eyes were filled with berserked rage due to Zhang Dong's constant evasions. This time though he didn't wait for the monster to charge, instead he closed the distance himself.

His hand opened up, his fingers together. Zhang Dong began gathering Qi onto his fingertips, there weren't that many Qi condensation techniques that he could utilize. This one would change his hand into a spear that could pierce through things like hard metal.

The monster swung its fist in a blind rage again but with a small side movement, this face only grazed Zhang Dong's cheek. He took a step forward and was now in range to perform his attack. His fingers looked like they were covered in golden plasma energy. They were quickly shoved into the monster's chest piercing it in one go as he aimed for the electrical organ.

The monster screamed in agony while also producing a massive electrical charge. Its organ was pierced and went out of control just as Zhang Dong had planned. The energy flowed into him and he took it all in.

Soon the arena went quiet as one of the ape beasts fell. The other two that were about to deliver a killing blow to one of the warriors there turned to the shouts of their kin. There they saw him falling down, dead and without movement.

'One down two to go...'