

Versatile 1661

Chapter – 1661 You Are No Match For Him

Zu Xiangtian headed to the village alone. His Wind Wings only had two wings, but they were spinning rapidly, like the propellers of a helicopter. They produced strong winds as he swept towards the village.

The village mostly consisted of wooden huts with straw roofs. Even the stalls with delicate gifts in the middle of the village were buffeted by the strong winds!

“Damn it, why is there a typhoon in this season!?” a vendor selling sandals cursed.

“That’s no typhoon. Didn’t you see a Mage flying in the sky? Assh***, stop putting up a show. We are doing business here. Go away!” a tanned woman selling beach dresses pointed at Zu Xiangtian and scolded him.

The tourists cursed out after they realized a Mage was responsible for the strong gusts. Many of them were throwing stuff into the air.

“Imbeciles,” Zu Xiangtian harrumphed coldly. He simply ignored the crowd.

He looked around, searching for Mo Fan and Mu Ningxue.

Mo Fan and Mu Ningxue were not hiding. They were at the beach in front of the resort.

The strong winds completely ruined the atmosphere, stirring up the sand into the air.

Mu Bai was treating Norman’s wounds in their room. He initially planned to bring Norman to the Parthenon Temple overnight, but he was afraid that the man might die from the slightest bump along the journey.

Kris had already notified the Parthenon Temple. A Muse would be here before daylight to treat his injuries. Mo Fan and the others had no choice but to look after him for the time being.

They were now convinced that Norman must have caused Su Lu some trouble and ruined his plan to capture the dragon. It was definitely good news for Mo Fan and the others.

The Heavens would eventually serve justice upon those contemptible people. Norman did what Mo Fan had wanted to do. Unfortunately, they would not stand a chance against Su Lu and the powerful Mages on the mountain. However, they would not have any trouble preventing Norman from falling into the hands of Su Lu’s men!

“Humph, you’re too naive if you think I don’t know what you’re up to... where are you hiding Norman? You won’t know how you died in the end if you dare oppose us!” Zu Xiangtian had found Mo Fan at the beach, and looked down at him arrogantly!

“I’ve just beaten a bunch of lackeys, did their master finally show up?” Mo Fan faced Zu Xiangtian fearlessly.

Mo Fan would let Chairman Shao Zheng deal with someone like Su Lu. He might not be bold enough to provoke Su Lu, knowing he was simply asking for death, but who did this Zu Xiangtian think he was?

Besides, the Zu Clan was in charge of the Luba Clan. Mo Fan did not believe the Zu Clan had nothing to do with the kidnapping of the children. Jiang Yu had run into some trouble tracking down the culprit while he was investigating the incident in their country. He believed the Zu Clan must have been making the arrangements for the Guild of the Wicked, and was why the officials in Feinia City had never revealed the truth to the public!

“Mo Fan, do you know what the renowned clans see you as? You are like a wild dog with rabies, biting every person you stumble into! You are unruly, but we tolerated you many times. After all, you have made quite a name for yourself, but it doesn’t mean we can’t get rid of you! You have offended many renowned families and clans in our country, and even the Mu Clan sees you as a thorn in their side!

“The Lu Clan is going to make you pay for the two lives they lost. Do you really think the Lu Clan doesn’t dare to fight back as you trample them? As for our Zu Clan, we simply treat it as if we were bitten by a wild dog. If any of us were serious about taking you out, do you think you would still be alive now?” Zu Xiangtian was quite familiar with Mo Fan’s situation.

“I thought your speech would be special enough to send chills down my spine, but it’s the same meaningless words over and over again,” Mo Fan answered blandly, while digging in his ear with his little finger.

He was really curious; were these disciples of renowned clans all cast from the same mold? Why did they have to act so self-righteous and despise him whenever they stumbled into him? Their speeches normally focused on the fact that he was just common-born, and how dare he oppose the nobles. Why were they not embarrassed by the fact he had beaten almost every person they had sent after him instead?

If everyone in the renowned clans was the same, well, he would seriously find fighting the Black Vatican to be more interesting. The Black Vatican’s beliefs still sounded a little reasonable and logical at times, but the beliefs of these renowned clans were all about lowering the average intelligence level of ordinary people!

“I’m just telling the truth, yet someone is still being so full of himself. I was a batch earlier than you, so I didn’t really want to fight you, or people would say that I’m bullying you. But since you still don’t know your place, I think it’s necessary to show you what a real expert is... Don’t worry, I won’t kill you, I just want to show you that your title as the strongest participant in the World College Tournament, the strongest young Mage in our country, and your Double Innate Elements are nothing, but a joke to me!” Zu Xiangtian exclaimed.

A person’s strength would decide everything. Zu Xiangtian knew Mo Fan was a wild dog who had no desire for power and influence. Playing up his influence at the international level to Mo Fan was like discussing magic to those imbeciles in the village: utterly pointless!

Therefore, Zu Xiangtian was planning to communicate with Mo Fan in the language he understood.

Didn’t Mo Fan think he was the strongest Mage in the younger generations?

He was only the strongest in his own environment. It was like a high schooler claiming to be the strongest because he could not find any worthy opponent in his school. However, his title as the strongest high schooler was shattered as soon as he enrolled in a higher magic institution.

Zu Xiangtian did not trouble Mo Fan in the past because he only saw Mo Fan as a student. Meanwhile, he was already on the international stage, a bigger environment. If he challenged a student, it was not worth mentioning, even if he won the duel. However, since they were on the same level now, he was no longer considered to be bullying Mo Fan!

“Very well, the best kind of problem is the one that can be settled with fists,” Mo Fan nodded. He finally noticed Zu Xiangtian was different from the idiots he had stumbled into before.

“Ask Mu Ningxue to come out, too. Aren’t you both considered the strongest duo in our country? I don’t think it’s necessary to waste my time on two different fights,” Zu Xiangtian looked around, searching for Mu Ningxue.

Many people wanted to challenge Mu Ningxue, especially after she had established Fanxue Mountain.

A lot of people who struggled to find Mo Fan had decided to challenge Mu Ningxue instead. Mu Ningxue normally spent her time at Fanxue Mountain. Unlike Mo Fan, she rarely left the country, so the challenges from proud young Mages easily stacked up into a pile. Mu Ningxue would accept a few challenges from the strongest people among the challengers once in a while. It was a type of training for her, too!

Mu Ningxue’s winning streak had lasted for close to a year. A media company had even volunteered to handle the challenges on behalf of Fanxue Mountain. Mo Fan had been missing a lot over the years, allowing Mu Ningxue to secure the limelight. Every young Mage in their country had heard of her!

Zu Xiangtian was aware of Mu Ningxue’s achievements. Therefore, things would be a lot simpler with Mu Ningxue here.

He could take on both of them alone. No one would say that he was bullying them!

“I can handle you myself!” Mo Fan did not want Mu Ningxue to be involved.

“You are overestimating yourself! You are just an Advanced Mage now. Ask Mu Ningxue to show herself. We’ll fight somewhere more spacious. It’s going to be troublesome if I end up killing some of the imbeciles in the village if we fight here!” Zu Xiangtian scoffed.

“I told you, I can handle you by myself!” Mo Fan refuted instantly.

“Big brother, what are you doing?” Apas suddenly showed up.

Mo Fan always thought Apas used her innocent face as a disguise. However, he had eventually realized that she was not pretending to be harmless on purpose. It was just how she looked naturally!

“What are you doing here?” Mo Fan frowned. He did not understand why Apas would show up now.

Zu Xiangtian’s eyes glittered, and he quickly glanced at Apas, who was wearing thin nightwear. She must have come out of the hut after hearing the noise. Her appearance strongly tempted him.

His grudge against Mo Fan did not only consist of the conflict between them, but the fact that Mo Fan had a little lamb he was particularly attracted to by his side!

-You are no match for him, don't bother fighting him,- Apas communicated with Mo Fan mentally.

-Are you sure?- Mo Fan said.

-Mm, the gap between the Super Level and the Advanced Level is too huge. You won't have trouble against a Ruler-inferior creature or a Super Mage with only a single Element in the Super Level, but this guy is stronger than Bartholomew. Even Mu Ningxue and you together won't be able to defeat him, and my mind control isn't going to be effective against him, either,- Apas declared confidently.

Apas had a sharp sense of danger. This Zu Xiangtian was a great threat to them!

Even though Apas hated Mo Fan's guts, they were currently on the same boat. If Mo Fan capsized, it would severely damage her soul. Zu Xiangtian might actually have a chance to turn her into his plaything then!

-What should we do, then?- Mo Fan asked quickly.

Mo Fan initially thought this Zu Xiangtian was only slightly stronger than Zu Kuangli and Zhao Liwan. He should be able to face the man himself, yet he began to doubt it when Apas told him the man was stronger than Bartholomew.

He was not dumb, nor was he naive enough to think that he could defeat every Super Mage. He still had the scars left by Bartholomew's Demon Judgment Sword!

Chapter 1662 Challenge to a Duel

"Big brother, stop fighting them, didn't they want to know where the meteorite went? Can't you just tell it was on the mountain in the west? I don't want to see you injured again..." Apas said, pretending to be worried about Mo Fan while communicating with him telepathically.

Zu Xiangtian was already having a reaction after seeing Apas' tear-stained face. Why? Why must such a gorgeous little girl stay with that wild dog?

"Apas, why did you say that? These people are the bad guys!" Mo Fan answered righteously.

"I don't think so, he seems more like a nice guy than the others from before. He didn't attack you right away, even though he seems very strong," Apas blinked, glancing casually at Zu Xiangtian.

The gloomy look on Zu Xiangtian's face dissipated instantly.

A little beauty with good taste!

Splendid, he might be able to have a lot of fun if he could get his hands on her. Perhaps she might be willing to stay with him, even!

“Little girl, are you sure you saw a meteorite landing on the mountain in the west? Is it that way?” Zu Xiangtian asked seriously, pointing at the mountains to the west.

He did not forget the reason he was here. He had plenty of time to trample Mo Fan, but he had to track down Norman before reporting back to Su Lu.

So it turned out that Mo Fan had no idea the meteorite was actually Norman. Why did he even waste his time on the idiot!?

“Mm, we were playing on the beach when we saw a meteorite falling in that direction. There were three guys that came to us and ask about it too, but brother started fighting them because he was too angry,” Apas nodded. The innocent look in her eyes convinced the man that she was not lying to him!

Zu Xiangtian looked at Mo Fan and harrumphed coldly. It turned out that Mo Fan was just messing around with them. He almost messed up by wasting his time here!

However, Zu Xiangtian was not feeling comfortable if he did not trample Mo Fan into the sand. He bet it would not take long for him to defeat Mo Fan and Mu Ningxue. Norman was seriously injured. He would not get too far!

“Have you made your decision? I don’t mind if you insist on fighting here,” Zu Xiangtian said.

“There are too many people nearby, and the place isn’t spacious enough. Most importantly, there aren’t any spectators. No one would know if I beat the crap out of you. How about this? We’ll organize an official duel back in our country. You will represent your clan, while I represent Fanxue Mountain. I’ll step on your face in front of everyone. It’s better than fighting here. You would only eat some dirt at most, even if you lost, and the next day, you’d just pretend like it never happened!” Mo Fan said.

Zu Xiangtian smiled. He thought Mo Fan wasn’t afraid of anything, but it turned out that he was too scared to fight!

However, he did find the suggestion appealing.

Zu Xiangtian was not trying to kill Mo Fan. He wanted to crush his dignity several times over and turn the little girl by his side into his plaything. He would feel better by torturing Mo Fan. Besides, the Zu Clan might get in trouble if he killed Mo Fan!

Beating Mo Fan into a half-dead dog in front of the reputable Mages and the authorities in his homeland, proving that the Zu Clan’s status was untouchable, was obviously more appealing than teaching him a lesson in this crappy place!

He could crush the dreams of the imbeciles who claimed Mo Fan was the strongest young Mage in their country at the same time, too!

Zu Xiangtian had long gotten past the age of defeating other talented young Mages. It was meaningless to him, but it was definitely worth his time to trample Mo Fan underfoot. Mo Fan had been making quite a name for himself. It was time to put a stop to it!

“I don’t mind if you’re trying to buy yourself some time. I do like the idea... I’ll give you half a year’s time. Half a year from now, I, Zu Xiangtian, will trample Fanxue Mountain under my feet. If you two fail to

reach the Super Level by then, there's no point in facing you in the duel. You can send out your strongest representative. I will admit my defeat if I lose to any of you!" Zu Xiangtian promised.

It was meaningless to only challenge Mo Fan. He was going to trample all of Fanxue Mountain!

Zu Xiangtian took a final glance at Apas. He was planning to get his hands on this little beauty soon, but it seemed like he would have to wait for some time. There was no need to rush it. He finally had a chance to work for Su Lu. It was necessary to consolidate his position. He would need around half a year for that.

Everything would be his after he was done with Mo Fan! Patience was important to achieve great things!

Even if he gave Mo Fan ten years, Mo Fan would never catch up to him, let alone in half a year!

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Zu Xiangtian soared into the sky. The Blue-Scaled Hawk was roaming nearby. Zu Kuangli spoke out when he saw Zu Xiangtian returning so quickly, "As expected of brother, you've dealt with them so quickly!"

"I haven't done anything. You idiots, couldn't you tell that Mo Fan was just messing with you!?" Zu Xiangtian cursed.

Zu Kuangli was startled. He recalled their encounter carefully and realized it was indeed the case. That Mo Fan suddenly started a fight out of nowhere by provoking him and Zhao Liwan...

They might not necessarily have seen the meteorite from the peninsula. After all, the sky was so huge, so it was possible that clouds had blocked the flames. Mo Fan acted like he was never going to tell them what he saw, yet there was a chance that he never saw anything.

He was just messing around with them!

"So... where did Norman go?" Zu Kuangli said.

"Did you check the mountains to the west? You only saw the trail he left behind. Perhaps he fell into the mountains instead of the sea," Zu Xiangtian said.

"The west... we didn't check there! Damn it, that Mo Fan is seriously bad luck! We almost messed up because of him!" Zu Kuangli patted himself on the head.

It was possible that Norman had fallen into the mountains, judging from the angle of the trail he had left behind!

"You were wasting your time arguing with that idiot instead of searching the mountains. How stupid can you be!?" Zu Xiangtian sneered.

"Yes, yes, it's just that Mo Fan has such a foul mouth. We have to teach him a lesson... brother, did you teach him a lesson?" Zu Kuangli asked eagerly.

"There's no point doing so here. It wouldn't make any difference," Zu Xiangtian told them the duel he had organized with Fanxue Mountain.

“Brother has all things considered. It won’t just be a little brawl. The whole country will be watching the duel! Nicely done!” Zu Kuangli said.

“How many times have I told you to use your brain more and not just act on impulse...”

“Brother is right! I can’t want to see Mo Fan doubting his life after he loses. He has no clue how strong brother is... (cough cough!) Let’s find Norman first. That Mo Fan is going to pay when the time comes!”

Chapter 1663 Your Breast Is Growing?

“Did that Zu Xiangtian seriously leave, just like that?” Mo Fan stared into the distance with a surprised look. “He didn’t seem that stupid to me.”

“I can’t fully control his mind, but I can guide his thoughts!” Apas sniffed.

“Guide his thoughts?” Mo Fan was confused.

Apas rolled her eyes at Mo Fan. She was not in the mood to explain the complicated topic of influencing a person’s thoughts and emotions.

Mo Fan was not bothered. Either way, they had managed to send Zu Xiangtian away. Norman was safe for now!

Someone finally arrived to heal Norman after midnight. He woke up in the middle of the process, surprised when he saw a bunch of strangers surrounding him.

Blue Star Knight Kris immediately explained the situation to Norman. Norman had been watching from the other mountain, so he had seen Mo Fan and the others show up at the peak where the people of the Magic Associations had gathered. However, he did not expect them to save his life after such a coincidence.

“Did you ruin their plan?” Mo Fan was more concerned about the ritual.

Su Lu... Mo Fan was disgusted by the man from the bottom of his heart! He hoped the man failed in everything he was trying to achieve!

Norman shook his head. He said feebly, “Su Lu is stronger than I thought. It’s only a matter of time until they can control Austin!”

“Does that mean the Black Dragon Emperor will fall into Su Lu’s hands?” Mo Fan asked.

Su Lu was incredibly strong if he could initiate the Ritual of a Forbidden Spell. He would then control an ancient Black Dragon. Wouldn’t that mean he would soon conquer the world?

Su Lu was obviously not a good man. Many countries were going to suffer once he was given more power than he already had!

In addition, Su Lu had always treated Shao Zheng as an eyesore. He had been intervening with Shao Zheng’s proposal to focus on fending off the sea monsters along the shoreline. If Su Lu had control over

the Black Dragon and became the highest authority in the Asian Continental Magic Association, it might affect Shao Zheng's status.

A loud roar came from the distance while they were in the middle of the discussion.

The roar sounded dull at first, but when it reached their ears, the voice exploded like a thunderclap. They subconsciously shivered in fear!

It was the unique roar of the Black Dragon!

"He's being controlled," Apas said softly.

Apas could understand a demon creature's emotions from their cries. Mo Fan's heart sank when he heard her words.

Su Lu's plan had still worked in the end!

Why did that assh*** not die to a lightning strike? What were the Heavens doing!?

The cliff at the top of Mount Tyrant...

Su Lu stood on the shattered cliff. His laughter echoed in the surroundings, but his face was sinisterly dark!

The Black Dragon beat its enormous wings and hovered above the clouds. Its fierce, bloodshot eyes were fixed on Su Lu. It slowly raised its claw.

"You dare touch me!" Su Lu glared at the Black Dragon and yelled.

The Black Dragon Emperor cried out in agony, as if it was suffering from some mental blow.

It did not swing its claw at Su Lu, but it needed a way to vent its rage. It went past Su Lu and swung its claws at the other members of the Magic Associations instead!

The members of the Magic Associations wailed like ghosts and howled like wolves as they were attacked. Two Super Mages died instantly to the dragon's claws!

"Why aren't you following my orders? Why aren't you listening to me!?" Su Lu yelled angrily.

The Black Dragon Emperor seemed to have lost his mind. He was attacking every human he came upon!

The Black Dragon Emperor was currently targeting Ferran. The man was using every spell he had to stay alive, but the Black Dragon was too quick for him. The dragon could easily travel across the entire sky just by beating its wings a few times!

"Mr. Su Lu, help!" Ferran scowled miserably.

The Black Dragon Emperor opened his mouth and bit at Ferran. He was planning to tear the peak in half too, leaving the tiny Ferran with no escape.

"Back off!" Su Lu snapped.

A Formation of black light appeared above the Black Dragon Emperor. Countless Stars connected rapidly.

When the Formation took shape, a half-transparent blood-red light curtain fell from the sky and encapsulated the Black Dragon Emperor.

It was the callback of the Contract, similar to the spell that Summoners normally used to withdraw their Summoned Beasts back into their Contract Space. However, the Black Dragon Emperor was extremely savage. He resisted the spell fiercely, unleashing his dragon might in his scales. The destructive force almost shattered Su Lu's spell!

"Son of a b**ch!" Su Lu was enraged. He flew above the Formation and Summoned bolts of lightning with the Contract to punish the Black Dragon who was ignoring his orders.

The Black Dragon cried out in agony as the lightning struck his soul. His unstoppable dragon might weakened after the torture. The light curtain fully encapsulated his body and forcibly dragged him into the Contract Space!

The Formation was on the verge of collapsing, but it still managed to subdue the Black Dragon in the end.

The mountain had lost many of its peaks. The rest of the Mages were hiding far away from the cliff, having yet to recover from the shock.

Su Lu's face was extremely pale, too. Not only was he severely injured during his attempt to subdue the Black Dragon, he was extremely frustrated!

The Black Dragon was unwilling to listen to him!

The Black Dragon was not obeying any of his orders!

He had spent so many years finding the way to subdue the Black Dragon, putting in so much effort to make the necessary preparations. He had also found the perfect solution to neutralize the dragon's breath. He had even placed a Seal on the Black Dragon's soul to enslave it and turn it into his Contracted Beast...

However, when Su Lu Summoned the Black Dragon with a burst of laughter to show off his great achievement, the Black Dragon dared to attack its own master, as if it had gone mad!

What was the point of capturing the Black Dragon if it was not going to follow his orders?

"Norman, I swear I'm going to hack you into pieces!"

Su Lu's face was frigid. Everything was supposed to be under his control, except Norman had suddenly intervened!

Norman had damaged part of the Ritual, so it had failed to completely subdue the dragon as intended!

Even though Su Lu could still Summon and withdraw the Black Dragon as he wished, the creature was savage and uncontrollable. It seemed to have lost its intelligence as a high-rank creature, too! It was nothing but a killing machine!

Would he even dare to Summon the mad Black Dragon for his purposes?

Years of effort had ended up with such an undesirable outcome. Su Lu had an urge to slaughter the Black Dragon and take its scales, core, and blood instead. However, he felt it was such a waste, killing the chicken just to get the eggs!

He could only lock the Black Dragon in the Contract Space and figure out another way to tame it. However, even he doubted there was actually a way to tame the dragon!

Mo Fan and the others returned to Athens the next day.

The people of the Parthenon Temple took Norman back. Whatever happened next was no longer Mo Fan's concern.

Mo Fan said goodbye to Xinxia before returning to his homeland. He had been away for half a year. He had only been planning to visit the Alps Institute for the exchange while dropping by the Holy Judgment Court for the required procedures, but he somehow went through so many troubles. He was reluctant to even recall some of them!

Mo Fan landed in Shanghai; he and Mu Ningxue stayed there for a few days. She had to make the necessary arrangements to get the defensive Equipment for her patrols crafted.

"Is there an armorer you recommend in the Magic City?" Mu Ningxue asked him.

"You can visit Huo Tuo. The old man was the one who crafted my Black Snake Armor. I have no doubt in his skills, but he's kind of a weird guy," Mo Fan told her.

"Alright, are you coming with me?" Mu Ningxue asked.

"I have to go to the Clearsky Hunter Agency to visit Lingling. If I don't see her soon, she might throw away my Hunter Badge!" Mo Fan said.

"Mm, I'll come find you after I reach a deal with Huo Tuo," Mu Ningxue nodded.

Mo Fan headed to the old street where the Clearsky Hunter Agency was located after parting ways with Mu Ningxue. He was still thinking about his conversation with her.

For some reason, he was in a great mood. He did not flirt much with Mu Ningxue, so why was he humming so happily? Perhaps it was because her attitude toward him had changed a lot?

"So this is the country where you were born? It doesn't look that special, apart from having a lot of people," Apas commented.

"You will see its differences soon," Mo Fan said blithely.

Mo Fan arrived at the Clearsky Hunter Agency. He had to admit, the Clearsky Hunter Agency looked a little run-down, as if it was about to be closed down soon. Mo Fan seriously did not understand why Old Bao was not willing to spend some money to renovate it. How were they supposed to do business like this?

"Lingling, I'm back! Lingling, my little Lingling, do you miss me... Lingling?" Mo Fan yelled as soon as he went inside, treating it like home.

Apas followed him inside. She looked around and saw a white cat under an old stool. As a lover of little animals, she picked up the cat and asked, "Are you looking for her?"

Lingling happened to be coming down the stairs. She looked at Mo Fan, then at Apas.

"Don't touch my cat," Lingling said coldly.

Lingling had not tied up her hair up in twin ponytails today, so it was disheveled. She had most likely been taking a nap. Her face was more mature now, instead of her usual adorable cuteness.

Mo Fan exclaimed in his heart, Oh my, even Lingling has grown a lot. She's no longer the adorable little girl I know. I'm so not used to it!

Mo Fan stepped forward and spread his arms wide, "Lingling, did you miss me? Give me a hug... huh, did your breast grow, too?"

Chapter 1664 Tit for Tat

Lingling's face darkened!

Mo Fan quickly explained himself when he saw Lingling was about to explode in anger, "I was just kidding. Let me introduce, her name is Apas..."

"Is she deaf?" Lingling asked.

"She's not, why do you ask?" Mo Fan looked at Apas.

"Put my cat down!" Lingling repeated.

Apas blinked and stared at the arrogant little girl.

"She likes me, didn't you notice she isn't willing to leave my arms?" Apas did not put the cat down, fondling its head.

"She's trembling in terror!" Lingling corrected her.

Apas opened her mouth in surprise. She observed the little girl who seemed to be a few years younger than her carefully.

Lingling was right that the kitten was not fond of her. It could pick up her scent of a Medusa. It was like a little lamb that did not dare to move in front of a starving wolf, too scared to even run away!

How did the little girl notice something so subtle?

Lingling took the little kitten from Apas and placed her in the backyard.

The little kitten was indeed terrified. It could not even walk properly!

"Ugh...(cough cough!), this is Lingling, my Hunter partner. Speaking of which, the two of you should be around the same age. Be nice to each other," Mo Fan said awkwardly.

Apas was at most around sixteen years old, but her European genes made her look a lot more mature than Asian girls. Even those at the age of twenty did not have curves like hers.

Mo Fan was thinking about how Lingling did not have any friends around her age while he was on the plane, and decided to introduce Apas to her. He had bet they would soon become good friends, but it seemed like Apas did not leave Lingling with a good first impression!

“I don’t mind as long as she doesn’t get in my way,” Lingling said.

Apas was displeased with Lingling’s attitude, too!

Apas had a naturally attractive demeanor. Even the little kids liked to hang around her. No one had treated her so bluntly after they first met her!

“In the past, I wouldn’t hesitate to give an impolite girl like her to my servants as snacks,” Apas rolled her eyes. It was difficult to tell if she was talking to Mo Fan, or if she was warning Lingling instead.

Lingling stared at Apas and seemed to notice something unusual about her. She turned to Mo Fan and asked, “What kind of creature is she?”

Lingling’s question took Mo Fan by surprise.

As expected of the daughter of a respectable Hunter, she was unusually sensitive to demon creatures!

Apas’ status was even less obvious than Liu Ru. No one would doubt her identity as a human as long as she did not reveal her unique golden snake eyes, yet Lingling had already deduced she was a demon creature after such a brief encounter!

Mo Fan was utterly impressed by Lingling’s ability to identify demon creatures!

“Ahem!... She’s a Medusa. She’s currently my second Contracted Beast,’ Mo Fan informed her awkwardly.

“Little Flame Belle is cuter,” Lingling calmly judged.

Little Flame Belle, who was taking a nap, came out of the Contract Space on her own as if she had heard Lingling’s compliment.

Apas was quite close to Little Flame Belle. Since Little Flame Belle’s intelligence was still developing, Apas had successfully bribed her with delicious snacks. That being said, Little Flame Belle was starting to lose her bottom line, too. She would befriend anyone that fed her delicious food!

When Little Flame Belle came out of the Contract Space, Lingling, who had not seen Little Flame Belle for a long time subconsciously reached her arms out to hug Little Flame Belle. Meanwhile, Apas, who had been playing with Little Flame Belle a lot lately since she had nothing else to do, was reaching her arms out too.

Little Flame Belle was struck dumb. Both were her beloved sisters that treated her with love and tenderness. They both had their arms out to hug her. Whose arms should she go to?

Luckily, Little Flame Belle was pretty smart, even though her intelligence was still developing. She jumped into Mo Fan’s arms and acted like he was the dearest to her.

Mo Fan was amused by Little Flame Belle's smart choice, and the tit for tat between Apas and Lingling.

"Let's go and eat something!" Mo Fan announced, changing the topic. He had not eaten Shanghai's seafood for a long time. He had struggled to enjoy the food in foreign countries, apart from the pizzas.

"Sure, you better keep me full at all times. Otherwise, I find annoying little girls to be the most delicious," Apas grinned. Since Mo Fan had already revealed her identity as a Medusa, she no longer had to put on an act in front of Lingling.

"I'm looking for a pair of snakeskin boots, too!" Lingling returned the favor.

Mo Fan was left speechless. Didn't they always say all the lolis in the world were as close as family? Why were these two being so aggressive toward one another?

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Mo Fan decisively chose a new crayfish restaurant after Mu Ningxue regrouped with them.

Eating crayfish was like a special ritual for Mo Fan every time he was in Shanghai. It felt like he was finally able to enjoy a pleasant meal at home after all the suffering he went through outside of his homeland.

"I don't like these red scorpions." Apas' face darkened when she saw the huge plate of crayfish.

"These are crayfish, not scorpions!" Mo Fan shelled a crayfish and shoved it into Apas' mouth without asking permission.

Apas ate the meat reluctantly. Her expression shifted slightly.

The spicy taste was quite good!

"Do it yourself," Mo Fan smiled. He knew Apas had never tried this delicacy before. China's cuisine never failed to impress!

"Mo Fan, I've asked Huo Tuo to craft you a new magic Armor. Remember to pick it up when it's done," Mu Ningxue said.

"For me? What for?" Mo Fan asked.

"Time to change your Black Snake Armor. How can you not have some reliable defensive Equipment?" Mu Ningxue said.

"Oh, I understand!" Mo Fan was overjoyed. His wife was concerned about his safety!

He finally realized why the relationship between him and Mu Ningxue felt a little different lately.

In the past, Mu Ningxue did not really care about him; everything he did was none of her concern. However, not only was she slowly accepting his feelings lately, she even took the initiative to do him some favors...

HAHAHA! The day in which he lay comfortably on the bed waiting for Mu Ningxue to seductively crawl onto him and sit on him like an empress was imminent!

Chapter 1665 Could that be Yan Shi?

Mo Fan initially thought Lingling had urged him to return to his country because she had something urgent to do, or she had found the secrets of a quest with an impressive reward. However, the little girl was reluctant to spill the beans now that he was back. She even put on an expression that was shunning him because he was still stuck in the Advanced Level!

Mo Fan wanted to advance to the Super Level, but he was struggling to find the right way to trigger the breakthrough. The renowned clans were able to find compatible ways and resources to aid their talented disciples with their breakthroughs. So far, the only resource that might come in handy that Mo Fan knew of was the power of the Totem Beasts. The problem was, the Totem Beasts were either hibernating, living in seclusion, or had gone extinct. It was not easy to track them down!

“Forget it if you haven’t reached the Super Level!” Lingling decided to hold on to her little secret.

Mo Fan had promised Zu Xiangtian he would face him in a duel in half a year from now. He could not afford to lose the duel. He also felt the urgency to reach the Super Level as soon as possible!

“I found something called the Horn of the Deer God in Athens. Your sister told me that it might be related to the Enforcement Union’s Tree of Vows. I’m thinking of visiting the Lingyin Enforcement Union. I’ll also drop by the temple at the lake to see if I can find any Totem Seals that resemble it,” Mo Fan told her.

“We’ll go together,” Mu Ningxue said.

Mu Ningxue did not like to procrastinate. Mo Fan was initially planning to get some rest for the day and go on a date with Mu Ningxue in a romantic park. He might have the chance to make some bold moves today. Mo Fan had been drooling over Mu Ningxue’s body for a decade!

“I’ve asked Nighthawk to give us a ride,” Lingling said.

Lingling texted Nighthawk. A few minutes later, Nighthawk arrived on his ferocious beast.

Nighthawk was wearing a dark blue outfit, and had a dark and cold bearing. His jawbone was extremely sharp, like it had been sharpened with a blade. He did not look like a good person at all.

However, his bearing as an Enforcer collapsed as soon as he was around Lingling. He put on an awkward smile when he saw her.

“Lingling, I’m not a taxi driver. You can’t just ask me to give you a ride whenever you want. It’s my bad for not telling you I was taking over your sister’s role, but the Enforcement Union is responsible for maintaining order. We can’t leave our positions for too long!” Nighthawk chided her.

Nighthawk only noticed Mo Fan and Mu Ningxue were there after finishing the sentence. He seemed a little surprised.

“Nighthawk, it’s been a while!” Mo Fan greeted him.

Nighthawk had been an Enforcer of the Magic City for some time. He was the chief commander of the operation that had wiped out the Blue Deacons Xu Zhaoting had exposed at the cost of his life.

Nighthawk was reassigned to Beiyu Mountain. He was going to be promoted to the Head of the Enforcement Union there, but Lu Zhantian had seized it with his connections instead. Nighthawk lost the chance to be promoted, but to his relief, the Lu Clan was stupid enough to touch Mo Fan's inverse scale. Mo Fan ended up forcing his way up Beiyu Mountain and killing Lu Zhantian!

Mo Fan fell out with the Lu Clan over the incident. If Shao Zheng had not been looking after him, the Lu Clan would have sent a Super Mage after Mo Fan!

Nighthawk did not stay at Beiyu Mountain. The head of the Enforcement Union had asked him to replace Leng Qing instead, so now was currently the Vice Head of the Lingyin Enforcement Union and taking orders from Tang Zhong.

The Beiyu Enforcement Union and the Lingyin Enforcement Union were in charge of the Magic City and Hangzhou, respectively. The Lingyin Enforcement Union was considered one of its main headquarters in the country, so Nighthawk had clearly managed to make a name for himself by getting appointed as the Vice Head of the Lingyin Enforcement Union.

"Yeah, it's been a while! Did you reach the Super Level?" Nighthawk suddenly asked.

"Not yet! Strange, why is everyone more concerned about my cultivation than I am?" Mo Fan had to ask.

"That's a relief!... Hehe, I was already an expert at the Advanced Level when you were still an Intermediate Mage at the Pearl Institute. If you were at the Super Level like I am now, wouldn't that mean I'm a good for nothing?" Nighthawk replied proudly.

Nighthawk was a lot stronger than Mo Fan when he was taking out the Black Vatican in the Magic City. He would feel ashamed if Mo Fan had already caught up to his cultivation!

"Sir, we are heading to Lingyin Mountain. Please drive safely, we have ladies on board!" Mo Fan said firmly.

Seriously, he had never seen a taxi driver so dramatic; it was time to leave a bad review!

Nighthawk was struck speechless.

—

It was a lot quicker to fly to Lingyin Mountain. It only took them around twenty minutes to reach Hangzhou's West Lake from Shanghai's Jing'an District!

Huge bubbles surfaced on the lake as they flew past the West Lake. Apas subconsciously trembled in fear, feeling an overwhelming sense of danger arising from the lake below.

"It's salty, I've brought you five kilos of them!" Mo Fan yelled at the lake. He tossed a whole bucket of salted prawns down at the lake from his Space Bracelet.

The prawns poured down into the lake like rain.

To prevent the food from dirtying the lake, a huge head rose from the water and opened its mouth to receive the prawns.

The prawns were like little shrimps compared to the mouth. The five kilos was only enough to be treated as a snack by the enormous creature.

Mo Fan was not planning to seriously feed the big guy. Knowing his appetite, he could easily spend all his money on food in just minutes!

“I’ll come visit you later. I have to go to the Lingyin Temple first!” Mo Fan yelled at the lake.

There was no response from the lake. The creature was most likely enjoying the taste of the prawns.

“Do you really have to force your tastes on everyone around you? Who would even feed him that stuff?” Lingling grunted.

Mo Fan was a foodie, and a stubborn one too. He would stick to the food he liked, and even forced the people around him to eat the same things...

Lingling was utterly speechless, too. How did he even convert the Black Totem Snake, who was used to eating the tasteless fish and prawns in the West Lake, into a fan of different flavors, like the thirteen aromas, spicy, or salt and pepper!

“What...what the hell was that thing!?” Apas asked coldly. She was still trembling.

“Oh, he’s a snake too, but I think he’s a different kind from you... His tastes are the same as you though, he likes salty food,” Mo Fan replied casually.

—

The bamboo stand on Lingyin Mountain were its most beautiful features. The wind would play a naturally pleasant melody when it blew through the trees. In the summer, people would find a relaxing spot and place a mat down, bringing along a nice pot of tea. The environment was more relaxing than any coffee shops or bars. It felt like their hearts were being purified by nature.

The soothing night breeze kept coming. Apas was from the dry desert in the west, so she had never experienced the natural scenery in the east. The fear she had felt previously had long dissipated. Her eyes were sparkling as she surveyed her surroundings.

Leaving aside her terrifying identity, Apas was no different than an ordinary girl. She was curious about everything around her.

“There’s nothing to get so excited about,” Lingling murmured under her breath.

“Malnourished girl, what are the holes on these stones for?” Apas asked haughtily.

Malnourished?

Lingling subconsciously looked down at herself when she heard the term. Her face darkened immediately!

Since Apas' appearance resembled Europeans, her body had matured earlier, just like most European girls. Some European girls around the age of fourteen already had the physique of an Asian woman at the age of twenty. Apas was slightly older than Lingling... her age and her genes had given her a huge advantage in terms of height and feminine features!

—

"Mo Fan, you finally came to visit me!" Tang Zhong was surprised to see Mo Fan at Lingyin Mountain, and received him with a warm smile.

"I didn't come to visit you. I heard from Leng Qing that there's a Deer God under the Tree of Vows. I happened to find the Horn of the Deer God when I was overseas. It might be related to a Totem Beast, so I came to ask you about it," Mo Fan explained.

"I've only heard the legend from a senior. She has been in seclusion for a long time. I only have her address. You can try and ask her. She knows the tale better than I do," Tang Zhong said.

Tang Zhong took out a pen and wrote down an address.

Mo Fan grabbed the paper and looked at the address briefly. He instinctively shifted his gaze to Nighthawk.

"Hey, stop treating me like a taxi driver. I'm a Vice Head of the Enforcement Union now, it's not like I have nothing better to do!" Nighthawk grumbled.

"Mo Fan, don't you think the address seems a little familiar?" Mu Ningxue said.

"Yantai?" Mo Fan took a closer look at the address.

"Yeah, Yantai, the old senior retired a long time ago. It's such a pity, too. If she hadn't chosen to retire, she would most likely be a Forbidden Mage by now." Tang Zong sighed heavily. "The impermanence of life, that tragedy was too much to bear for her. She lost her will, why would she care about becoming a Forbidden Mage or not?"

"Are you... talking about Yan Shi?" Mo Fan asked.

"Yan Shi? I have no idea who you're referring to. Her name is Lu Yi. She was once the Head of the Enforcement Union! She was also the old Councilman Jiang Xia's wife, but her influence greatly surpassed Jiang Xia's back in the days. Senior Lu Yi is the main reason why our country's Enforcement Union has its current status, including the reason why it is well-known in other countries!" Tang Zhong told him.

Lu Yi was long a reputable Mage when Tang Zhong was still a newbie. Tang Zhong was temporarily assigned to her on a mission. He still remembered it clearly even today. It was his first time talking to his goddess. He was so nervous that he had stammered while talking to her.

Lu Yi was considered the symbol of an era, but no one had expected the choice she made in the end...

Chapter 1666 Old Councilman, Jiang Xia

"Jiang Xia? Isn't he Jiang Feng's father?" Mo Fan asked curiously.

Wasn't Jiang Feng Little Flame Belle's mother? Yan Shi was Jiang Feng's mother, Chen Yi's grandmother!

When Chen Yi's grandmother was fighting the demon tree on Mount Kunyu, her strength was extremely close to that of a Forbidden Mage, and had almost toppled Mo Fan's understanding of how strong a Mage could be. He still remembered the shock he felt when he saw her destructive spells falling down from the sky like meteors!

However, the thing that touched Mo Fan the most was not her magic that was close to the level of a Forbidden Mage, but the remorse she had shown at the very end, the final words she had uttered with all her might while grabbing his hand.

Tang Zhong had no idea that Mo Fan had already met Lu Yi, who had changed her name to Yan Shi to conceal her identity.

Mo Fan described his encounter at Mount Kunyu to Tang Zhong. Tang Zhong was quite convinced that the Yan Shi whom Mo Fan mentioned was actually Lu Yi, the woman that had brought the Enforcement Union to its utmost brilliance.

"She betrayed the hopes of the people around her when choosing to pursue the path of a Forbidden Mage. It's true that becoming a Forbidden Mage was meaningless for her in that case. For a long time, I couldn't understand why she chose to give up in the end, but I finally know the reason now," Tang Zhong sighed.

Don't let the people around you down!

Those were the final words of a half-Forbidden Mage to Mo Fan!

Sometimes, people only had themselves to blame for being left all alone in the world...

'What about the Tree of Vows?' Mo Fan asked.

"It was Senior Lu Yi that brought the Tree of Vows back. It was to ensure that the members of the Enforcement Union would devote themselves to their duties. If Senior Lu Yi is no longer around... maybe you can talk to old Councilman Jiang Xia. They worked on many operations together, and the Tree of Vows was one of them," Tang Zhong said.

"Where is this Jiang Xia?" Mo Fan asked.

"Here in Hangzhou! He rarely involves himself in worldly affairs. He's preparing for his retirement, but I wouldn't recommend you talk to him," Tang Zhong said.

"Why is that?"

"Jiang Xia's second wife is from the Lu Clan. He was the one pulling the strings behind the Beiyu Enforcement Union. I doubt he will go easy on you, considering what you did at Beiyu Mountain," Tang Zhong said.

"I will never apologize for what happened at Beiyu Mountain," Mo Fan said seriously.

"It's true that they did cross the line back then, but it's going to be difficult to resolve the conflict. Jiang Xia might be Chen Yi's grandfather, but from what I know, Jiang Xia had long parted ways with Lu Yi. The

two never contacted one another after then. You'll have to work on it with a different approach. Jiang Xia definitely knows the origin of the Tree of Vows. If you can find its birthplace, you should be very close to finding the Deer God," Tang Zhong said.

"It sounds like trouble," Mo Fan said.

"It's your call, there's nothing I can do to help you," Tang Zhong shook his sleeves clean. He had no intention to put aside his pride and ask the old Councilman for help on behalf of Mo Fan!

Mo Fan asked Chen Yi about her grandfather. She told him that she had only met Jiang Xia once in her life, during a clan meeting held by the Zhao Clan. Jiang Xia was only there to go through the motions.

Mo Fan actually knew more about Chen Yi's grandfather than she did!

Mo Fan's head was hurting even more. According to Tang Zhong's description, Jiang Xia was a stubborn old man with a foul temper. If he knew Mo Fan was thinking of visiting him, he was already giving the national team and Shao Zheng face if he did not welcome him with Mages lined up in formation. There was no way he would let Mo Fan in!

Ever since Mo Fan had left the Pyramid, he felt like he was ready to break through the barrier of the Advanced Level.

He just needed a strong supply of energy to help him break through the sturdy walls of the Star Galaxy. If he could find a Totem Beast and let Little Loach acquire its power, Little Loach could provide him with the energy for the breakthrough!

Mo Fan relied heavily on Little Loach to improve his cultivation. However, as his rank increased, only the power of the Totem Beasts could satisfy its appetite now!

There were ancient sources of energy in the Pyramid, but that energy was not suitable for him, doing Mu Bai a huge favor instead. Mo Fan had no choice but to keep searching for the Totem Beasts!

His Demon Element was still in deep slumber. Mo Fan did not feel confident with his cultivation stagnant at the Advanced Level. He now realized how important it was to reach the Super Level. Otherwise, he would have to admit that he was inferior to a scum like Zu Xiangtian!

Yan Shi was right, he should not let anyone down... including idiots that deserved a beating!

The Dongfang Clan was the closest to Mo Fan in Hangzhou. Mo Fan went to visit Dongfang Lie. He happened to be in Hangzhou at the time.

"Dongfang Lie, how close is your clan to Jiang Xia?" Mo Fan asked him.

"Jiang Xia? The old Councilman who retired?" Dongfang Lie repeated.

"Yeah, him," Mo Fan nodded.

"That old prick, he's been pissing us off lately. He's still governing from behind the curtain after he's retired. He will only be willing to let go of his power when he's finally lying inside a coffin!" Dongfang Lie was enraged.

"Uhh... what happened?" Mo Fan had to ask.

“It actually has something to do with your Fanxue Mountain, too. That Jiang Xia has been ignoring us ever since we began working closely with your Fanxue Mountain. Our clan is well-known for our blacksmiths and armorers. As long as magic Equipment has our logo on it, most of them will be sold out within a day!

“Recently, one of our masters invented a magic shield made of Steel Rock. It will earn us a great fortune as long as we have the material. We had already reached a deal with Fanxue Mountain. You will be selling the Equipment, while we will focus on making it,” Dongfang Lie informed him.

Mu Ningxue nodded. She did know about this cooperation with the Dongfang Clan. Since Fanxue Mountain and the Dongfang Clan were tied to the same boat, she had agreed to proceed with the cooperation without having to take a close look at the details. However, she was preoccupied with the incident of the children’s hearts before she had time to ask what the deal was about.

As for why she decided to look for armorers overseas to craft the magic Equipment for her men on the Quartz Reef Island, it was because the Dongfang Clan was running short on workers to process the raw materials, hence Mu Ningxue had no choice but to look for other options. The funny thing was, the people she planned to cooperate with in Athens turned out to be unreliable, and she only learned about Huo Tuo after returning to the country. She had basically wasted a lot of effort. In simpler words, they were still lacking in connections!

“What is the problem?” Mo Fan asked.

“The materials! There’s only one Steel Rock mine. It’s owned by the government, and Jiang Xia is in charge of it. Jiang Xia told us that we will have to pay a special tax for the Steel Rock. Seriously, I have never heard of a tax like that! Anyway, it greatly increases the cost to craft the magic Equipment. The Steel Rock Shield is appealing because of its price. It’s only worth a shot if we target Basic and Intermediate Mages, but now, it’s no longer profitable because of Jiang Xia!” Dongfang Lie spat.

Chapter 1667: The Disaster of Salamander Demons

1667 The Disaster of Salamander Demons

Mo Fan was hoping to use his connections with the Dongfang Clan to solve his problem, but it turned out that the Dongfang Clan was holding a grudge against Jiang Xia too!

“I have a close friend in the government, I will ask him about the tax first. We should be able to get rid of it if it’s not reasonable,” Mo Fan said.

“Please do! I’ll think of a way to solve your problem. Our clan still has some old people that Jiang Xia has to give some face to,” Dongfang Lie said.

Mo Fan’s close friend in Hangzhou was obviously Councilman Zhu Meng. Even though Zhu Meng was from the Ancient Capital, he had established some connections in Hangzhou since the plague incident. He would know something about the tax implemented on the Steel Rock.

Zhu Meng happened to be in Hangzhou, too. Mo Fan went straight to see him. There was no need to be courteous with him!

Zhu Meng opened the door. He was still in his sleepwear. He was surprised there were women visiting him. He awkwardly led them to the living room before leaving to change his clothes.

“Why did you shave your beard? I feel like you look more imposing with your beard. You’ve shaved both your head and your beard. You look like an inmate that was just released from prison...” Mo Fan teased Zhu Meng when he noticed the changes in the councilman’s appearance.

“Piss off, everyone keeps saying how much younger I look now! You’re the only one with a foul tongue. Spill it out, what kind of trouble did you cause this time?” Zhu Meng harrumphed.

“Are you close with an old man called Jiang Xia?” Mo Fan cut straight to the topic.

“Jiang Xia? Sort of, we are both Councilmen. I often see him at the meetings. He might have retired, but many people are still asking him for help. Did you step on Jiang Xia’s tail this time? Why did you keep finding trouble with troublesome people like him? I’m telling you, Jiang Xia has been around for a long time. If he wants to deal with you, I won’t be able to protect you,” Zhu Meng said.

“I just want to ask him something,” Mo Fan said, and explained the reason he was searching for the origin of the Tree of Vows.

“I see... it won’t be difficult to meet him. I heard long ago that it was Senior Lu Yi and Jiang Xia that brought the Tree of Vows back when I was in the Enforcement Union. However, I’m familiar with Jiang Xia’s character. He’s like a businessman. He won’t bother with things that don’t bring him benefits. He will use everything he has to make a profit,” Zhu Meng advised him.

“Huh? Doesn’t that mean I won’t have a chance to talk to him? If there’s no other choice, I can ask the Black Totem Snake to kidnap Jiang Xia and force him to tell me the truth. I really need to find a Totem Beast. If I’m stuck in the Advanced Level for too long, my enemies will soon come to kill me!” Mo Fan exclaimed.

The Essence Orb was not filled yet, so the Demon Element was not available. Mo Fan was feeling uneasy. He had been courting death too much lately. He was seriously worried that he would die suddenly in the middle of the street!

“Hang on, hang on; if you do that, he will clearly turn your Fanxue Mountain upside down to get his revenge. There’s nothing bad about his character. He’s a businessman, and with the right benefits, he might even be willing to put aside his personal conflicts. He doesn’t really have a conflict with you, he’s just been influenced by the Lu Clan to hold a grudge against you. If you can offer him something valuable, he will tell you everything about the Tree of Vows and the tax on the Steel Rock,” Zhu Meng said.

“To suit his fancy, right?” Dongfang Lie asked.

“More or less. He’s willing to take any benefits,” Zhu Meng confirmed.

“Is he fond of beautiful ladies? I have a little European beauty here...” Mo Fan ventured.

“Ugh... how old is she now? Stop messing around,” Zhu Meng glanced at Apas. Even he felt awkward after hearing Mo Fan’s suggestion. This nut really could come up with all kinds of nonsense!

“Money, but I don’t have any,” Mo Fan said.

Mo Fan was lacking money, as usual. He could easily spend all his money on his cultivation, no matter how rich he was!

“You’ve come at the right time. I happen to know what’s troubling Jiang Xia lately. Dongfang Lie, didn’t you say you were asked to pay a high tax to buy the Steel Rock?” Zhu Meng said.

“Exactly!” Dongfang Lie snapped.

“I do know a thing or two about the Steel Rock. The Steel Rock is a special kind of rock surrounding the lake islands of the Thousand Island Lake. They are from the residue of the lake that accumulates between the boundary of the lake and the islands. You can find them attached to the edges of the hundred-some largest islands on the Thousand Island Lake. They can be collected and refined into raw materials to craft defensive Equipment...” Zhu Meng took a sip of his tea while explaining the source of the Steel Rock.

“Let’s skip the science behind it. It’s not really my concern,” Mo Fan interrupted him.

“Fine. The Thousand Islands Lake is currently a half-safe zone under Councilman Jiang Xia’s jurisdiction. Every year, it will provide the government with Steel Rock and another rare material we call Ward Rock. It is useful for building dams for rivers, lakes, and even the sea,” Zhu Meng said.

“Ward Rock?” Mu Ningxue had obviously heard about the material before.

“HAHA, I bet Fanxue Mountain is in need of the Ward Rock too! It’s something that can’t be bought for a thousand gold. The Steel Rock is more or less the impure version of the Ward Rock. It doesn’t matter if Jiang Xia sells them or not,” Zhu Meng said.

“So why is Ward Rock so important?” Mo Fan asked.

“Ward Rock is just like an Earth Pistil, and contains an abundant supply of energy. You saw how Pudong is now drowned in seawater? The government has built a long dam on the Huangpu River to stop the seawater from rising and spreading any further. It doesn’t just take builders to construct a long dam, since normal stone is as fragile as bubbles to Warrior-level and Commander-level creatures. Ward Rock is used to inject the dams with Earth Magic to strengthen their walls. It also makes the dams flexible. We can fix the dams quickly if they are destroyed, they are not just lifeless walls,” Lingling explained.

Most demon creatures had outstanding physical abilities. A Warrior-level creature could jump a dozen meters into the air. Walls over ten or twenty meters tall were barely like little fences to the demon creatures.

Ward Rock was magical; not only were they able to alter the shape of walls to stop demon creatures from crossing them; it was a lot sturdier than normal stone!

“Do you remember the tall dam in Tokyo’s East Maritime Fortress? There was a short dam and a tall dam. The demon creatures struggle to cross the tall dam despite their overwhelming numbers. The main reason is because the tall dam is made of Ward Rock. It’s like a powerful magic formation, and the main reason why Tokyo is unharmed while the battles along the coast never end. A complete piece of Ward Rock is as sturdy as a city!” Mu Ningxue said.

In simpler words, Ward Rock was a kind of Earth Pistil. An Earth Pistil was used to protect a piece of land with a barrier, also marking the demon creatures within its range. If a city inland had an Earth Pistil, its safety was more or less guaranteed.

Ward Rock was slightly weaker. It could only be used to build walls and stop enemies from crossing it, but that was extremely useful for many cities along the coastline!

“For some reason, a species we have never seen before appeared at the Thousand Islands Lake, called the Salamander Demons. Steel Rock and Ward Rock are the products of a complicated natural reaction. The soft ripples of the lake slowly accumulate substances around the edges of the islands. It takes time for the substances to accumulate, meaning their supply is limited.

“We need Earth Mages to collect the substances before dawn every day, but the Salamander Demons are proving fond of these substances, too. They take away the accumulated substances from the islands. These Salamander Demons were not hard to kill in the past, but for some reason, their skin has suddenly turned sturdy as steel lately, making it difficult to kill them!” Zhu Meng said.

“These Salamander Demons are using the substances and the energy they contained to strengthen their shells?” Mo Fan asked.

“Mm, that’s most likely the reason! Jiang Xia didn’t think the Salamander Demons were a serious threat before, but it’s extremely difficult to deal with them now! You know that if a species doesn’t have any natural foe in an ecosystem, it will destroy the resources and environment once they mass reproduce, like a plague of locusts. Jiang Xia has already smashed a lot of things because of this. If you can help him deal with the problem, he will bring you to the Tree of Vows and even find the Deer God for you!” Zhu Meng said.

“No wonder he added that insane ecology disaster tax to the Steel Rocks!” Dongfang Lie said.

“Mm, he can’t produce the Ward Rock if he doesn’t secure the islands. He probably has enough Steel Rock in storage to build a whole town. He’s clearly going to increase the price. Otherwise, where would he get the money to deal with the demon creatures from?” Zhu Meng pointed out.

“Fine! I thought Jiang Xia was purposely messing with our clan,” Dongfang Lie admitted.

“I already said that he’s the kind that puts his benefits first. The Salamander Demons aren’t high-level creatures, yet even a Super Mage would struggle to take them out. Jiang Xia once used his Super Spell on them out of anger, but he went crazy when he realized that even if the Salamander Demons stacked up into a mountain in front of him, he would kill less than a tenth of them, even if he used up all his energy!” Zhu Meng said.

Chapter 1668: Danger Level

Translator: Exodus Tales **Editor:** Exodus Tales

Lingling was extremely efficient. She had already gathered the information about the Salamander Demons while Zhu Meng was still explaining.

"The Hunter Union has put up a quest with no limits. They are paying two hundred thousand for a Salamander Demon's heart," Lingling said.

"No limits?" Mo Fan said.

"Mmm, it means they are willing to take as many Salamander Demon's hearts as anyone has," Lingling said.

"Wouldn't that make them a huge loss?" Mo Fan asked.

"Of course not; it's a request Jiang Xia made through the Hunter Union! A Salamander Demon's heart contains rich levels of the particles of the Steel Rock and Ward Rock. The other Mages are clearly going to sell them to the government, since they don't have the technique to refine them. The government is clearly profiting from it. Many Hunters and Mages have gone to the Thousand Islands Lake recently. The numbers of the Salamander Demons are just too overwhelming. The Thousand Islands Lake is like a land of gold for them, but according to my men, it's not that easy to get a Salamander Demon's heart," Zhu Meng said.

"Mo Fan, they are similar to the Sandstorm Demon Locusts," Lingling spoke up while browsing the information. "The Sandstorm Demon Locusts didn't have natural foes either, allowing them to mass reproduce endlessly, and grow into a disaster. Both humans and demon creatures had no choice but to avoid them. These Salamander Demons are actually a mutation of a species called the Spiral Shelled Monsters from the Pacific Ocean. They somehow found their way to the Thousand Islands Lake through an underground waterway. They crossbred with the lizard demons of the Thousand Islands Lake and gave birth to the Salamander Demons."

The rest of the group quickly shifted their attention to Lingling after hearing the important discoveries she had made.

Lingling continued to explain, "The Spiral Shelled Monsters have a very slow growth rate. They have to live in the shallow waters around the islands for five years before reaching the adult phase. Therefore, despite their outstanding reproductive abilities, they aren't necessarily a threat, and would only occupy a few islands at most. Interestingly, the Lizard Demons have bad reproductive abilities and a low survival rate, but have an insane growth rate. They are found in Dongting Lake and the Thousand Islands Lake. These two species surprisingly gave birth to a mutated species with outstanding reproductive abilities and an insane growth rate. A newly born Salamander Demon will mature in just a single season, with a long lifespan!"

"Just a season?" Mo Fan gasped.

"Yeah, a species like the Blue Moths might have outstanding growth pace and reproductive abilities, but in return, they have an extremely short lifespan and are very vulnerable. But the Salamander Demons... not only are they able to reproduce and mature quickly, they can live almost as long as a tortoise. I believe if we don't get rid of them or find a way to limit their growth, the Thousand Lakes Island will be crawling with these creatures in just five years. They will wipe out every plant and creature that can provide them with energy!" Lingling stated firmly.

Mo Fan and Lingling had witnessed how deadly the Sandstorm Demon Locusts were. The others would not treat the Salamander Demons seriously if they had not heard Lingling's analysis.

"Is it really that serious?" Zhu Meng frowned.

Zhu Meng only knew about the existence of the new species, but was unsure of its origins. He believed he should treat it more seriously after hearing Lingling's analysis. There had been many unpredictable threats lately!

"It's very serious, they are as dangerous as the Sandstorm Demon Locusts. If they haven't gone extinct, it means they don't have a deadly weakness, nor are they going to disappear on their own. They might continue to reproduce too, so it's important to have the Research Union keep an eye on a new species like the Salamander Demons, in case it turns out to be a new disaster species!" Lingling said.

Zhu Meng frowned.

If the Salamander Demons were indeed a disaster species, things were going to be a lot more complicated!

What was Jiang Xia even doing? He definitely knew more about the species, so why did he only put up a request and ask the Hunters and ordinary Mages for help? Why did he not report it to the Magic Association and let them assess the danger of the species?

"The information you found is very important, and your analysis is on point, too. I will head to the Research Union and ask them to assess the danger level of the Salamander Demons," Zhu Meng promised.

"Jiang Xia might be thinking of settling the problem himself. That way, the Ward Rock will still be his. If he reports this to his superiors, the government might end up splitting the profits or classify it as a territory of the demon creatures and not allow people to enter it freely," Mu Ningxue conjectured.

"Mm, that's possible too. I will have to ask Jiang Xia in person!" Zhu Meng was decisive as always.

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Zhu Meng brought Mo Fan and the others with him. Jiang Xia was already asleep when they arrived, and was woken up by Zhu Meng's sudden visit.

Zhu Meng was not afraid of offending the old Councilman after learning how serious the threat might be. He insisted on waking Jiang Xia up.

Jiang Xia yawned as he brought the guests to his living room with a sullen face. He poured himself some tea and glanced at his unexpected guests coldly.

"Zhu Meng, you have come to my house at this time. I won't forgive you if it's not something important!" Jiang Xia was an arrogant man. He treated Councilman Zhu Meng like he was his junior, and did not even bother greeting him conventionally.

"Councilman Jiang, have you assessed the danger level of the Salamander Demons?" Zhu Meng promptly inquired.

Jiang Xia frowned instantly, and fixed his eyes on him. Zhu Meng had asked a critical question!

“It’s the Research Union’s job,” Jiang Xia replied flatly.

“I believe the Salamander Demons might be a new disaster species. You better let the others know and tell them to send an army to deal with it,” Zhu Meng said.

“It’s not like the army has nothing better to do. You are well aware of how grim the situation is along the coastline! There’s no need to raise a fuss if the local government can deal with the problem!

“Or do you think I’m too old to handle a trivial matter like that myself? Besides, did the Research Union assess the danger? If not, what excuse do you have to send in the army? Who cares what you believe in? Even though you are in charge of the Threat-Elimination Strategy, you have no right to intervene with my business before the Research Union has finished assessing it!” Jiang Xia shouted.

“But it will take the Research Union a long time to assess it. I’m worried that it will be too late to get rid of the Salamander Demons by then,” Zhu Meng countered.

“See them out!” Jiang Xia rose to his feet and ordered his men to send his guests out.

Chapter 1669: Making Up the Numbers

Translator: Exodus Tales **Editor:** Exodus Tales

The Thousand Islands Lake was more than a hundred kilometers from Hangzhou, some distance away. The strange thing was, the sea was at least a hundred kilometers away from the Thousand Islands Lake, too. How did the Spiral Shelled Monsters even find their way there?

Nothing was indeed impossible when mating was involved, no matter what living creatures they were!

Mo Fan asked Lingling to accept the quest that Jiang Xia had put up as representatives of the Clearsky Hunter Agency. They were asking for the details of the Tree of Vows in return.

Jiang Xia was reluctant to accept their help at first. He had believed he could handle it himself, but after Zhu Meng’s sudden visit, he quickly asked some experts on demon creatures for their opinions.

They told him that the Salamander Demons were quite tricky to deal with. It was impossible to tell how long it would take the local government to eliminate them all without the help of elite Hunters.

Jiang Xia found out that Lingling’s group was responsible for taking down the Black Vatican on Chongming Island, solving the mystery of the Drowning Curse, and had even completed the quest of the Tear of Medusa. He eventually agreed to sign the Hunter’s Agreement after acknowledging Mo Fan and Lingling’s capabilities as Hunters.

Mo Fan was no longer worried that Jiang Xia would go back on his word only after signing the Hunter’s Agreement. After all, knowing Jiang Xia was the kind of person to haggle over every detail, he might have been reluctant to fulfill his end of the bargain once he knew they were looking for the Tree of Vows without it!

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Mo Fan put on a disguise and used the name Fan Mo before heading to the Thousand Islands Lake.

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There was a half-military outpost to the east of the Thousand Islands Lake, about the size of a small town. It did not have civilians. It mainly consisted of soldiers patrolling in the area to ensure the safety of Hangzhou and the other cities nearby.

There were four squads of soldiers mainly focused on patrolling the area. They were not too impressive in combat.

The rest of the people at the outpost were Hunters. The Thousand Islands Lake was currently a source of treasure. There was a simple Hunter's Lodge providing the latest updates on the quest to the Hunters. Information was often more important than strength to Hunters!

Minghu Outpost was developing steadily. Everything was in order, and defensive measures were being conducted properly. It had been bustling lately, especially after the government put up the quest asking for the Salamander Demons' Hearts, which had attracted many Hunters. The outpost was even a little overcrowded already.

Mo Fan noticed many people shouting at the entrance of the Hunter's Lodge when he walked past.

It was common to see Hunters recruiting members for their parties with the most primitive approach at places like the Hunter's Lodge. The parties that were recruiting new members would raise banners, leave their contact numbers, or simply yell and shout to attract people's attention.

"Water Mage, any Intermediate Water Mage looking to join a party? You must be at least an Intermediate Hunter to join our Foehn Hunter Squad! We are led by an experienced Advanced Mage. We guarantee you a high efficiency when it comes to completing quests. Any Water Mage looking for a party here!" a passionate young man yelled at the entrance of the Hunter's Lodge.

The young man immediately grabbed Mo Fan when he walked past him. "Friend, are you interested in joining our Foehn Hunter Squad? We will pay you two hundred thousand!"

"I'm not a Water Mage," Mo Fan said to the passionate young man, who somewhat resembled Zhang Xiaohou.

"It's fine if you're not a Water Mage. The Hunter Union has requested that every party have at least seven members. Our party only has six members, so we are short one Intermediate Mage. We have already devised a plan for the quest. It would be best if we can find a Water Mage, but it's not a must. You can just make up the numbers and cheer for us later!" the young man encouraged him.

"I see. Are you sure you just want me to make up the numbers?" Mo Fan asked.

"Of course, we have strong Mages in our party. You are in safe hands by joining us. Most importantly, we will pay you exactly what we promised!" the young man said.

"Are you familiar with this place?" Mo Fan asked.

“Of course we are! We aren’t that popular, but we’ve been active in the Thousand Islands Lake for around three years. We know the location of the islands, the depth of the water, even the spots where we can find many demon creatures. HAHAHA, what do you say? Are you interested in joining us?” the young man said.

“But... I’m not an Intermediate Mage,” Mo Fan said.

“Huh? Your extraordinary bearing caught my eyes. You must be a student of a famous institute. How are you not an Intermediate Mage? What is your Primary Element? Oh, I should ask, what is your Element?” the young man asked.

“My Primary Element is Lightning,” Mo Fan informed him.

“Lightning? Wait here, I’ll go and ask my captain!” the young man said, and ran into the hall.

Mo Fan had come to inspect the area and familiarize himself with the place. The government had yet to resolve the problem after such a long time. It was unlikely that he could settle the problem in just a few days.

The others were not going to be here any time soon. Mo Fan was planning to follow a party around and learn more about the Thousand Islands Lake. He wanted to take a look at the Salamander Demons first. It was better than roaming about aimlessly like a headless fly.

The young man was quite impatient, so it did not take him long to return.

“Brother, since our party is in a rush as we don’t want the others to get a head start, we are willing to let you join us, even though you are only a Basic Lightning Mage. However, you must be extremely careful. The Salamander Demons are not as weak as you think. Besides, they normally stay in packs,” the young man said.

“I’m an Advanced Mage, I’m not a Basic Mage,” Mo Fan said. He was too lazy to conceal his strength like he usually did.

“Hah, stop bluffing! If you’re an Advanced Mage at such a young age, I’d be a Super Mage by now. Let’s go, we must hurry! The other Hunter Groups have already moved out. We can’t let them take all the profits!” The young man dragged Mo Fan to group up with the rest of the party.

“I’m really an Advanced Mage,” Mo Fan said with a wry smile.

“Sure, you’re an Advanced Mage. We’ll all cheer for you when you take on the demon creatures on your own!” The young man did not treat Mo Fan’s words seriously, clearly not believing him.

It was not his fault. First, it was rare for someone in their twenties to be an Advanced Mage. Second, those people would usually stay in their own clans and enjoy the resources provided by their clans, or have their own hunting bands. Why would he be looking to join a random party at the Hunter’s Lodge?

Chapter 1670: Perfect Terrain

Translator: Exodus Tales **Editor:** Exodus Tales

Mo Fan soon became an official member of the Foehn Hunter Squad after paying the deposit.

Not every Hunter had a fixed group. It was impossible for every member in a group to always be on good terms with one another, nor was it possible for a group to not suffer any deaths. Normally, the death of a member would eventually lead to the party's disbanding.

Therefore, it was common for Hunters to form a party at the last moment for a specific quest. Taking the difficulty of the quest and the safety of the Hunters into consideration, the Hunter Union would set level requirements and the number of members of a party for different quests. The party had to meet the requirements before they were allowed to take on the quests.

In the past, many Hunters had taken on quests beyond their capabilities. Some of the quests were only available to a single party, meaning that other parties could not pursue those quests after they were taken. As a result, not only were many Hunters killed because they were too weak, it also delayed the completion of the quests and wasted their employer's time and opportunities.

The Foehn Hunter Squad had failed to meet the requirements because it was short of a member.

The deposit that Mo Fan paid was just a simple constraint for members that had joined the party temporarily. It was necessary to prevent a new member from leaving the party for no reason, or running away on their own when the party was in danger. The leader had the right to keep the deposit if either situation happened.

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The young man was called Zhong Li. He was the Wind Mage in the party.

He was surprised to find the party leader was a woman. Her fair skin was smooth and tender. She was in her late twenties, mature and beautiful.

Mo Fan had seen women leading Hunter Groups, but most of them were the tough and capable kind. It was rare to see a woman that kept flirting and teasing her members.

"Little boy, you better look after yourself. I won't be able to keep an eye on you all the time. It will be a pity if your handsome face is ruined and covered in blood," the leader, Gu Ying, told him with a smile.

Mo Fan listened to Gu Ying's teasing with a serious face. He lowered his head and looked at his crotch, "Leader is talking to you, did you hear her?"

Gu Ying did not react at first. She was wondering why the young man was talking to himself like a retard. She finally realized something when she noticed where Mo Fan was looking and recalled what she had said to him. She rolled her eyes at Mo Fan alluringly and giggled, "You're an interesting guy."

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Mo Fan was glad he could just follow the party, knowing how bad he was with directions. The terrain of the Thousand Islands Lake was rather complicated. Mo Fan was seriously worried that he would not be able to find his way back on his own.

The group of seven left the outpost. They traveled across the swampy areas along the lake for two hours.

“The Valley Lake Island is ahead. The island is almost entirely surrounded by mountains, apart from a narrow crack connected to the Thousand Islands Lake. We all know that the Salamander Demons stay in packs, and they usually travel in groups of dozens. It’s difficult for even a strong party to face a few dozen Salamander Demons at once, so we must abuse the terrain of the Valley Lake Island. Since the island is surrounded by mountains, we’ll send someone to lure the Salamander Demons to the crack and only let two or three of them enter at a time by blocking the crack. That way, we won’t have any trouble killing the Salamander Demons,” Gu Ying pointed at an island in the distance.

“That’s brilliant, how did you find such a place with the perfect terrain?” the Ice Mage in the party, Xie Hao, asked.

“It’s all thanks to me. I was chased by a Brutish Water Mammoth once. I happened to see a part of the lake surrounded by mountains when I had nowhere left to run to. I thought I was dead for sure, but it turned out to be the perfect hiding spot. I only survived because the Brutish Water Mammoth eventually stopped chasing me. I noticed that the island surrounded by hills with only a narrow crack for its entrance was perfect for our plan to control the numbers of demon creatures we fight at a time,” Zhong Li said proudly.

“Isn’t the Brutish Water Mammoth an extremely dangerous species? You’re lucky to be alive!”

“Yeah, I also think it’s my lucky place, so I believe we can earn a fortune using it!” Zhong Li agreed excitedly.

Mo Fan agreed that the Valley Lake Island was perfect for battle.

The mountains were surrounding a submerged valley with a narrow ravine leading to the spacious lake. The crack had tall mountain walls on both sides, so the demon creatures were unlikely to fly over them or flank them from the sides. An Earth Mage could easily block off the entrance too, providing them with a safe and enclosed environment to fight the creatures that were lured into the pass.

It turned out that this Hunter Group did have a plan in mind. They were actually using their brains! Mo Fan had a whole new level of respect for them.

“I’ll lure the Salamander Demons here, get ready for battle!” Zhong Li said.

Zhong Li’s Primary Element was Wind, and his Secondary Element was Water, so he was playing an important role in the party. He was the only member that could run away safely after provoking the Salamander Demons. The rest of the party would easily be overrun by them.

“I’ll block the entrance!” the middle-aged Earth Mage promised.

“Alright, be careful,” Gu Ying said.

Mo Fan was planning to inspect the terrain of the Thousand Islands Lake and evaluate the strength of the Salamander Demons, but he could not evaluate how strong the demon creatures were with his own strength. After all, his spells could easily penetrate their defenses, no matter how sturdy their shells were.

However, it was not practical for him to keep blasting the Thousand Islands Lake with his spells. Even a Super Mage would have a hard time eliminating these creatures, so it was unlikely that an Advanced Mage like him could resolve the problem on his own. He had to figure out the true weaknesses of the Salamander Demons with the help of these Intermediate Mages, and use the right approach to take them out!

Mo Fan was also interested to see how these Hunters were planning to fight the Salamander Demons. He was curious if the Salamander Demons were truly as terrifying as Lingling had mentioned!

“Don’t you think you’re lucky for being able to fight alongside Intermediate Mages like us?” Xie Hao, asked, glancing at Mo Fan.

“I do, I still have much to learn!” Mo Fan nodded.

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“We used to be Basic Mages too. We know how difficult it is to fight real demon creatures with only a single Element and a single spell. It’s very easy for you to die, even if you have the Lightning Element. A piece of advice; you should stay in the safe zone until you’ve reached the Intermediate Level!” Xie Hao warned him in a friendly manner.