

War God 281

Chapter 281 - Goldfish Island

The ambush was unexpected. Sensing a scarily powerful aura, Long Chen grabbed Ling Xi's waist with one arm and stood up, his feet planted firmly on the Dragon Falcon's back.

The black light had stopped in front of the Dragon Falcon. It was a black eagle that was not large, but it was especially aggressive. It was smaller than the Piercing Wind Divine Peng and could only carry one person, but Long Chen was sure that the black eagle was an Earth-tier demonic beast. It was even more powerful than the Sun Devouring Wolf in its current state!

"Ninth Prince! I didn't expect to see you here! I didn't have to spend any effort in searching for you after all!"

There was a man clad in a fitted all-black outfit standing on the black eagle's back. His cunning glare was fixed dead on Lin Cangtian, and the moment he finished speaking, he suddenly threw a punch at the Dragon Falcon!

"He's from the Heavenly Demon Palace! Old Yan, protect them!"

The Ninth Prince's face darkened and he was immediately embroiled in battle. The Heavenly Demon Palace member was surprisingly powerful; Long Chen could not even see his attack clearly, and all he felt was a shudder beneath his feet, but the flying Dragon Falcon's internal organs had already been shattered by the punch. The Dragon Falcon was dead, and they were free-falling!

Old Yan knew that he had no time to save them. Since he was worried about the Ninth Prince's safety, he abandoned the free-falling Long Chen, Ling Xi, and Mo Xiaolang and rushed towards the Ninth Prince!

Long Chen did not know how the Ninth Prince and Old Yan would save themselves. After the Dragon Falcon died, he held Ling Xi tightly in his arms and they fell from the sky! The wind howled in their ears as they accelerated. Long Chen felt like his bones were separating from their joints.

If he felt that way, Ling Xi, who was now a normal human, was sure to be feeling even worse. Under such dire circumstances, he hugged her tightly.

Due to differences in air resistance, the Dragon Falcon's carcass fell towards a different direction!

Fortunately, the Dragon Falcon had been flying at a relatively low speed and altitude because they had been approaching the Biyang Imperial Capital. Soon after they fell, Long Chen could already see the ground. He and Ling Xi were carrying powerful momentum from the fall; if Long Chen were alone, he was confident he could divert this momentum and survive, but Ling Xi was present too. She was very fragile, and her bones could break even from a short fall!

What do I do? Long Chen was panicking. Ling Xi had only just gotten to experience owning a body! Was this it?

Xiaolang, who was also falling, suddenly expanded in size so he would reach the ground much sooner than them. The gigantic Sun Devouring Wolf crashed into the ground first!

He had a hardy body that was much stronger than Long Chen's. Xiaolang landed without injury, then he jumped up to meet Long Chen, who was still midair!

Long Chen sighed in relief, using his Qi to put Ling Xi on Xiaolang's back. The momentum she carried was absorbed by Xiaolang as he landed, while Long Chen took out the Azure Dragon Halberd. When he touched the ground, he slammed the halberd down. The bounceback from the impact sent him back up into the air, then he landed firmly once more!

Not far away, the Dragon Falcon's carcass crashed, throwing a plume of dust into the air.

After Long Chen landed, Xiaolang also landed with Ling Xi on his back. He rushed over and found that Ling Xi had successfully survived the landing unscathed, only startled and a little pale from shock. He sighed in relief and pulled her hard into his embrace.

Ling Xi had only just gotten this body, but she had to endure such a huge scare before even reaching the Biyang Imperial Capital. It was rotten luck, but thankfully, she was fine.

"That Heavenly Demon Palace guy was obviously aiming to kill the Ninth Prince. We are now considered part of the Ninth Prince's faction, and I'm sure they saw us land. It's best if we leave quickly."

Long Chen looked up at the sky and realized that he did not know where the Ninth Prince and the Heavenly Demon Palace guy had ended up. He made the decision to lead Ling Xi and Xiaolang away from this place.

Holding Ling Xi, he used the Azure Dragon Halberd to clear a path. To avoid attracting attention, Xiaolang shrank his body once more and hurried after Long Chen.

"The Biyang Imperial Capital is in that direction. The Ninth Prince was ambushed and had to abandon us for the moment. It's unlikely he'll turn around to search for us, so I think we should go to the Biyang Imperial Capital on our own." When the decision was made, Long Chen headed straight towards the Biyang Imperial Capital through the lush, green forest.

It was a beautiful patch of forest with rivers everywhere. There were also lakes of all sizes. Along the way, Long Chen stopped to hunt a few wild rabbits. They started a fire and roasted the rabbits for a good meal. Ling Xi had been eating dry food these past few days, and she was starving, so she drooled when she saw the juicy rabbits.

After the girl was fed, the trio departed once more. Ling Xi clearly could not keep up with Long Chen's speed, so he carried her on his back.

Long Chen's mind raced when he felt the warmth coming from her soft body on his back, while Ling Xi also blushed as she inhaled his scent.

Xiaolang followed them, sulking and pretending he had not seen anything.

Although he had just rescued Ling Xi, he couldn't help feeling like a third wheel ...

A vast lake appeared ahead. The lake was blue and its surface was tranquil, and they could faintly make out a small island ahead. There was smoke rising from the island, so there had to be people staying there.

“It’s getting late. Let’s rest for the night on that little island and continue our journey tomorrow. I’m sure we’ll arrive at the Biyang Imperial Capital very soon,” Long Chen said.

Xiaolang had been trying to communicate something to Ling Xi for a long time, and she finally understood. “Brother Chen, Xiaolang says he recognizes this island. He was there when he was young; it’s called Goldfish Island.”

“Goldfish Island? That’s perfect if you’re still familiar with the place.”

Mo Xiaolang had spent his childhood in the Biyang Imperial Capital.

Long Chen walked on the surface of the lake with Ling Xi on his back. At the same time, he conversed with Xiaolang through Ling Xi, the translator. “So the regions outside the Biyang Imperial Capital are controlled by the four main families of the imperial capital. Goldfish Island and the large flat piece of land nearby all belonged to the Mo family? But you don’t know what the current situation is with the island after the Mo family was destroyed?”

Xiaolang nodded, gazing at the fast-approaching island with nostalgia in his eyes.

His whole family had been killed when he was only six years old, and he had fled with deep enmity in his heart. It was tough for Long Chen to imagine such a tragedy. He was about to comfort his stepbrother when he and Xiaolang heard a fervent cry.

“Help! Die, you dwarf bastard!”

The cry for help rang along with a man’s malicious laughter.

“Let’s go check it out.” Long Chen could not leave a person in distress behind. They followed the source of the voice and quickly arrived. There was a small boat floating on the lake, and two people were fighting in it. It was a male and a female; the man was making animalistic sounds, pinning the girl down as he tore manically at her clothes.

Without a word, Long Chen ran up to them and kicked the man away, making him fall into the water. He did not know the full story, so he hadn’t put much strength into his kick so as not to kill the man. The man was at the Earthly Core Realm, so he would not drown.

Then Long Chen turned to look at the girl on the boat. Fury rose in his heart when he saw her clearly, because she was thin and looked very young, clearly only starting to develop. She was probably only twelve or thirteen years old. That man, who was much older than her, was clearly going to rape this young girl!

“He’s a fucking animal,” cursed Ling Xi, gritting her teeth.

The man had already floated up to the surface, cursing at Long Chen in a language he did not understand. His eyes were red and his glare was fierce. He leaped out of the water, and the aura of an Earthly Core Realm cultivator exploded from his body as he charged at Long Chen.

The man looked very ugly and creepy, his figure stocky and stout. In fact, he was only around Long Chen's chest level. However, the violence and insanity in his eyes showed that he was not someone to be messed with.

"You brat! How dare you touch a noble dwarf! You're looking for death!" Finally, the guy spoke in a language Long Chen could understand, though he had a strange accent. Long Chen only understood him with great effort.

"Dwarf? What's that?" But by now, how could he not see that the bastard was an animal? When he leaped out of the water to kill Long Chen, Long Chen punctured his chest using his Sword Devil Finger!

The stout man's eyes widened, and he fell backwards into the water. His eyes did not close upon death. Blood poured out of his chest and very quickly dyed the surrounding water red.

The young girl saw clearly that Long Chen had killed the dwarf. She stood up, smoothed her clothes, then thanked him politely. "Thank you, Big Brother and Big Sister, for saving my life. I'm Xiao Yu."

The young girl was strong-hearted. She did not cry even after such a harrowing experience.

"What happened here, Xiao Yu?" Long Chen guessed that she was from the small island.

"That man is a dwarf. I thought they would not come today, that's why I came out to play. I didn't expect to meet him! If you hadn't saved me, I would have died," she said fearfully.

"What is a dwarf?" he asked, sitting down on the boat with Ling Xi.

Chapter 282 - Dwarf

Xiaolang nudged Long Chen's leg. After Ling Xi's translation, Long Chen understood his explanation.

"The dwarf tribe is a human tribe that originated in the east of the Cangyang Kingdom. However, due to terrible environmental conditions, they migrated to a place near the Biyang Imperial Capital. One of the more elite branches of the tribe, whose people were quite capable, formed the Harmony family in the Biyang Imperial Capital. They are now one of the three main factions of the capital, having the same power as what the Mo family previously held."

That was Xiaolang's explanation.

When Long Chen heard the explanation, he realized that the dwarf tribe was not a simple tribe at all.

With Ling Xi as his translator, Xiaolang said, "The dwarf tribe usually lives on the outskirts of the imperial capital. They have their own language and look different from the people of the Cangyang Kingdom. They are usually very ugly and stout; they are violent, aggressive, and unreasonable by

nature. Both the men and women of the tribe tend to be immoral, even inhumane. However, because they have the Harmony family in the imperial capital backing them, they live well and not many people dare to cross them.”

“That’s right! They cannot even be called humans; they are animals with human skin!” Xiao Yu added angrily.

“Xiao Yu, can you tell us why you think that?” Long Chen asked with concern. Although he wanted to head to the Biyang Imperial Capital as soon as possible, it seemed like there was something he could help with here. Furthermore, Xiaolang seemed to be sentimental over Goldfish Island. If the people of Goldfish Island were having trouble, Long Chen thought that he could perhaps lend a hand.

“That’s because Goldfish Island is almost done for!” Xiao Yu answered darkly.

“What happened?” he asked.

“The land around the capital used to be controlled by the four main factions, but since the Mo family disappeared, the other factions started to fight over the unattended land. Goldfish Island doesn’t have anything worth fighting over, and it’s far from the city, which is why it has been peaceful here so far ...”

Xiao Yu paused, then continued, “... But recently, the dwarf tribe has been conquering land like crazy, and they’re going to reach Goldfish Island soon. Our chief said that the dwarf tribe is violent and beast-like, that everywhere they go, they burn, rob, and kill. They commit every crime possible, and he said they always get their gnarly claws on pretty girls. We wanted to move, but most of the people on the island are not willing to leave. This is land left behind by our ancestors; we can’t hand it over to such beasts!

“Our chief said we have five days at most. Right now, all the cultivators on our island are cultivating like mad. We have sworn to fight until our deaths once the dwarf tribe arrives! We will not surrender our ancestors’ land, even if it costs us every drop of blood! And we will not let these beasts step on our heads!”

Although Xiao Yu was young, she was very knowledgeable and told them about the island’s situation. She clenched her small fist with great passion, and refusal to surrender filled her eyes!

“That animal was probably a scout sent by the dwarf tribe, but he died here. If the dwarf tribe finds out about this, they will definitely speed up their attack! When that happens ...”

Xiao Yu felt helpless when she thought about the dwarf tribe’s strength. Although she was afraid, she refused to give up.

“Brother Chen, Xiaolang wants to help them. He said these are the people of the Mo family and he will not let other people harm them,” Ling Xi whispered.

Long Chen looked down and met Xiaolang’s burning eyes, then he nodded.

“Xiao Yu, we will stay behind to help you all,” he said with a smile.

Even without Xiaolang’s input, Long Chen would’ve been unwilling to let a peaceful little island be destroyed by violent people. He was also touched by Xiao Yu’s battle spirit, as if she was willing to sacrifice herself for this.

Long Chen knew that she was proud of her people.

“Really?” Xiao Yu was overjoyed. She had watched him kill an Earthly Core Realm cultivator. If Long Chen could help them, Goldfish Island might stand a chance! At the very least, fewer people would die!

There would be a small delay to his visit to the Biyang Imperial Capital, but he assumed it would be fine.

“Big Brother, could you tell me your cultivation level? Mid Heavenly Core? Late Heavenly Core? Or are you one of those terrifying Heavenly River Realm masters?” she asked excitedly. She was currently at the Eighth Draconic Stage herself.

Since this place was close to the imperial capital and cultivation was popular here, Long Chen was not surprised that she was knowledgeable about cultivation.

“Heavenly River,” he answered directly, not hiding his capabilities. Goldfish Island currently needed help, and he was not going to be stingy.

“Really?” exclaimed Xiao Yu. She eyed him up and down, and when she surmised that Long Chen would not lie to her, she jumped for joy on the little boat. Without the weight of her tribe’s annihilation weighing on her mind, she was still a child.

“Big Brother, and the beautiful Big Sister, I’ll take you to Goldfish Island now to see our chief!”

Then Xiao Yu rowed her oars. Their boat passed the dwarf’s body and they headed towards Goldfish Island. They reached it quickly and found that the island was small; it was even a little smaller than Baiyang Town.

The only special part of the island was its center. There was a small mountain there, and Long Chen sensed some heat coming from it.

There’s a volcano on this small island? Long Chen was surprised. Perhaps this whole place was the top of a volcano, but due to the movement of the terrain, the volcano’s mouth had sunk and ended up becoming this small.

Xiaolang also seemed to have noticed the peculiarities of the mountain. He sniffed the air carefully, then he shook his head in confusion.

“Xiaolang says he can sense the aura of demonic beasts ...” Ling Xi whispered into Long Chen’s ear.

“Demonic beasts? Probably not. If there are beasts here, Goldfish Island would have long been destroyed. They wouldn’t have been able to last this long,” said Long Chen, shaking his head.

“Big Brother, follow me!” Xiao Yu waved at him cheekily, standing in front of the group.

Long Chen and Xiaolang put this matter aside and focused on following her. It was clear that life was peaceful on Goldfish Island. There were not many people here; most people fished for a living and lived simple lives. Long Chen felt very comfortable on the island.

However, he was puzzled because he passed a few houses but did not see many men. He only saw women doing chores and children playing freely. Everything looked peaceful.

“Everyone else is with the chief, who is guiding them in cultivation. They’re working hard to prepare for the battle! They have already dug a cave at the back of the mountain, and tomorrow, the old, the young, and the women will start to move to the caves while the rest will stay and fight to their deaths! I’m twelve this year, but I’m already at the Eighth Draconic Stage! Though the chief won’t let me fight, he says I must protect the rest! He says it’s an even more important job!” Xiao Yu was very proud of herself.

Long Chen was solemn.

She was only twelve, yet she had to face such huge pressure. If this went south, she would die. Based on their descriptions, Long Chen learned that their enemies, the dwarves, were violent and aggressive like beasts. If they lost, they would suffer greatly.

“The island chief lives beyond this bamboo forest. But I’m guessing that they’re at the training grounds, so I will take you there! The chief will surely praise me for bringing him a Heavenly River Realm cultivator, hehe!” she said with glee.

“Xiao Yu, do you know how both sides compare in terms of strength? How many strong cultivators does Goldfish Island have? And how many do the dwarves have?” asked Long Chen.

“About that ... We have two Heavenly River Realm masters, the chief and his son. We have many Heavenly Core Realm cultivators too. As for the dwarves, all I know is that only one of the families of the dwarves is attacking us. I don’t know their specific composition though. But seeing as the chief is so anxious, they must be very strong!”

Long Chen nodded.

A few bamboo houses appeared in front. They were all built in a neat row and looked extremely sophisticated. Passing through the bamboo houses, the bamboo forest opened up into a clearing. They were far away, but Long Chen could already hear the noises from the training grounds.

“Haargh!”

Long Chen could clearly hear loud cries and the sounds of weapons clashing.

Very soon, he spotted a group of about two hundred people up ahead. They were mostly topless, strong men, all drenched in sweat and fighting fiercely. Some of them were using divine jades to cultivate in the bamboo forest nearby.

“Chief, Chief!” Xiao Yu did not dare approach, so she yelled from the side.

Everyone turned and saw Xiao Yu. They did not care much about her, but Long Chen and Ling Xi attracted their attention. Long Chen because of his strength, and Ling Xi because of her beauty.

“Carry on with your cultivation!” bellowed an old man coldly. He had white hair and a hawk-like glare. Then he turned to approach Long Chen and Ling Xi.

“Chief, Chief! I found a huge helper! Big Brother is a Heavenly River Realm cultivator! He promised to help us defeat the dwarves!” she yelled excitedly.

Xiao Yu’s words made everyone stop fighting. They all looked at Long Chen, puzzled.

Long Chen was so young, and he was already at the Heavenly River Realm?

A prodigy like that could be found in the Biyang Imperial Capital, but not in a small place like Goldfish Island.

Everyone stopped cultivating and looked at each other, discussing Long Chen and the beautiful Ling Xi.

“Heavenly River Realm?” When the island chief heard Xiao Yu, he gasped in surprise. He could tell with just one look that Long Chen was an impressive prodigy, though he did not expect him to be at the Heavenly River Realm. Even the chief, at his ripe old age, was only at the First River Stage.

The chief of Goldfish Island walked up to Long Chen and asked seriously, “Hey kid, is what Xiao Yu said true?”

Chapter 283 - Sky Lake

A true man had to know what to do and what not to do. Saving Goldfish Island was something he had to do.

“I am Long Chen. Miss Xiao Yu told me about the problem on Goldfish Island, and I decided to contribute,” said Long Chen, nodding.

The island chief eyed Long Chen and realized he could not sense the depth of Long Chen’s cultivation. He was in dire need of an expert like that.

“Little Long Chen! My name is Chen Feng. If you don’t mind, you can call me ‘Old Chen!’ I’m very grateful that you would like to help protect Goldfish Island!” Gratitude filled Chen Feng’s eyes.

“Come, come here!” Chen Feng was naturally receptive towards Long Chen and hurriedly led him into an elegant bamboo house. He instructed someone to serve them tea and brought out local pastries to serve Long Chen.

Long Chen did not have much need for food himself, but Ling xi, as a normal human, was very interested in the delicious delicacies. Long Chen did not hold back and passed the food to her so she could enjoy them while he spoke with Chen Feng.

“May I ask where you’re from?” Seeing as Long Chen had reached the Heavenly River Realm at such a young age, he guessed that he was from the imperial capital.

“I can’t say,” Long Chen answered apologetically, shaking his head with a smile. It would be inconvenient, and he did not want to tell him.

“My apologies for intruding!” Chen Feng said.

“Old Chen, I won’t waste time on small talk. When I passed Goldfish Island just now, I saw a man harming Xiao Yu and saved her. She told me about Goldfish Island and what the dwarves are doing, and it’s infuriating. That is why I decided to help. However, I don’t know anything about the dwarves at all, so I hope you can tell me more,” said Long Chen.

“I see. So that’s why the girl brought you here.” Chen Feng raised his eyebrows slightly. “It’s one of the dwarf families that set their eyes on Goldfish Island. That family has always been living near Goldfish Island, and we’re afraid of them. There is a couple in that family, husband and wife, who are both Second River Stage cultivators. They also have a few First River Stage cultivators, so ...”

Long Chen was shocked. There were only two First River Stage cultivators on the island.

“Sir, forgive me, but the enemy is much stronger than you guys. You guys have almost no chance of winning, so why aren’t you moving away? Why would you stay here and die for nothing?” he asked solemnly.

“Migrate the whole tribe? I wanted that too, but only a few people agreed. This land was left to us by our ancestors; how could we give it away just like that? My people have said that it does not matter how strong the enemy is—we will fight until we have shed our last drop of blood! And we refuse to allow the enemy to take it without paying a great price! We will die, but our spirit will live on forever!” Towards the end, Chen Feng was as emotional as Xiao Yu.

When Long Chen saw the old man’s face redden with passion, he was affected too, and he felt his blood boil. Previously, he mainly wanted to help because of Xiaolang, but now he was willing to give it his all.

“Little Long Chen, you have decided to help us and for that, I thank you sincerely. However, the odds of Goldfish Island winning are just too small. You’re still young; you shouldn’t waste your life like that.

“Don’t worry, Old Chen. Even if I am no match for them, staying alive is not a problem. I will do my very best to minimize the casualties on Goldfish Island.”

Chen Feng had told him about the dwarves’ military strength, but Long Chen was still fearless, which moved Chen Feng.

“I think he’s just bullshitting us.” A tall middle-aged man walked into the bamboo house and glanced at Long Chen mildly.

This man’s aura indicated that he was no weaker than Chen Feng. He had to be the other Heavenly River Realm cultivator on Goldfish Island.

“Nonsense!” Chen Feng reprimanded, then he smiled at Long Chen. “This is my son, Chen Lei! Lei’er, this is little Long Chen, who has agreed to help Goldfish Island! You must have heard about this already. He’s young, but he has already reached Heavenly River Realm! He’s much stronger than you!”

Chen Lei had indeed heard about this. He eyed Long Chen up and down but was still suspicious. He asked, “You don’t have any hidden intentions, do you? I refuse to believe that some idiot would come to Goldfish Island to get himself killed!”

“Chen Lei! What are you talking about? Get the hell out of here!” Chen Feng shot up from his bamboo chair with a whoosh, glaring sternly at him.

“Alright, alright!” Chen Lei was furious that his father had yelled at him. He remarked with a mocking tone, “Father, look at how slick this brat looks. He doesn’t look like a good person to me. Maybe he’s a spy sent by the dwarves.”

“You donkey-brained idiot! Get out! Have you seen such a tall spy from the dwarf tribe?” Based on Long Chen’s age, current cultivation level, facial features, and height, it was impossible for him to be a dwarf spy.

Recalling the dwarves’ heights, Chen Lei did not know how to rebut his father. All he knew was that something was not right with Long Chen, but he could not put a finger on it. So he left in a rage.

“Long Chen, I hope you won’t take that to heart. It’s just one of his silly antics. He’s just gotten a bit sensitive because his wife, whom he loved for many years, was killed by the dwarves,” said Chen Feng apologetically as he sat down.

“It’s fine. I understand,” Long Chen responded with a nod.

Dongfang Yunxiao had once said that the most terrifying thing in the world was being unable to protect one’s own woman. Long Chen was understanding, given Chen Lei’s past.

“That is all, then. It’s getting late, and I humbly request a place to stay, Old Chen. I will stay on Goldfish Island for the next few days. When the dwarves arrive, I promise I will fight with all I have!” Long Chen stood up, tugging on Ling Xi, who was still eating pastries.

“Good, good! This way, please! Right, Long Chen, I have already sent someone to prepare a feast for you ...”

“There’s no need for that. Old Chen, this is an emergency situation after all. If you have any food, you can send it directly to my room. You only need to send enough to fill Ling Xi’s belly,” Long Chen said with a smile, pinching Ling Xi’s cheek.

Since Ling Xi had turned into a normal person thanks to the Profound Heavenly Jade Lotus, Long Chen had started stockpiling food in his Universe Pouch.

Chen Feng had prepared an elegant bamboo house for Long Chen. After showing him to his quarters, Chen Feng left. Dinner was delivered two hours later, and the host left after Long Chen and the others finished their meal.

The trio remained in the tiny house. Xiaolang howled, then he left the room knowingly. He did not forget to close the door for Long Chen when he walked out.

“Brother Chen, is it inconvenient to have me around?” Ling Xi asked anxiously, tugging at the corner of his sleeve.

When cultivators started to cultivate, their main energy source was the spiritual Qi of heaven and earth, and their reliance on food would decrease. Long Chen only ate when he wanted to taste delicious food. However, right now, food provided Ling Xi with energy to live. That was why she had asked him this question, because Long Chen had been preparing food for her daily.

“Silly girl, don’t you feel loved like this?” Long Chen grinned and patted her pink cheek.

Ever since the Star Devil Prison incident, Ling Xi’s personality had started to change. She seemed to be more reserved, and Long Chen could see a hint of worry in her gaze.

“Xiao Xi, are you worried about something?” he asked.

“Me? No.”

“Then why are you sulking? You look like a miserable auntie!” Long Chen laughed.

“You’re the miserable auntie! I’m not!” huffed Ling Xi.

It was a cool night.

“I can’t sleep,” said Ling Xi, who was lying in Long Chen’s arms.

“Really?”

“Mhm.”

“I have this nagging feeling that there’s something strange with that mountain. Xiaolang also felt it, I think. But I didn’t want to leave you here. Since you can’t sleep, I’ll take you with me,” said Long Chen, sitting up.

Once Ling Xi put on some thick clothes and tidied herself, Long Chen took her out and called for Xiaolang, who was some distance away from their quarters. The trio then headed towards the center of Goldfish Island.

“Indeed, it’s the aura of a demonic beast. But it is in a deep slumber.” Long Chen noticed this when he approached the mountain. He believed that Chen Feng and the rest were aware that a beast was hiding within Goldfish Island.

When they hiked to the peak, there was a small lake filled with emerald-green water.

Long Chen dipped his hand into the lake and took some out. “The water is warm. This beast should be a fire-type beast. A fire-type beast’s core will be useful for you, Xiaolang. Protect Ling Xi while I enter the lake to check it out.”

Xiaolang gave an *a-woo* and nodded.

Ling Xi was currently very weak, so Long Chen had no choice but to be meticulous about keeping her safe. He set Ling Xi aside, gave her a few reminders, then dove into the warm lake and disappeared beneath the emerald waters.

What surprised him was that despite it being a small lake, it was very deep. It took him a long time to reach the bottom. The temperature was very high here, but a strange type of grass grew at the bottom.

Long Chen looked around the bottom of the lake. The heat was coming from underneath. He wanted to check it out, but there was no opening that would allow him to descend directly.

Of course, he could use brute force to break the lakebed, but that would startle the beast, whose strength level was currently unknown. That was why Long Chen would not dare take the risk.

He scoured the lakebed and finally found a small gap between two boulders in a corner next to a wall. Long Chen entered the gap and found that it was a small underwater pool. It was not a deep pool, so he easily floated to the surface and arrived in an underground cave.

The cave led him downwards.

It’s very likely that this cave will lead to the beast. With that thought, he had no choice but to be extra cautious and not make a single sound. He descended through the cave; the deeper he went, the hotter it became. About fifty meters later, he realized that the rocks around him had turned fire-red.

The beast must be just up ahead ...

Chapter 284 - Eight Clawed Fire Chi

The deeper he went, the wider the cave grew. Very quickly, he arrived at a vast underground space. The rocks here were so hot that they glowed red, and a fiery aura filled the air.

“There must have been a lot of magma here once. But now the properties of the rock have changed and only the shell is left.”

Long Chen peered down at the depths of the cave. There was a giant hole at the bottom. It could have been filled with magma a long time ago, but now it was only filled with red rocks and a small magma pool less than fifty meters wide.

The magma pool itself was not what caught his attention though. There was a beast a few times larger than the Sun Devouring Wolf sleeping inside it! It was a beast that resembled a dragon—sharp claws and teeth, and muscular limbs. It had fiery-red skin like a dragon, but it did not have horns.

The peculiar thing was that it did not only have one pair of upper limbs, but four! It had eight feet lined with fire-red claws in total, each one resembling a steel sword glowing during the forging process. They were terrifying!

What kind of beast is this? Long Chen had never seen anything like it before.

Although it was in a deep slumber, its aura was very thick and stronger than that of the Sun Devouring Wolf. Long Chen dared not poke around, so after he memorized its features, he turned back via the same route and swam out of the lake, back to Ling Xi.

He described the beast to Ling Xi. When she heard about its eight feet, she said without hesitation, “That’s the Category Three Earth-tier Eight Clawed Fire Chi![1] It survives by absorbing the fire power from magma. Since there isn’t much magma left here, it has gone into a deep slumber to decrease energy expenditure. Eight Clawed Fire Chis are quite lazy; it will probably only move when the magma is used up.”

“Category Three Earth-tier?” Long Chen did a mental comparison and found that it was one level above Xiaolang. They might stand a chance if they both fought it together. However, Long Chen did not dare engage before fighting the dwarves.

“It’s fine. We will think about this after we help Goldfish Island through their crisis,” Long Chen declared.

The Eight Clawed Fire Chi brought two benefits. First, its inner core contained fire essence accumulated over many years of absorbing magma. That would be a great source of nourishment for Xiaolang. On top of that, its nutritious blood was food for Long Chen.

With his arm around Ling Xi, they turned to go back via the route they came from. “After coming out for a walk, you should be able to sleep now, right?” Long Chen whispered into her ear.

“I want you to hold me, but you’re not allowed to touch me anywhere else!” Ling Xi said, blushing. It was cold these days, and she felt especially calm and warm with Long Chen holding her.

“Alright.”

Long Chen smiled bitterly. This was like having mouth-watering food placed right in front of him when he was starving! Yet at most, he could only have the occasional taste. Every day, he was so attracted to her that he burned inside, yet had no outlet for these feelings. It was absolute torture ...

When they were nearing the place that Chen Feng had arranged for them to stay, a figure suddenly stepped in front of Long Chen. It was Chen Lei, who was smirking coldly.

“Long Chen! Indeed, you bear ill intentions! It’s late at night, and instead of staying in your quarters, you’re sneaking around suspiciously on Goldfish Island! Why?” he questioned coldly, towering over Long Chen with his huge figure.

“These legs are mine, so I will walk where I want! I promised to help Goldfish Island fight the dwarves, but that doesn’t mean I can’t walk around the island, right?”

Long Chen pitied Chen Lei, but if he kept acting like this, he would not mind teaching the latter a lesson.

“Still trying to argue? You’re clearly a thief! What did you steal?” Chen Lei demanded.

“Steal? What do you guys have here that’s worth stealing?” Long Chen was too lazy to talk to him.

Chen Lei eyed him suspiciously. Long Chen was right. Chen Lei and Chen Feng had the most wealth on the island, and there was nothing else that could have attracted Long Chen. Chen Lei found Long Chen suspicious because he couldn’t understand his intentions. In terms of cultivation level, Long Chen was indeed at the Heavenly River Realm. But how much real battle experience could he have at such a young age?

Chen Lei saw Long Chen as an aristocratic progeny of some large faction, the kind who had been sheltered and raised by their family to achieve such results. Fragile flowers like that would be no match for him if they truly fought.

That was why he surmised that it was not very likely that Long Chen had been stealing.

He looked behind Long Chen, then he gasped. “Did you go to Sky Lake? Long Chen, it looks like you’re targeting the Eight Clawed Fire Chi! You’re looking for death! The Eight Clawed Fire Chi is a Category Three Earth-tier beast. If you wake it up, not only will you die, but you will bring harm to all of Goldfish Island too! You say you’re here to save Goldfish Island, but I think you’ll be our downfall instead!”

Green veins popped out of his head as he made the accusations. Indeed, he had guessed correctly because Long Chen was indeed interested in the Eight Clawed Fire Chi, though not at the moment.

Long Chen did not want to argue too much, so he suppressed his annoyance and slowly explained, “Chen Lei, calm down. I’ll be honest. I did come here to help you guys, but I noticed something strange with Sky Lake when I arrived on the island. That was why I went there to investigate, and I found that indeed there were signs of a demonic beast there. Tell me, if your assumptions were correct, wouldn’t I be fighting the Eight Clawed Fire Chi right now? Would I be here talking to you?”

“You might not be targeting it today, but you will tomorrow! With your cultivation level, it will be suicide! No way, I must make you give up on this completely!”

Chen Lei’s Qi started to surge.

“Move!” Since his explanations weren’t working, Long Chen did not want to explain further.

“Never!” roared Chen Lei.

Long Chen had lost all patience. He was about to pass Ling Xi to Xiaolang to teach this idiot a lesson when Xiaolang suddenly enlarged and took on the Sun Devouring Wolf’s full-sized form. With his Category Two Earth-tier strength level, it only took a few attacks for him to pin the terrified Chen Lei to the ground.

The Sun Devouring Wolf’s thick aura and the black flames burning in his eyes sent chills through Chen Lei. He did not expect Long Chen’s pet wolf cub to be an Earth-tier beast. And it was clearly above Category One Earth-tier too.

“Listen. There is a limit to my patience. I am here to help Goldfish Island, not to get bullied by you. If you provoke me, I don’t mind killing you!” Long Chen warned as he passed Chen Lei.

Then he left with Ling Xi. Xiaolang slammed Chen Lei hard into the ground with his muscular paw, flames curling in his mouth. Chen Lei shuddered at the icy temperatures brought about by the black flames, almost unable to breathe.

Then, fortunately, Xiaolang retracted the Nine Devils Ancestral Fire.

However, his warning was enough to make Chen Lei unable to move for a while. He only stood up after fifteen minutes, staring in the direction that Long Chen had left with terror in his eyes.

Where did Long Chen come from? How did he get such a terrifying beast to be so loyal to him? Chen Lei could not figure it out. He shook his head and sighed. “It doesn’t matter how hard I work. It’s impossible to catch up to people from large factions. Their elders can just give them a random beast and they’ll be able to bully me. If Long Chen genuinely wants to help, having that beast on our side means Goldfish Island still has some hope. Looks like I shouldn’t target him anymore, or Father will definitely yell at me ...”

“When will this misery end ...” Long Chen rolled his eyes, staring at the ceiling in exasperation.

He did not know whether it was the right decision to let Ling Xi use the Profound Heavenly Jade Lotus to become a normal human. At least she was happy so far, and that was enough.

Long Chen spent a total of five days on Goldfish Island. During these five days, he occasionally walked around the island, sometimes watching the islanders cultivator and other times helping the old and young move. Other than Chen Lei, the islanders really liked the legendary young couple.

News of Long Chen being a Heavenly River Realm cultivator had spread to the rest of the island thanks to Xiao Yu. When they learned that Long Chen was here to help them fight the dwarves, everyone was very grateful and often gave him presents. Ling Xi also received many clothes, beautiful accessories, and all types of delicacies, so she was very happy every day.

As for the problem with the Eight Clawed Fire Chi, Long Chen had already discussed it with Chen Feng. He planned to see if he could deal with it some time after the dwarves attacked. Chen Feng had no comment because his full attention was on defeating the dwarves. To be honest, while he knew that Long Chen had an Earth-tier beast that could easily defeat Chen Lei, making it likely a Category Two Earth-tier, there were still two Second River Stage masters on the dwarves' side ...

In the face of mortal danger, the men of Goldfish Island were not afraid. Their blood boiled with passion, waiting for the dwarves with their weapons sharpened—they were going to fight to their deaths!

They were guarding the old, the weak, and the young of their island, as well as the land left behind by their ancestors. That was why the alternative to victory was death; there was no backing down!

Amidst their preparations, the dwarves finally arrived ...

Chapter 285 - Arrival of the Dwarves

The people of Goldfish Island had set up many lookouts around the island so they would be aware of when the dwarves arrived.

The old and the young had already been moved to the cave they had dug a few days ago. Even if the dwarves searched the entire island, they would have difficulty finding the entrance to the cave.

Though they did not dare take this lightly, as they were in mortal danger.

The able men of the tribe were prepared for war. After many days of cultivation and training, they were filled with battle spirit.

Goldfish Island was not large, so when the lookouts rushed back to confirm the dwarf army's location, the warriors rushed over. They set up a full defensive formation, so no matter which direction the enemy came from, they had great geographical advantage.

Long Chen followed the crowd. Because he was worried about Ling Xi, he let her follow him and did not put her with the rest of the islanders in the cave.

He only trusted himself and Xiaolang to protect her.

There were about three hundred warriors on Goldfish Island laying in the hills. The lake was just ahead. They could see the dwarves' large boats heading for their island. Vulgar, violent laughter rang across the lake, piercing through the misty air. The islanders' chests tightened.

Long Chen and Xiaolang stood in front, their expressions not as anxious as those of the other warriors. The chief, Chen Feng, and his son, Chen Lei, were also with them.

Chen Lei had disliked Long Chen from the moment they met and still felt like Chen Feng was too nice to him. However, Long Chen had not caused any trouble so far, so Chen Lei, while remaining suspicious, could not say anything.

“We'll see who kills more enemies later. Some people seem good but are not actually capable. Do you really think you can compete against a Heavenly River Realm cultivator with more than twenty years experience like me?” Chen Lei said when he saw the calm Long Chen.

“Of course you’ll have a higher kill count, Brother Chen Lei. I’m so young; how could I compare to you?” said Long Chen with a smile.

He couldn’t care less about arguing with this stupid donkey.

Long Chen saw the battle spirit and violence in every islander’s eyes. Although they knew that the enemy was strong, they did not show a single hint of fear. He was truly amongst people with absolutely no fear of death.

“Men, the words ‘surrender’ and ‘holding back’ do not exist in our vocabularies. The dwarves are vicious. If Goldfish Island is conquered by them, we, along with our children and grandchildren, will live under their tyranny and suffer, living lives like dogs ...”

Chen Feng’s brows were deeply furrowed. He paused, then he continued in a sorrowful but heroic tone, “To prevent our children and women from enduring such humiliation, no one shall back down from this battle! This land is the most precious gift from our ancestors. We have lived on Goldfish Island for generations, and today she is in danger! The success of this battle depends on whether you men are afraid of death!

“Remember this: if you kill one, it’s worth it! If you kill two, you’re making a profit! If you kill ten, you’re making a fucking fortune!”

The usually stern and reserved Chen Feng let out a rare cuss word to lighten the anxious mood. The crowd grew even more motivated.

This was the battle for the livelihood of their tribe. The winner would be king, and the loser would be conquered. Long Chen saw bloodlust in their eyes that made him respect them.

“Old Chen, don’t be too worried. Look at the dwarves! Their heads barely even reach our chests. How can a group of short people be any match for us?” Long Chen said with a smile.

The islanders all knew that the dwarves were short and ugly.

“Long Chen, I truly thank you for this. If it looks like we’re losing later, run away and bring as many people with you as possible. Even saving one is worth it to keep the Goldfish Island bloodline going. Help me watch the ones in the cave too,” Chen Feng said mildly. From the look in his eyes, they could tell that he was prepared to die today!

“Alright.” Although Long Chen did not think they would lose, he made the promise so the old man would be assured.

The large boats were slowly approaching. The crowd in the hills could see the shouting and celebrating dwarves standing on the decks. From their perspectives, they were merely here to take the island as their own. They did not take the tiny army on the island seriously.

The group of more than a hundred dwarves grew more and more excited as they thought about the wealth and women on Goldfish Island.

Although on paper they were representing the Harmony family to manage Goldfish Island, in reality, they were a horde of robbers who committed every crime possible, bringing carnage everywhere they went.

They would reach land soon. Seeing as they had only brought about a hundred dwarves, they clearly did not take Goldfish Island's military power seriously. However, each of the hundred dwarves was much stronger than the islanders. There were only thirty-plus islanders at the Divine Core Realm, but most of the dwarves were well into it.

That was how big the gap between the islanders and the dwarves was.

Chen Feng paled after witnessing the power of his enemies, clenching his fists tight.

Long Chen heard shocked gasps and anxious heavy breathing from all around him.

A middle-aged dwarf took several steps forward with a smug grin, letting out a passionate roar. Despite his small stature and ugly looks, he was decently powerful, a First River Stage like Chen Feng.

“Goldfish Island! You must have received the notice already. From today onwards, this land belongs to the Harmony family, and Goldfish Island will be managed by us. Haha! As a gesture of gratitude and joy from you guys, as usual, hurry up and give us three quarters of your fortune. Then give us a hundred teenage girls to serve my dwarf brothers!

The bastard was at the Heavenly River Realm, so his booming voice easily reached every corner of the island. Even the islanders hiding in the cave could faintly hear him. When they heard ‘a hundred teenage girls,’ the girls panicked and fell into a terrified silence when they thought of the possibility of rape.

And a hundred of them? The teenage girls and young women of Goldfish Island barely made up this number. Where would they get a hundred teenage girls? According to the dwarves' rules, one man was to be killed for every girl they could not provide.

“Of course, young women are also fine! They taste even better!” The dwarf let out an evil laugh.

They would get to enjoy themselves beneath the open sky! They had raped women openly together as a group of hundred before, so they were looking forward to enjoying this. The hundred dwarves started to breathe heavily when they imagined the beauty of the Goldfish Island women.

“One, two, three, four?” Long Chen counted four First River Stage dwarves in total, but the two Second River Stage cultivators that Chen Feng had mentioned were not there.

“Old Chen, didn't you say there would be Second River Stage cultivators?” Long Chen asked.

“Yes ... Maybe they didn't come today? But that's impossible; they operate together!” Chen Feng was puzzled too.

“Father, let’s not worry about that. It’s good that they’re not here. With four Heavenly River Realm cultivators, us three plus the demon wolf are just enough to deal with them! As long as we kill these four, everything else will be much easier. Even if the two Second River Stage cultivators arrive, we can all fight them together, right?” Chen Lei said decisively.

He had weighed the strengths of both sides and decided that the best solution was to shorten the time spent fighting as much as possible.

“Chen Lei is right. Let’s move.” Based on the dwarves’ words and expressions, Long Chen could tell that there was not a single good person there. Only death was punishment enough for these evil scum.

“Let’s move!” commanded Chen Feng.

“Wait. Only we move. Everyone else stays.” When Long Chen saw that Chen Feng was about to command everyone to attack, he hurriedly intervened.

“Why?” Chen Feng asked, puzzled.

“Old Chen, the outcome of a battle mostly depends on the fight between the strongest figures of the army. If we let everyone attack, it will only increase the number of casualties. Why don’t we just make them send their leaders?” Long Chen gave a small smile.

“That is easy to say, but tough to execute,” said Chen Lei, pursing his lips, as if unimpressed by Long Chen.

Long Chen couldn’t be bothered with his opinion though.

The dwarves had been waiting for a long time. When they realized that the islanders weren’t going to hand them any pretty girls or riches, they looked at each other and burst into laughter, chattering in their strange language. The only thing an onlooker could confirm was that their expressions had gotten more insane.

“Well, let the killing begin, then!” said one of the Heavenly River Realm cultivators.

That was when three figures shot out towards them, quickly arriving in front of the dwarves. The dwarves were surprised to see three Heavenly River Realm cultivators, but when they thought of how they outnumbered the islanders, their confidence returned and one of them demanded haughtily, “You three! Are you here to deliver us your riches and girls? Give us the riches. Where are the girls?”

“My apologies. We’re not here to give you pretty girls; we’re here to send you to hell! I wonder, do the Heavenly River Realm cultivators of the dwarf tribe have the guts to fight the Heavenly River Realm cultivators of Goldfish Island alone?” Long Chen said without a hint of reverence.

“Oh, you guys are here looking for death.” When the dwarves understood Long Chen’s intention, they burst into laughter once more. Very soon, four dwarf Heavenly River Realm cultivators stepped forward. One of them said darkly, “It looks like you’re challenging us to a fight, brat. But there are only three of you and four of us. How is that enough?”

“Who said there are only three of us?” Long Chen dropped Xiaolang from his arms. When he landed, his body slowly expanded and the killing aura from his body intensified.

“Earth-tier demonic beast?” The dwarves were pleasantly surprised and grinned. “Haha! With the carcass of an Earth-tier beast, we’ll get to live good for many days!”

Even with the presence of an Earth-tier beast, the dwarves clearly did not take Long Chen and his group seriously.

Chapter 286 - Dwarf Massacre

“You are as stupid as pigs! And you think you can challenge the mighty Harmony family? There must be something wrong with your brains to risk destroying your tribe by disobeying us! Let me tell you this: many people have disobeyed us, and none of them have had good ends! Goldfish Island isn’t the only one, and it won’t be the last one either!”

“We must treat animals like animals. Goldfish Island is home to men, so how could we bend our knees to a herd of animals?” Long Chen remarked, gazing darkly at them. The boldness of his words impressed Chen Lei, who previously did not like him.

“What? Did you just call us animals? You’re looking for death! My three brothers! Leave this rude little brat to me; what do you say?” said one of the Heavenly River Realm dwarves, who looked younger than the others.

This meant that they had accepted Long Chen’s challenge.

“Be careful,” Chen Feng said to Long Chen. Then Chen Feng and his opponent moved aside to put some distance between them and the others.

“It’s been a long time since I’ve fought a beast. I’ll take this strange demon wolf!” one of the Heavenly River Realm cultivators exclaimed.

Long Chen could not help but silently grieve that dwarf’s death.

Just like that, Long Chen was left with the final dwarf. The four battles were about to begin soon.

Goldfish Island had more experts than the dwarves expected, but this was still nothing to them. They were very confident in their combat capabilities. Someone like Long Chen did not make their confidence waver in the least.

Long Chen gripped the Azure Dragon Halberd, staring at his opponent, who was mocking him.

His gaze darkened even more after listening to their vulgar propositions.

Fuck! Not only are they vulgar and violent, they're extremely perverted too! They do things only animals do!

This was unacceptable to a righteous person like Long Chen.

After hearing the dwarf, the rest of the dwarves erupted in cheers as they knew he was about to give them a good show in his fight with Long Chen. Long Chen already had a deep hatred for them, and now he was angered even more. Without another word, he shot out and swung at his opponent!

“Azure Dragon Combat Technique, Nine Heavens Dragon Ascension!”

Long Chen used his most powerful technique on his first strike, though he had not activated the Dragon Soul Transformation yet. However, his combat strength was still formidable. Before the middle-aged dwarf could react, a huge Azure Dragon soul was charging towards him!

What a terrifying attack! How is this possible? The dwarf's initial contempt turned into complete shock when he saw Long Chen's Azure Dragon Combat Technique. At the very last moment, he hurriedly sent out a punch. A gigantic fist seal turned into a tiger, colliding with Long Chen's dragon!

One side had prepared a sudden attack; the other side had reacted defensively. Furthermore, Long Chen was stronger than his opponent because his Qi was four times stronger than normal despite not activating his Dragon Soul Transformation!

Cries and gasps of shock came from the audience. Due to such a large gap in power, one move from Long Chen was enough to send the middle-aged dwarf flying in the air, blood spraying out of his mouth.

Long Chen gave chase immediately, waving his halberd without any emotion on his face. He aimed for his severely injured opponent's neck, then a head flew towards the crowd of dwarves. Blood sprayed out of the headless corpse, and it crashed into the ground!

Only a few breaths had passed between the start of the fight and the dwarf's death!

Both the dwarves and the Goldfish Islanders hiding in the hills were completely shocked after they saw the teenager fight. They knew he was strong, but they didn't know he was this strong.

Chen Lei and Chen Feng experienced particularly strong emotions. They were fighting for their lives against their opponents, and their battles were even at the moment. Long Chen, however, had killed his opponent before Xiaolang did. Didn't that mean Long Chen was a little stronger than Xiaolang?

This was extra shocking to Chen Lei. He had just mocked Long Chen for having nothing but good looks. Now he was the useless one.

However, this was not the only thing that shocked them. Killing his opponent quickly had indeed showcased his capabilities, but the viciousness and decisiveness he possessed had been completely displayed too!

The people of Goldfish Island hated the dwarves to their bones. Long Chen himself was also furious at the evil dwarves after hearing about their animalistic crimes. That was why he landed together with the Heavenly River Realm cultivator's head in the middle of the crowd of dwarves.

They were mostly Heavenly Core Realm cultivators, some at the late Heavenly Core Realm. However, this was nothing to Long Chen.

How dare Long Chen kill an important leader of their tribe! The dwarves' eyes reddened, and they charged at him without holding back.

“It's great that you're all coming to me! Now I won't need to chase you down!” Long Chen's bloodlust reached its peak!

As he waved the Azure Dragon Halberd around, he did not even need to use his Qi because his Level Three Complete Blazing Thunder Combat Body was enough to make these animals suffer.

Every time he waved the halberd, splashes of blood followed, along with shrieks of despair. Long Chen was like a wolf in a herd of sheep, killing to his heart's content. The number of people around him decreased with time, and the pile of bodies grew. There was soon a river of blood on the small patch of land on Goldfish Island.

Long Chen, who placed great importance on fresh blood, was not even slightly interested in the dwarves' blood because he thought them dirty and smelly.

The dwarves were furious at first, but when they noticed the bodies strewn around them, their rage turned into panic and terror. Some of them started to run away, but Long Chen rushed up onto the boat, waving his halberd around so the boat shattered instantly, despite being covered with a layer of metal. The dwarves who were hiding on the boat died from the vibrations of his combat technique!

“You scum! No one gets to leave.” Long Chen utilized the Nine Dragon Flashes, so the dwarves, despite scattering in all directions, couldn't escape. When the hundred dwarves turned into a hundred bodies, everyone was left in shock.

At this point, Chen Feng and Chen Lei, with Xiaolang's help, had already killed their opponents. Or more accurately, Xiaolang had killed three First River Stage cultivators.

Goldfish Island had not lost even one soldier, but Long Chen and Xiaolang had killed almost all the dwarves. The crowd stared at the piles of bodies next to Long Chen and then at the magnificent black flaming demon wolf and gulped. They looked at each other in shock.

Especially Chen Lei. He had previously thought Long Chen to be useless. Now he was the useless one. His cheeks burned, and he did not dare look directly at Long Chen. He wished the ground would swallow him whole.

Chen Feng was in shock too. This crisis had worried him endlessly for a long time, causing his hair to turn all white. Yet Long Chen had solved the problem so easily!

The soldiers hiding in the hills all stood up, looking at Long Chen with great respect.

Previously, they were grateful for his kindness. Now he had left a deep impression on their souls. His magnificent performance today would be verbally passed down for generations so their children and grandchildren would know of the master who had saved Goldfish Island.

The islanders experienced a surge of emotions, but Long Chen did not think much of it. The hundred corpses were an eyesore, so he turned to say to Chen Feng, “Old Chen, you guys need to

think of a way to deal with these bodies. It's best you don't leave any traces behind. You mentioned two Second River Stage cultivators on their side, but they haven't shown themselves yet. We must not celebrate too early."

Chen Feng understood this too. According to rumors, a small clan under the Harmony family had two Second River Stage cultivators. If it wasn't for the fact that they were not present, Long Chen would never have won this easily.

"Alright, I will instruct someone to deal with the bodies." Chen Feng nodded and immediately called for the rest.

Long Chen came to Ling Xi's side with a grin. "Xiao Xi, wasn't I cool just now?"

"Of course, you're the best! But it was a bit scary when you were killing them." Ling Xi was a little pale from witnessing all the blood.

"The dwarves are animals, not humans," Long Chen said with a grin.

That was when Chen Feng rushed over and said, "It looks like we cannot relax yet. I will send scouts in all directions to keep a lookout. If they notice the two Second River Stage cultivators, they will report to us immediately."

"They assumed sending four strong fighters would be enough to conquer Goldfish Island because we only have two Heavenly River Realm cultivators. So, there are two possibilities—either they are still at home, or they are here but doing something else ..."

Long Chen thought about it. He had a sudden thought and blurted, "Old Chen, do you think they'd target the Eight Clawed Fire Chi?"

"Could that be possible?" Chen Feng's brows were furrowed. The only valuable thing on Goldfish Island was the Eight Clawed Fire Chi in deep slumber beneath the mountain.

Right after he spoke, the whole island trembled. Long Chen looked and saw an explosion at the mountain. Smoke and dust filled the skies, and a fire-red beast crawled out of the mountain!

Chapter 287 - Battle Against Dwarf Experts

The large fire-red beast that crawled out of the mountain was the Category Three Earth-tier beast who had been slumbering within, the Eight Clawed Fire Chi!

The Fire Chi unleashed one angry roar after another, causing all of Goldfish Island to shake. It was clearly furious!

Long Chen could faintly see two tiny human figures nearby attacking it.

"Those two must be the Second River Stage dwarves. I can't believe they were actually targeting the Eight Clawed Fire Chi! Two Second River Stage cultivators attacking a Category Three Earth-tier beast ... They really are going to get themselves killed," said Long Chen, squinting in their direction.

Chen Feng was already drenched in sweat from his panic. After Long Chen defeated so many dwarves with his powerful combat technique, Chen Feng now saw him as his anchor.

“Long Chen, what should we do? Although the vulnerable islanders are hidden, at the rate the battle is going, it will likely affect them. And it’s possible the whole island will be destroyed by the Eight Clawed Fire Chi!”

“Long Chen, just give the command and I’ll do it!” Chen Lei was also completely impressed by him.

Long Chen looked at them hurriedly and said, “Chen Lei, I will give you a task, then Xiaolang and I will head there. I promise not to let them hurt Goldfish Island and the other islanders.

“What is the task?” Chen Lei asked hurriedly.

“Help me protect her,” Long Chen said, pointing at Ling Xi. “We don’t have much time. All you need to do is protect her. Although there shouldn’t be much danger, you mustn’t let your guard down. I’ll help you resolve your other problems. Xiaolang, let’s go!”

Long Chen did not waste any time and charged towards the mountain at the center of the island with Xiaolang.

“Don’t worry! I will protect this lady even if I die!” yelled Chen Lei.

He was a true man. He was previously contemptuous towards Long Chen purely due to a misunderstanding. Now that Long Chen had displayed his true capabilities, he was inwardly feeling guilty.

Chen Feng watched Long Chen leave and sighed. “Miss Ling Xi, it looks like you guys come from a powerful faction. Although Long Chen is at the First River Stage, his combat abilities are terrifying.”

“Brother Chen doesn’t have much of a background. He slowly climbed the ranks on his own,” explained Ling Xi. She felt a surge of pride when she heard Long Chen being praised.

“No wonder, no wonder.” Chen Feng sighed. Only someone who had climbed the ranks on his own and experienced many fights to the death could fight on Long Chen’s level, not to mention his decisiveness.

“Xiaolang, let them fight for now. It’s fine as long as they don’t affect the island and the underground cave. It’ll be even better if both sides get very hurt,” Long Chen whispered as they approached.

Xiaolang nodded.

They hid themselves among the trees. The Eight Clawed Fire Chi's many roars came from beyond the trees, where it was fighting the two Second River Stage dwarf cultivators. It was a huge beast covered in red flames and it had eight powerful feet full of sharp claws. The two cultivators did their best to avoid being struck by the claws, moving very quickly using body combat techniques. They spun around the beast at high speed, occasionally launching an attack, provoking it into furious roars!

Long Chen finally saw their faces clearly. Both of them were short and thin wearing skin-tight leather armor, dressed to kill. Their speed and techniques were also extraordinary.

Based on their body shapes, he could tell that it was a man and a woman; and based on their figures and her chest, he could tell that these two had better looks than the average dwarf.

They spun like irritating flies around the Eight Clawed Fire Chi. It was difficult for it to strike them. Indeed, if this continued, there was a possibility for them to tire it to death.

"Their weapons aren't bad at all." Long Chen looked closer and saw that they were each holding a dark green dagger, slashing them around. Occasionally, they were able to make cuts on the beast's body.

Those daggers were at least elementary Earth-tier weapons.

They relied on speed, body combat techniques, and elementary Earth-tier weapons to kill the Eight Clawed Fire Chi. It was indeed a decent arsenal, but Long Chen opined that since it was a Category Three Earth-tier beast, it would not be easy to defeat.

Indeed, the slashes made on its body had completely angered the beast. It opened its jaws, and bright red flames shot out at the dwarves. There was even molten lava mixed with the flames!

Since the Eight Clawed Fire Chi lived amidst lava, using lava in its attacks was expected.

This Eight Clawed Fire Chi didn't look young. After so many years, its core must have absorbed a lot of fire essence. The Sun Devouring Wolf had been injured at the Burning Heaven Secret Realm, which caused its strength to be lowered by one category. The Fire Chi's demonic core would likely help Xiaolang increase his strength.

Long Chen had set his sights on the Eight Clawed Fire Chi the moment he laid eyes on it. He refused to let someone else kill it.

The battle intensified the moment the beast started unleashing all sorts of attacks, including the flames from before. Thankfully, the battle remained in the same location, so it was not a threat to the people in the underground cave.

Old Chen was worrying too much. I'll just wait until a victor emerges, then I will swoop in and take everything, Long Chen thought to himself.

This battle on the scale of the Heavenly River Realm caused the earth and mountain to shake. Although he was not personally involved in the battle, he could feel the extraordinary strength of both sides. The Eight Clawed Fire Chi was a Category Three Earth-tier beast, so its strength was obvious. On the other hand, the two dwarves had speed and excellent body combat techniques, coupled with the weapons in their hands. This combination made them dangerous to the beast.

The beast let out multiple roars, furious that it could not hit the dwarves at all!

Then it gave up on attacking them. Bearing the brunt of the woman's attacks, it pounced and struck the middle-aged man with all of its claws. This strategy meant risking its life, but it was effective. It was impossible for the man to dodge so many claws after all. After he was struck by one claw, blood sprayed out of his mouth and he flew backwards into the air!

The woman shouted in her strange language, leaving several deep cuts on the beast's back with her dagger. That was when the Eight Clawed Fire Chi turned its full attention to her. She was now in mortal danger.

"These two are done for." Long Chen could see the end when the man was injured. They had the upper hand only because they were fast and worked together. Unfortunately, the Eight Clawed Fire Chi was no idiot and stopped them from working together.

The ground trembled greatly from its manic movements.

Long Chen suddenly heard a high-pitched scream. Shocked, he hurriedly turned to look and saw a young girl crawling out of the bushes not far away. She was pale with terror after seeing the beast roaring with fury.

The girl was Xiao Yu.

"Damn it!" Long Chen knew that Xiao Yu, who was in the cave, must have come up to investigate due to the huge commotion outside. But when she saw the gigantic beast, she was completely overcome with fear.

The Eight Clawed Fire Chi had sharp hearing, so it noticed Xiao Yu while it was fighting the dwarf. From its perspective, tiny organisms like her were the most terrifying. That was why it instantly shot a mouthful of flames at her. If she was struck, she would die!

Long Chen could no longer remain in hiding. He shot out of the trees and sprinted after Xiao Yu. Before the flames arrived, he held her in his arms and leaped into the air, dodging the flames.

"Go back now! And stay there! Or I will give you a beating!" Long Chen's fierce glare almost scared her to tears, but she knew that he had just saved her. With such a terrifying beast present, she did not dare stay and quickly hurried back.

But Long Chen and Xiaolang were now exposed.

The Eight Clawed Fire Chi had noticed Long Chen and Xiaolang.

It realized that they posed a larger threat to it than the two dwarves.

All humans looked the same to the beast, and all humans were on the same side. Therefore, the moment the duo appeared, it abandoned its dwarf opponents and lunged towards Long Chen with heavy breathing and waving its claws!

The dwarf lady heaved a sigh of relief and hurried over to the severely injured man. Now that it was Long Chen's turn to face the Eight Clawed Fire Chi, the tables would turn, and they would be the ones to swoop in for the fortune later.

Of course, Long Chen would not let this happen.

“Xiaolang, how long can you last against this Eight Clawed Fire Chi?” he asked.

Xiaolang gave a look of dissatisfaction, and Long Chen understood. Xiaolang opined that he and the beast were similar in strength.

Since Xiaolang was not one to brag, Long Chen trusted his judgment.

“I’ll let you handle the Fire Chi. I’ll kill the woman first, then focus on helping you.”

After telling him the plan, Long Chen shot off to stop the dwarf lady while Mo Xiaolang transformed to his combat state. Although the Sun Devouring Wolf was not as large as the Eight Clawed Fire Chi, it was definitely not weaker!

When the dwarf lady saw that Long Chen was coming to her instead of fighting the beast, she cautiously asked, “Who are you?”

“The person who will kill you,” replied Long Chen flatly, taking out the Azure Dragon Halberd and activating the Dragon Soul Transformation. Dense, elegant, red scales quickly enveloped his whole body, turning him into a blood-colored fighting machine.

“You’re merely at the First River Stage, and you think you can kill me?” She smiled.

“I’ve already killed the rest of the dwarves. What do you think will happen to you?” Long Chen responded with a grin.

When she heard the news, the lady’s gaze darkened. “You’re looking for death!”

She lunged towards Long Chen!

Chapter 288 - Sending You To Hell

Long Chen possessed the advanced Black-tier Nine Dragon Flashes as his body combat technique of choice while the dwarf lady, he guessed, had an elementary Earth-tier body combat technique.

However, Long Chen had completely mastered the Nine Dragon Flashes, so he was as fast as her. In fact, he could even move faster than her.

When she saw this, she gasped. “You’re only at the First River Stage, yet you have mastered a body combat technique to this level? How is that possible? Aren’t us dwarves the only people who possess such talent?”

“The dwarves are nothing!” Long Chen grinned.

Xiaolang was already engaged in battle against the Eight Clawed Fire Chi, and Long Chen wanted to join him as soon as possible, so he did not want to waste time talking. Halberd in hand, he charged at the dwarf!

With the Dragon Soul Transformation and Azure Dragon Halberd, Long Chen’s attacks were almost more powerful than hers.

“Your halberd ... that must be an intermediate Earth-tier divine weapon!” When she saw that her dagger was forced away by him, her eyes were fixed greedily on his halberd.

Long Chen knew that this couple had to die, or they would bring Goldfish Island more trouble in the future.

“Azure Dragon Combat Technique, Starsweep Dragon!”

The elementary Earth-tier technique was unleashed. Countless rays of light shot at the woman. After seeing such a powerful attack despite him being merely at the First River Stage, she started treating him as an equal.

“Secret Technique, Piercing Sun!” The dark green dagger in her hand spun quickly, and a blinding ray of light flew towards Long Chen’s forehead. At the same time, her footsteps quickened!

She was using a delicate technique against his large attack. Indeed, she was smart, but Long Chen would not let her get her way.

From the woman’s perspective, Long Chen was using the halberd, which was a long weapon, while she was using a short weapon. As long as she closed the distance between them, Long Chen would be done for.

The manic energy from Starsweep Dragon brushed past her. Since both sides were using body combat techniques, neither attack injured their target. However, she used this opportunity to arrive by his side. With a cold smirk, she thrust her dagger towards his waist!

Long Chen felt the sharp aura of the dagger. He immediately released one hand from the halberd, and the bright Sword Devil Finger appeared. The shining sword light not only blocked her dagger but also forced her back!

He showed no mercy, unleashing several quick consecutive Sword Devil Fingers so she was forced backwards. When she finally retaliated by breaking one of the attacks, his cold chuckle rang in her ear!

“Azure Dragon Combat Technique, Nine Heavens Dragon Ascension!”

He was using an intermediate Earth-tier combat technique despite only being at the First River Stage, yet he managed to utilize it to its full potential. In that moment, the world seemed to darken as a furious Azure Dragon soul charged at her!

The woman had almost lost all hope in the face of such a sudden powerful attack. She did her best to flee using a body combat technique while simultaneously launching various attacks to defend herself!

Then she suddenly had an idea. She tugged at her clothes so that they came undone, and a pair of huge breasts were freed. Long Chen was almost blinded by them.

After undoing her clothes, she hurriedly made a pitiful expression, signaling that she was begging him for mercy.

“What the fuck.” Long Chen was speechless. Although this was the biggest, most tempting thing ever, this was nothing compared to Ling Xi’s beauty. Long Chen’s stomach turned, and his hands did not stop. He continued to drive his halberd into

her chest, and the gigantic force from the Nine Heavens Dragon Ascension killed her immediately.

Is he not a man? That was the dwarf lady's only thought before she died.

From her perspective, no man should've been able to deal the killing blow in the face of such temptation.

Indeed, there were not many people who could proceed after seeing the best thing in the world. Long Chen was unfortunately the minority. After being by Ling Xi's side day and night, and witnessing her pure innocence, every other woman might as well be a pile of poop.

Long Chen did not pause for even a moment after killing the dwarf lady. He spun his halberd around and ran towards the Eight Clawed Fire Chi. The battle between it and the Sun Devouring Wolf had reached its peak!

Although that woman was at the Second River Stage, her actual combat abilities had not even reached Emperor Yuan's level. If Long Chen could kill Emperor Yuan, then he could kill her.

Unbeknownst to Long Chen and Xiaolang, the dwarf man who had been injured by the beast was able to crawl on his feet. Looking at the woman's body, hatred filled his eyes. After glaring at Long Chen venomously, he prepared to flee Goldfish Island.

The direction he had chosen to run towards was coincidentally where Ling Xi was. He had heard what Long Chen said to the woman and learned that Long Chen had killed his clan members. His objective now was to head over to see if he could kill someone in order to take revenge!

Long Chen and Xiaolang were focused on the Eight Clawed Fire Chi, which was nearing its limit after taking countless hits.

"Blood Devouring Domain!" Xiaolang covered for Long Chen, who unleashed his formidable killing technique!

When he joined forces with Xiaolang, the divine technique became extremely effective because Xiaolang was not affected and now possessed a greater advantage!

The Eight Clawed Fire Chi was a Category Three Earth-tier beast. Long Chen's Blood Devouring Domain should not have had much of an effect on it, only slowing its movements at most. However, it had sustained topical injuries from fighting the dwarves, plus the Sun Devouring Wolf had injured its feet!

Its body was covered in cuts. Under the influence of the Blood Devouring Domain, blood flowed from the cuts to Long Chen. Although it was not much, it would die from lack of blood if this continued!

Roar!

The Eight Clawed Fire Chi let out a furious roar. It went insane when it noticed that the amount of blood in its body was decreasing, and bloodlust filled its eyes. It waved its claws hysterically, and while they did not strike its opponents, they caused the ground and mountain to break!

"Xiaolang, now's your chance!" Long Chen yelled.

Xiaolang immediately rushed to a direction where the beast could not see him and opened his mouth. A pillar of black flames shot towards its back!

The Nine Devil Ancestral Fire left a giant crater in its back. Its blood and flesh turned into black ice and shattered!

The Eight Clawed Fire Chi lost a huge chunk of its body, including internal organs. At this point, it clearly could not survive any longer. Very soon, its eyes dimmed and it crashed to the ground, throwing a cloud of dust into the air!

In reality, targeting the head would've been the most fatal attack strategy, but Xiaolang had spat the Nine Devil Ancestral Fire at its back because he wanted the demonic core in its head.

That attack also meant that one-tenth of the beast's blood was lost. Long Chen's heart ached. He was now a First River Stage cultivator, and this Category Three Earth-tier beast far exceeded his Qi's level. It would likely help him ascend to the next level!

"Damn! The Eight Clawed Fire Chi was tough to beat. But now, all the good stuff on its body belongs to us." Long Chen was ready to give Xiaolang the demonic core and use Blood Transmutation. That was when he noticed a commotion coming from the east.

That was the direction leading to Ling Xi.

Long Chen's nerves tightened. His gaze swept across the area and lo and behold, the dwarf man who had been hurt by the beast was no longer there. Long Chen had a bad feeling. *That dwarf must have headed towards Ling Xi!*

The dwarf was a Second River Stage cultivator, so Chen Feng and Chen Lei were likely no match for him. Terrified, Long Chen abandoned his plan for Blood Transmutation and ran as fast as he could towards Ling Xi without even calling for Xiaolang!

"Xiao Xi ..."

Violence filled his eyes. This was an oversight on his end! If anything happened to Ling Xi, he would never forgive himself!

The wind howled in his ears as rage coursed through him. However, he felt slightly better when he noticed Xiaolang catching up.

Xiaolang didn't know what had happened, but he had abandoned the Eight Clawed Fire Chi's carcass. This showed how important Long Chen was to him.

It took less than thirty breaths for Long Chen to arrive. To his horror, he saw that Chen Feng was already wounded, barely standing with help from a few Goldfish Island warriors. Chen Lei was stubbornly standing in front of Ling Xi, facing attacks from the Second River Stage cultivator. Due to what Long Chen had said, retreat had never even crossed his mind!

The dwarf stared at the beautiful Ling Xi with fire in his eyes. Her beauty had made him completely forget his initial objective. As long as he could take Ling Xi away, he would leave this place.

That was when Long Chen and Xiaolang rushed over.

“You idiot! You think you can stop me? This is my final strike! I’m sending you to hell!”
The dwarf swung his dagger at Chen Lei’s neck.

Chapter 289 - Merak Heavenly River

Chen Lei could not dodge the strike. He had no choice—all he could do was close his eyes and await death.

He could not describe the way he was feeling if he tried. He had realized that he had been treating Long Chen badly due to his own close-mindedness and was feeling guilty.

He wanted to do something for Long Chen to prove that he was a good man. That was why he had fought to the end to protect Ling Xi. However, he had found that he could not defeat the dwarf, although the dwarf was an injured Second River Stage cultivator.

After he died, Ling Xi would be taken away by the evil dwarf. After observing them for the past few days, Chen Lei knew that Long Chen and Ling Xi shared a deep bond. If Ling Xi were kidnapped by this animalistic tribe, forget about Long Chen, even he would not accept it.

But ...

Chen Lei sighed internally. He knew that if he died, that outcome would be inevitable.

He could already feel his enemy’s dagger approaching his neck. Death’s shadow loomed over him and his scalp went numb.

Whoosh.

Time seemed to stop. Chen Lei gasped and realized that he was not dead. When he opened his eyes, there was a headless body standing in front of him, and the body was holding a dagger up against his throat. Just a little more and it would have cut through, killing Chen Lei.

Chen Lei spotted the dwarf’s head and stared at its wide eyes. This bastard likely did not know how he had died.

In reality, the dwarf had been very close to getting his hands on Ling Xi and his emotions were running high. That paired with the enraged Long Chen would only lead to the same outcome. Long Chen had chopped off his head with his halberd from behind.

Who killed him? Chen Lei was puzzled. He noticed there was some commotion behind him and turned around hurriedly. He saw Ling Xi in a young man’s arms. The young man was holding a long, green halberd, and its tip was currently resting on the ground, blood dripping from it.

“Long Chen ...” Chen Lei’s mouth went dry.

Long Chen put his halberd away and patted Ling Xi’s shoulder to comfort her, then he turned to Chen Lei. “Brother Chen Lei, thank you so much. If it wasn’t for you, we would be in huge trouble. I’ve got to say, you’re a true man!”

“A man? Of course.” Chen Lei scratched the back of his head, embarrassed.

The dwarf’s body finally fell over.

It was not good to let Ling Xi see such a gory scene.

Everything had been resolved, and Long Chen's war spoil, the Eight Clawed Fire Chi's carcass, was still at the center of the island. He picked Ling Xi up, turned to Chen Lei and Chen Feng, and said, "You two are injured; get some rest. Everyone else can deal with the bodies. Also, Xiaolang and I have slain the Eight Clawed Fire Chi. We are now going to collect our spoils."

Then, with Ling Xi in his arms and Xiaolang by his side, he headed back to the center of the island. Chen Feng and Chen Lei looked at one another, finding shock in each other's faces.

To them, Long Chen was like a miracle. If it was not for him, Goldfish Island would definitely have fallen. If the dwarves had not destroyed it first, the Eight Clawed Fire Chi would have.

Long Chen had killed both the Eight Clawed Fire Chi and the dwarves.

That was a Category Three Earth-tier beast, yet it had died in the hands of Long Chen and Xiaolang. How powerful was that teenager to have been able to do such things ...

"Lei'er, I have learned what a true prodigy is. Talent, intellect, attitude, and luck—Long Chen has all of them. He is clearly a true prodigy."

Chen Feng was genuinely impressed.

"Brother Chen, to be honest, I was terrified just now ..." Ling Xi curled up in his arms.

"You've gotten a lot more timid ever since you used the Profound Heavenly Jade Lotus," Long Chen said.

"Yeah. I had some power when I was in my spirit form. Also, no one could touch me when I was in the Ling Xi Sword. But it's all different now. This powerless feeling makes me feel very insecure ..." Ling Xi explained worriedly.

"It'll be fine. I'll be more vigilant next time. I will protect you until we get the Nine Heavens Immortal Fruit. I promise to keep you completely safe even if I have to risk my life," said Long Chen with resolve.

"Why are you so good to me?" Tears welled up in her eyes.

"Because you're my Ling Xi," he said, grinning mischievously.

Ling Xi, who was being carried like a princess, wrapped her arms around his neck and buried her face in his chest. Unbeknownst to Long Chen, worry filled her eyes. She was worried about the future.

How much longer will I be able to hug you like this, Brother Chen ... Ling Xi thought, biting her lip.

When they finally arrived at the center of the island, the carcass was still present. Xiaolang was walking back, already holding its demonic core in his mouth. Long Chen saw the red, fist-sized ball with flames on it. Xiaolang swallowed it whole and let out an *a-woo* towards Long Chen, then he went off to cultivate it.

Due to the delay, more blood had flowed from the Eight Clawed Fire Chi's carcass. Long Chen's heart ached at the wastage. The blood of a Category Three Earth-tier beast was a good resource to raise his cultivation level.

Not daring to delay any longer, he put Ling Xi aside and said, "I will cultivate and refine the beast's blood. I will only be able to protect you by becoming stronger."

Blood Transmutation was a gory and terrifying technique. Ling Xi could not bear to watch it, so she found a place to sit down.

Long Chen quickly absorbed the beast's blood and, to his surprise, it was especially nourishing. The blood that had been lost was mostly regular blood; the true essence still remained in its body.

The large quantity of blood sped up the process of condensing the heavenly river in his body, specifically the second star vein. The First River Stage involved condensing the Dubhe Heavenly River, so it was also known as the Dubhe Realm. The Second River Stage was called the Merak Realm, or the Tianxuan Realm. Dongfang Tianxuan was named after this heavenly river.

The massive amount of Blood Qi was converted into Long Chen's own Qi, aggregating in the Merak Star Vein, though it was not enough Qi to form a heavenly river. He started to use the Star Attraction Method to link himself with the power in the Merak Heavenly River in the sky above.

One part of the Merak Heavenly River appeared during the day and the other at night. Since it was daytime, Long Chen was condensing the Yang heavenly river.

Starlight was faint due to the sunlight, but it poured into Long Chen's body. The Merak Heavenly River's power was only the precursor. The true tool that could help him break through to the Second River Stage was the Heavenly River Pills.

Long Chen had no choice but to pay a great price to progress his cultivation. He had more than two thousand pills in total, and he had already used two hundred when condensing the eighteen star veins.

In his opinion, money was meant to be spent. That was why he did not hesitate to take out ten pills. He popped them in his mouth.

Other people would be cautious because they had a limited number of Heavenly River Pills. However, Long Chen had an abundance of them, so he popped them into his mouth like beans. Usually, cultivators would slowly cultivate and improve as the star power within them grew. Long Chen, however, received power directly from the pills.

The Inherited Blood Essence in his body had a property that the common person could not imagine. Long Chen felt as if his body was a bottomless pit, like he had a gigantic stomach that would not be full no matter how much he ate.

Whatever he ate was just way too little for it.

Time passed slowly. Long Chen gradually grew stronger with the assistance of the Blood Qi and the Heavenly River Pills. The Qi in his body slowly condensed along with the new energy, forming a liquid-form Star River Qi. It slowly flowed into his Merak Star Vein, forming the shining Merak Starry River in his body.

One hour later, Long Chen successfully condensed the third star vein. He had one foot in the Second River Stage. As long as he completed the other Merak Star Vein, he would truly enter the Second River Stage.

However, he had already exhausted the Eight Clawed Fire Chi's Blood Qi and consumed about a hundred Heavenly River Pills. If he wanted to condense the other Merak Starry River, he would need more time.

However, although he had only partially entered the Second River Stage, his strength had grown immensely.

After his success, he saw Xiaolang sitting next to him, radiating a thicker and heavier aura.

“Are you finally a Category Three Earth-tier again?” Long Chen asked, pleasantly surprised.

Xiaolang nodded. He was happy with the feeling of being stronger.

The two brothers had leveled up thanks to Eight Clawed Fire Chi.

“Since we've already been here for a while, we might as well stay for a few more days. We'll leave when I truly hit the Second River Stage. That will also give me some time to study the Divine Fire Clone technique,” Long Chen said.

Xiaolang was very interested in Divine Fire Clone. Due to Ling Xi, he would be able to discuss his thoughts with Long Chen.

The days passed peacefully, and the citizens of Goldfish Island returned to their tranquil lives. Xiao Yu often played with them.

On the tenth night after Long Chen condensed the Yang heavenly river, after consuming many Heavenly River Pills and ten straight days of brutal cultivation, he finally condensed the Merak Heavenly River in his Fourth Star Vein and officially reached the Second River Stage.

The next day, Long Chen and Xiaolang prepared to leave.

They still had to go to the Counter Essence Realm at the Biyang Imperial Capital after all.

Chapter 290 - Incident At the City Gate

After bidding farewell to the people on Goldfish Island, Long Chen, Ling Xi, and Xiaolang continued their journey to the capital.

Both Long Chen and Ling Xi rode Mo Xiaolang while traveling. Thanks to his speed, they soon saw the massive walls of the capital.

It was tens of times larger than Yuanling City, and the emerald-colored walls were very impressive even from a distance away. Long Chen felt like an ant in front of the massive city, akin to a pebble being dropped into the ocean that would cause nothing but a tiny ripple.

The walls were so tall that they separated the heavens and earth.

The closer they got, the taller the walls looked. Long Chen had not expected them to be so massive, and he felt insignificant next to them.

There were many people riding demonic beasts outside the capital's wall. However, Long Chen still ordered Mo Xiaolang to become small again in order to not attract unwanted attention. The Sun Devouring Wolf was too unique.

Long Chen then gave Ling Xi his veil and hat to prevent anyone from seeing her beauty.

"We will be fine once we enter the city and find the Ninth Prince," Long Chen whispered.

Since the Ninth Prince was not around, Long Chen was essentially considered a nobody in the city. Even though he couldn't get a clear grasp on the Ninth Prince's personality, he was sure that the Ninth Prince was not someone who would befriend him earnestly. Unfortunately, he had to rely on the Ninth Prince to enter the Counter Essence Realm.

They made their final preparations before they approached the entrance to the city.

They were at the southern gate of the capital. Even though it was not the largest one, it was larger than Yuanling City's gates. Countless people were constantly entering and exiting the city. Long Chen lined up with the rest, and there were more than ten lines of people waiting to enter. The closer they got, the more people with money and demonic beasts they spotted.

Long Chen held Ling Xi's hand and followed the crowd. They would be safe once they passed through the gates. All they would need to do then was find the Ninth Prince.

"Both of you, halt!"

One of the guards stopped Long Chen and Ling Xi.

There were thousands of guards standing outside the gates. All of them were standing in an orderly line, had bulging muscles, and beards covering half of their faces.

"Is there a problem, Sir?" Long Chen pulled Ling Xi to his side. His face was calm when he said that.

"Why is that woman wearing a veil? I need to check what is wrong with her before allowing her entry!" The guard saw that Long Chen was just a brat and didn't wait for a reply before approaching Ling Xi. He had intended to tear off Ling Xi's veil with or without consent.

Long Chen stood between him and Ling Xi, glaring at the guard. He didn't want to fight, but the guard was being too aggressive.

Seeing that Long Chen dared to disobey him, the guard scoffed at Long Chen and his voice grew cold. "What do you think you're doing? Are you trying to fight?"

"Your words are too harsh. There are many people who did not reveal their faces when they entered the city. Why are you targeting us?" Long Chen did not back down.

The guards were at least at the Divine Core Realm. Even though their ranks weren't high, they were all likely at the Heavenly Core Realm at least. Also, they had the backing of the Biyang Imperial Capital military. Therefore, it was not wise to fight them, but Long Chen would not allow a guard to walk all over him.

Many people saw the conflict and some of them started discussing it themselves.

There was indeed a reason the guard had stopped Ling Xi. Even though she was wearing a veil, the outline of her figure was still visible. The guard determined that she would be a beauty and wanted to stop her. His intention was to take her away from Long Chen.

It was not the first time they had done this.

Those who had been to the city numerous times had seen this happen before. All of them gave Long Chen looks of pity, already imagining what would happen to him. He would be killed and buried while Ling Xi would become the guards' plaything. If she was extremely beautiful, she would be offered to the higher-ups and the guards would either be rewarded or maybe even get promoted.

Everyone knew that the ruling faction of the imperial capital was the imperial family. It was also the strongest faction. The three noble families were nothing but their underlings. The military was under the direct command of the imperial family, so no one would go against the unruly guards if they didn't have sufficient power.

Long Chen was not an idiot, so he understood the rules. The military belonged to the imperial family, but Long Chen was an Immortal Guard that the Ninth Prince had personally recruited. There was no reason for him to be afraid.

The guard thought Long Chen was an idiot and laughed. He was originally going to let Long Chen live, but now there was no reason to.

"Men, come and catch him! He's a disciple of the Heavenly Demon Palace. He's trying to infiltrate the city!"

"Yes, Sir!"

The other guards leaped into action the moment he said that. All of them attacked Long Chen. Obeying their captain was always the best decision, as they would be rewarded for it.

A captain usually commanded a squad of a hundred guards. At the present moment, a hundred guards surrounded Long Chen. It was a strong squad, with all of them at the Divine Core Realm, but they were nothing to Long Chen.

Long Chen said nothing as he let Xiaolang protect Ling Xi while he himself rushed into the group of guards like a blade.

"You dare fight back?" The captain laughed, but his smile froze when he saw his men falling down left and right.

In just several minutes, all of the guards were lying on the ground. Both the captain and the spectators were shocked as they re-evaluated Long Chen.

"The young man has guts and strength. He probably has a good background too. Too bad he has offended the guards and will most likely get punished. No one can go against the guards with the military backing them."

"That's true. There was once a Heavenly River Realm cultivator who fought the guards and was killed in one strike by the commander."

Long Chen knew that Heavenly River Realm cultivators were the apex in the capital. Although it was possible that there were people who had gone past it, there were still many at the Divine Core Realm and the Draconic Realm.

The capital's population was immense, almost ten times that of Yuanling City, so naturally a lot of strong cultivators were gathered here.

The captain was shocked to see Long Chen defeating so many guards. He instinctively knew that Long Chen was stronger than himself, but he was not afraid. There had been many others stronger than him, but they had died in the end. The captain took out a horn and blew into it, sending a solemn sound into the clouds.

Is he calling for his superior? But this was what Long Chen needed. He had chosen to fight in the beginning so that someone with a higher rank would come out. *But the captain gave me so much trouble as well as killed many innocents before ...*

Long Chen steeled himself. While the captain was blowing the horn, Long Chen used the Sword Devil Finger and pierced the captain's chest. An instant later, the captain was dead.

The horn fell to the ground.

The captain stared at Long Chen. He wanted to know if Long Chen was the one who had killed him, but he would never find out. He didn't even see Long Chen's face before he fell over.

The captain never thought Long Chen would actually kill him. He had done this multiple times in the past and had mostly succeeded, and his superior had protected him whenever he failed. But this time he had been killed before his superior even showed up.

The spectators had thought that Long Chen was sensible in injuring the guards without killing them. But all of them were stunned when he killed the captain.

To them, killing the captain in front of the entrance to the city was tantamount to rebellion. No matter how strong Long Chen's background was, it would be useless—he was effectively dead.

Almost everyone who wanted to enter the city was watching the young boy, who was still calm after killing someone.

The other captains recognized the direness of the situation and immediately called for their men. They surrounded Long Chen and Ling Xi but did nothing; they were waiting for their superior.

Thousands of guards were staring at Long Chen.

Just then, someone fell from the top of the walls. The person landed feet first without any injuries.

It was a middle-aged cultivator wearing a thick suit of armor. The man was handsome and seemed charismatic.

“We greet the Seventh Commander!”

Thousands of guards kneeled in front of him.

“What happened?” The Seventh Commander looked around, his eyes landing on Long Chen and the dead captain. The issue here had affected the flow of people entering and exiting the city, so he needed to fix it now.

“Seventh Commander, Liu Heng found out that that man is a disciple of the Heavenly Demon Palace. Liu Heng wanted to capture him but was killed instead. Please take revenge for Liu Heng!”