

Seller 341

Chapter 341 The Trial Of The Holy Beasts (Part-6)

As the ancient grade beast Xiang Liu rose from the ocean, an enraged Mark didn't give it any chance to even launch an attack and proceeded to unleash his most reliable skill, Thunderblast.",

In just an instant, a scarlet-colored lightning bolt descended from the false sky and struck one of the snake heads of Xiang Liu.",

The lightning bolt then tore through the snake's head and went on striking the neck before destroying its core and killing it with one move. No battle occurred here. It is just one-sided annihilation.",

Very soon, as the corpse of the beast slowly drowned in the ocean and disappeared, a floating beast spark appeared in Mark's sight but he ignored it and walked through the portal after dismissing the clone.",

Upon returning to the stairway, he stared at the remaining steps and mumbled in seriousness, "five to go. But, before that, let's see my whole stats to formulate a proper plan against future opponents. There are still five levels to go and surely, each one will be a lot stronger than the previous one. Hence, I would need to take notes of the cooldown timers more than anything.""

"Open character interface.""

The skills might not be activated by the voice recognition due to the system's offline status but somehow, just like the skill interface, he could open his character interface just by speaking out loud. This feature became available after the system upgraded to level 3. Once the system upgrades to level 6, who knows what other offline functions it will unlock?",

Anyways, back to the current situation, while Mark was recovering his spent ether energy, he observed the details of the stats and skills once again.",

Name: Lu Zhen (Mark Spencer)",

Rank: 9",

Strength: 9.5",

Intelligence: 7.6 (+25%)",

Defense: 9.8",

Agility: 9.6",

Vitality: 9.1",

Resistance: 9.1",

Charisma: 9",

Luck: 2+5",

Bloodline: Blizzard Pegasus",

Attribute: Lightning, Ice, and Space (locked);",

Spirit path: Summoner",

Ether quality: High",

Ether energy: 1,035,630 EP",

Special Skills: Ultimate Defense I, Ultimate Defense II, Thunderblast, Lightning Clone, Seal Breaker, the Devil's Hand, Gravity Dome, Ether Regeneration, No touch, and Enhanced Durability.",

Bloodline skills: Absolute freezing, Ice bolt, Blizzard Wings, Freezing gaze.",

Assistants: 2 (Allen Spencer, Alina Spencer)",

Store branches: N/A",

Lifespan limit: 585 (560 years left)",

Available credits: N/A",

Available Credit limit: N/A",

Net worth: N/A",

Total Debt: N/A",

Credit debt: N/A",

*

"Don't want to be too happy in this situation but it is just too unbelievable that I just upgraded my rank three times directly." ",

Mark was kinda overwhelmed for a moment by the stats as he looked at his stats and he couldn't just stop smiling.",

Compared to the last time, there was a big boost in every stat. Not that low ether energy will not allow him to reach his full potential, but with the powerful skills he had in his arsenal, Mark thought that low ether energy might not pose any problem even if he faces his mother in a battle.",

After calculating how strong each skill is going to be, he created a strategy on what skill he should use at what level.",

"Okay, my ether energy is full. Let's do this...""

Taking a deep breath, he climbed the next step to enter the eleventh level of the trial. ",

Previously, it was an island in the middle of the ocean, and now, it was a floating island in the sky with clouds passing around.",

Mark neither looked at the enemy nor did he pay attention to the surroundings. He directly went on unleashing the combo i.e. the lightning clone and the gravity dome, and only then he observed the surroundings.",

Like the last time, the beast didn't make its appearance for atleast 30 seconds, and when it did, it surprisingly appeared with a coating of scarlet barrier around it.",

Mark looked at the beast. It was a two-horned tiger with giant bat-like wings. Its body was protected by red-scale armor and there is a red mark on its forehead. He inspected the details.",

Qiong Qi",

Grade: Emperor",

Rank: 10-circle (intermediate)",

Description: A native demonic beast of the undying lands and the master of Bang Mountains.",

*

"Sure enough. The evil creator of this trial didn't betray my expectations." Mark looked at the beast with a cold gaze. He clicked on the second bloodline skill, Ice bolt, and conjured one ice spear.",

Grabbing an ice spear in his right arm, Mark ordered the lightning clone to guard while he closed his eyes.",

He concentrated on the graviton particles spread around his 1 km radius in the invisible dome. He motioned his left arm and clenched his fist, "200g.""",

In an instant, all the graviton particles started splitting into numerous numbers, increasing the intensity of gravity 200 times within the dome.",

The demonic tiger instantly felt the gravitational force and crashed onto the floating island. A crater appeared at the spot of the collision.",

"Let's go." Mark flapped his icy wings and flew forward at a low altitude. The lightning clone went past him and reached the demigod realm beast emperor, which was somehow resisting the enormous gravitational force with great difficulty.",

The clone threw a punch at the oval-shaped barrier surrounding the beast. A crack appeared on it while it lost its balance and fell on its butt. The lightning clone took advantage of the opportunity and threw a couple of consecutive high-speed punches to destroy the barrier.",

Just as its punch was about to land on the beast emperor, the latter let out a powerful roar and pushed away the clone into the sky.",

By that time, Mark reached the crater and he saw the clone almost brush past him and blasted into the sky. Luckily, he didn't collide with it and sighed in relief.",

"Okay, here we go..." He threw the ice spear at the beast and conjured the second one as soon as it left his hand.",

Qiong Qi glanced at the incoming attack and raised its paw. Sharp claws came out of it and the beast swiped at the icy spear with great force. The icy spear collided with its claws that have been empowered by the flames.",

Luckily for Mark, the beast was only at the intermediate stage of the demigod realm and its attack barely reach the immortal realm, and on the other hand, the icy spear has the power of an immortal realm expert (11.4-int). Its claws couldn't match the might of the icy spear. ",

While its flames did melt a part of the spear, the sharp pointy front had pierced its paw.",

Its paw was wounded and blood started flowing out before it was frozen by the aftereffect of the icy spear.",

The beast hurriedly breathes out the flames and tried to melt down the ice. Mark took advantage of this moment and threw another icy spear.",

The second icy spear cut through the air like lightning and pierced its forehead, followed by freezing it under - 220 degrees Celsius of temperature. The beast fell to the ground. ",

The ice slowly spread on its face but it just lay motionless on the ground. About four seconds later, it slowly turned into specks of lights, leaving behind a beast spark and letting Mark know that it was killed.",

As Mark let out a sigh of relief, the lightning clone was in a descent motion and soon, it landed nearby the beast spark and turned its head to look at him as if it was waiting for the order.",

"Useless..." He muttered under his breath for not being able to utilize the strength of the clone properly and dismissed it.",

After returning to the stairway and recovering his ether energy, he looked at the door that looks so near but is so far away, "Four to go."",

He climbed to the next step, entering the 12th level of the trial while expecting the opponents to be either two beast emperors of the demigod realm or an ancient-grade beast of the same realm.",

And it turned out exactly as he expected it to be. There were two demigod realm beast emperors and each one appeared to be a lot stronger than the previous one too. However, Mark was too calm at the moment as he stood at the edge of a cliff and stared at the two flying blue dragons with golden scales here and there.",

Ying dragon",

Grade: Emperor",

Rank: 10-circle (peak)",

Description: A dragon that is banished from the Heaven Palace of the Celestial Realm. Once a pet of the Yellow Emperor, it roamed across the undying lands and died in the hands of a three-legged Golden crow.",

"Too much unnecessary information. Let's finish it as fast as possible." "

"Gravity Dome" "Lightning clone" "icy Spear""",

While the two dragons were forced to crash on the cliff because of the gravity dome, the lightning clone went after one and Mark threw an icy spear at the other one.",

Chapter 342 The Trial Of The Holy Beasts (Part-7)

Fujian island;

Amidst the corpses of thousands of fish and other aquatic creatures that washed up on the island, Lan Ju was busy talking about some serious matters with the stranger, who sent Mark to the trial without his consent.

"I have seen him up close. He is a lot more stubborn than an average human. Not to mention, the darkness in his heart is something he has yet to conquer," replied Lan Ju after hearing the stranger's plan. The zheng was sure that it is going to be failed because of Mark's personality.

Yuqiang didn't seem to agree with Lan Ju's opinion either. He said, "I don't know him but I'm well aware of a human's greed. I just need to compensate him with something after he finishes his trial. Tell me, what he likes more? Wealth or power?"

Lan Ju didn't know what this person has in mind but he was sure that Mark will not be pleased about the trial. But, anyway, there's not much he can do at the moment for he lacks the strength and willpower to go against a god.

In the end, he let out a sigh and said, "Lord Yuqiang, he gave away a divine sword to his high-quality puppet to use. So, I doubt he will appreciate it no matter what kind of weapon you give him.

As for skill books, his lightning bolt skill and his lightning clone are very powerful. Not to mention, his bloodline skills.

Hence, in my opinion, he might be satisfied with either gold or ether crystals. Or maybe, celestial materials like adamantium and mithril, which are almost impossible to be found in this mortal realm."

Yuqiang thought for a bit and nodded, "alright, I got it. Once I confirm that he was able to reach the 11th step, I will give take him to places with rare materials. There are actually a few on the ocean bed."

"Will he be able to go past the tenth level?" wondered Lan Ju as he glanced to his right. There was a scepter floating in mid-air, being enveloped by golden energy.

Meanwhile, inside the scepter, Mark was currently fighting alongside the lightning clone against a giant white snake.

Compared to all the previous monsters he faced, in the trial as well as in reality, this white snake is far bigger. Its tail was stretched for tens of kilometers long and Mark was smaller than a flea in its eyes. As a result, the gravity dome wasn't helping that much.

But, thanks to the difference in height, it also became very tough for the white snake to kill Mark and his lightning clone as they were moving at their peak speed.

Ssssaa

As the white snake breathes out flames on a large scale, the lightning clone dodged it by taking a leap and landing on its back while Mark controlled his wings to cover himself.

The icy wings were perfectly able to block the flames and the lightning clone started running on top of its body, making its way to the head.

Within no time, the lightning clone reached its destination and proceeded to slide down.

Meanwhile, Mark spread his wings wide and stared at the snake. "Open skill interface," he mumbled.

Looking at the details of the skills, he thought, "There's still fifty seconds left for the Thunderblast to use again. Man, I really should have bought a few active skills. But then again, who could have expected that I would one day face an immortal realm beast? Anyways, let's focus."

As the clone reached its left eye to injure it for the seventh time during the past twelve minutes, Mark aided it by flapping his wings to soar into the sky to its height and threw an icy spear, which reduced his ether energy to as low as 10%.

The white snake saw a tiny clone near its eye, and despite the fact that it went through similar experiences for six times, it didn't defend against the clone and focused on the more powerful Mark and his icy spear that contained the power of a peak stage immortal realm expert.

Sssaaaa

It breathes out the flames once again, which melted the incoming icy spear, and Mark had to defend himself by covering himself with the wings, again.

Naturally, as he stopped flapping the wings, he started to freefall amidst the flames and crashed onto the ground.

A small crater formed and no injuries occurred to Mark, although it cannot be said the same for the beast.

The white snake's left eye started to bleed as the lightning clone gave consecutive punches. However, as it acted pretty quickly, it healed its eye and shook off its head, throwing away the clone far away.

The clone managed to land on its body, and meanwhile, Mark rose to his feet and backed away to recover his energy, just focusing on defending himself.

Half a minute later, the white snake appeared to have finally caught the clone in its spell. As there were spiral rings appeared in its eyes, the clone was slowly turning into a statue.

Within seconds, he turned into a complete statue and the white snake slammed its gigantic head onto it. The statue was broken into pieces, releasing a huge amount of energy and turning her mouth into a bloody pulp.

"Damn it." Mark gritted his teeth in anger. Taking a deep breath, he proceeded to click on the skill. "12 seconds to go. Let's hope its sacrifice hasn't gone in vain."

With the clone gone, the white snake's attention was firmly fixed on Mark. While recovering its mouth, it suddenly grew a pair of arms from its body that stretched toward him.

Mark quickly crouched down and covered himself with his icy wings to protect himself from any possible ambush. He then started counting down the time.

"8, 7, 6, 5..."

When he reached five, the two arms reached him with the goal of poisoning him with a simple touch. However, due to the "No touch" passive skill, it didn't go how the beast wanted it to go.

As its cultivation realm and strength are significantly higher than Mark, the invisible force that escaped from his body made him fly in the reverse direction instead of pushing away its arms

In reflex, Mark spread his wings wildly and stopped in mid-air. He then glanced at the holographic screen floating in front of his eyes and a smile escaped from him right away.

"Thunderblast, activate."

He clicked on the skill.

The lightning bolt made its appearance for the third time in this trial and struck its head precisely. This time, it was yellow in color.

The white snake's head burst open and the rest of the white snake's body fell down with a heavy thud.

"Did I get it?" Mark wondered out loud.

But, in the next couple of seconds, his facial expression changed as instead of disappearing, flesh slowly started to form and its head was about to reform into new albeit at a slow pace.

"Fu*k, I might have missed hitting its core due to its leaning posture." Mark cursed out aloud in frustration. Taking a deep breath, he mumbled, "If I wait five more minutes, it would be healed anew. I need to act faster but I don't have much ether energy left either. Should I wait and give it another try or should I go for an upgrade?"

In three seconds, Mark made his choice. He concentrated on his storage ring and took out a black colored pill.

Taking a glance at the fallen white snake and then at the pill, Mark mumbled, "well, there's one more enemy to defeat anyway. If it is going to be a lot stronger than this white snake, then, I might need more power from the lightning bolt with a shorter duration of cooldown timer."

After a bit of hesitancy, he finally swallowed the advanced-grade intelligence pill, raising his original "INT" to 9.6, effectively turning the amulet of magic into a useless item from now onwards.

But, there's no regret in his heart. After all, his survival is at stake here, well, atleast that's what he believed as he wasn't explained anything about the rules of the trial beforehand.

After making a breakthrough to rank 9, he checked upon the skills, specifically the Thunderblast skill that depends on his INT stat. In an instant, his facial expression changed and he broke out into a smile.

"Yes, now, this is something I needed at the moment. I made the right choice." Mark's mood became a lot better all of a sudden as he stared at the details of the skill.

Thunderblast (Lv-9): Summon a lightning bolt from the heavens to strike down the enemy with 150% attack power (max: 12.5). Cost: 50% ether. CD: None.

Chapter 343 The Trial Of The Holy Beasts (Final)

About fifteen seconds later, the white snake was completely healed. During this time, Mark didn't move from his spot and just focused on recovering his ether energy.

As the white snake raised its head and hissed at him, Mark just crouched on the ground and covered himself with the Blizzard wings while keeping an eye on the opponent's movement by looking through the small gap between the wings.

Somehow, the white snake learned nothing from the experiences and tried to burn him in its flames. Clearly, it didn't work and six more seconds are wasted. Hence, it went on to unleash its next skill, continuously spitting out a stream of venom at Mark for the next five to six seconds.

Mark had already faced it once and wasn't that worried about the attack. He continued to stay in his position.

Thirty more seconds passed away and the white snake has yet to find to way to break through the defense of Mark's blizzard wings. Whatever kind of attack it launches gets blocked by the wings. Neither its powerful and intense flames nor its head and tail slams was found to be effective.

Nevertheless, the beast just didn't give up or try to think of different solutions either. Perhaps, this is the difference between a real immortal realm beast and a programmed one. The white snake has no willpower or thoughts on her own and just battles according to how it was created and programmed by the creator of this trial.

However, there is something strange about this beast. It was supposed to be an 11-circle realm beast emperor and yet, it was only unleashing a specific set of skills or normal attacks when it was supposed to have over a dozen of them. Is it because it can't or is there something else? Mark wondered for a moment before realizing that his ether points reached the maximum.

He stopped thinking about other things and spread apart his wings, followed by rising to his feet.

The white snake saw that and it immediately motioned its head backward to unleash the flames once again.

Unfortunately, it didn't get such an opportunity as Mark already had his finger on the skill interface.

He clicked on the Thunderblast skill without hesitation while concentrating on the target to lock onto it.

A purple lightning bolt descended from the false sky and struck the head of the white snake. This time, the lightning just pierced its head. The energy released from the lightning bolt passed through its entire body, turning everything into ash.

"The lightning turned purple..." mumbled Mark in a daze, remembering the time when he had unleashed against the dark elves back when he claimed the fire seed.

Originally, his lightning was blue. It turned red when his INT stats (including the buff from the amulet) crossed 7 and its attack power reached the demigod realm.

Then, the lightning turned yellow, when its attack power crossed the immortal realm.

And now, as the power of a lightning bolt entered the saint realm (12-circle), it became purple. "I wonder what color it would become after I make it through demigod realm and its power cross God realm (13-circle). Anyway, only one level to go. Let's finish it as quickly as possible. Song Yue must be worried because of the sudden change of events."

After recovering his ether energy, he returned to the stairway and proceeded to climb onto the final step before the door, which is probably the exit. He can only know when he enters it.

As the surroundings changed to that of a barren island with large and small rocks here and there, Mark saw his opponent was already waiting for him just like how it was in the earlier levels.

However, it didn't launch any attack and just turned its head to look at him. As if that wasn't surprising enough, for the first time, Mark was greeted by his opponent. "Hello there, warrior. I'm..."

"Thunderblast"

Mark clicked on the skill in reflex as soon as his eyes fell on the dragon with the body of a goat and a single horn on its forehead. He neither read its details nor did he bother to converse with it. He went for the kill, right away.

The purple lightning ambushed it by striking its head in an instant. The ancient grade beast named Bai Ze was wounded heavily and turned into a bloody mess as it fell on the ground. In the next very instant, it was covered by golden energy.

But, Mark didn't give it the time to heal. Seeing that the first attack didn't kill the enemy, he clicked on the skill for the second time. With no cooldown timer, the purple lightning made its appearance once again.

The sky rumbled again and the lightning bolt struck the heavily injured beast without any mercy.

This time, the beast couldn't defend itself and turned into a corpse, leaving behind the Beast spark.

And this is how the one-sided battle against the final boss of this trial ended in two moves.

"Okay, now that was finished, let's return. I also needed to punish the bastard who threw me here and made me spend so many precious stat pills when I planned to sell them to the richer clients of northern empires for exorbitant prices."

Assuming that everything is over, he proceeded to walk into the portal, of course, after he recovered his ether energy to full. After all, there is still a potential enemy on the outside waiting for him. Well, that was what he thought as he returned to the stairway and went on to walk through the door.

However, he didn't return to the island. Instead, a little kid was waiting for him in some kind of white endless space. Everything was pure white in color, the background, his clothes, his hair, and even his skin were so pale that he appeared to perfectly blend in the surroundings.

The little kid's unique appearance and the fact that Mark didn't leave this place made him quite alert. This person might be the creator of the trial or another monster in humanoid form. Perhaps, this is the last monster he had to fight against?

Mark decided to attack the kid without any warning. But, as soon as he opened the skill interface, he saw that all the skills turned grey and became unavailable.

Mark was taken aback by surprise. "What the hell is going on? Without Thunderblast, how should I fight him?"

Not having many options left to act, he inspected the kid. However, all he saw are question marks, from name to description. Mark's heartbeat rose quite a bit. Now, his suspicion about the kid got stronger and he asked right away while trying to maintain calmness on the outside, "Are you the creator of this trial? The one who sent me here?"

The kid, who looked like a 7-year-old, opened his mouth in response without any expression on his face, "Yes and No. I'm the creator of this trial but not the one who dragged you here."

Mark thought that there might be two enemies who were cooperating with each other. If there are multiple opponents, then, the situation might become complicated.

Taking a deep breath and forcefully calming down himself, Mark then asked, "Who are you? What do you guys want with me?"

The little kid replied, "Before I give you the answer that you seek, let me introduce myself. My given name is Wang Zuo and I'm the spirit of the divine throne of the Heavens, well, former throne to be exact."

"Uhhh... Divine throne? Somehow, I feel like my life is going to get more complicated."

Chapter 344 Wang Zuo, The Divine Throne Of The Heavens

The background story of Wang Zuo is quite straightforward and without any sort of conspiracies. He was the soul of the divine throne of the heavens where the jade emperor sits and rules the entire celestial plane of existence.

For eons, the divine throne went through several repairs and eventually went into a stage where it will cost a great number of resources and time. Hence, the jade emperor was forced to replace it with a new throne.

Obviously, Wang Zuo didn't like to be retired. He protested in rather a violent way, causing mayhem in the heavens and bringing a huge amount of losses of resources to the heavenly palace. As a result, he was expelled from the heavens for eternity.

While wandering all over the universe for about millions of years, he eventually ended up on this earth.

"So, let me get this straight. You were out of the job. So, you threw a tantrum at your boss and got kicked out? Seriously, that's not a very smart method to take revenge." Mark was flabbergasted by the story of this pale-looking spirit and couldn't help wondering how unwise he was for a weapon that lived for billions of years.

"Are you calling me stupid?" The spirit responded with a question. He might have a blank expression on his face but his words clearly indicated that he was displeased by Mark's words.

Mark shrugged his shoulders and answered, "It isn't necessary that only stupid people make stupid decisions. Even the intelligent ones also do. If I was in your position, I would ally myself with the bitter most enemy and provide him with all the confidential information I have on those gods to bring down the jade emperor."

The divine spirit stared at Mark for a few seconds before he looked down at the floor and muttered, "That's right. I could have lent support to the Chaos King. I missed an opportunity."

"Chaos King?" Mark wondered whether he is some sort of powerful demon or something. But then again, those matters have nothing to do with him at the moment. Hence, he put those thoughts away and asked the spirit, "So, how did you end up in the hands of Lord Yuqiang?"

The divine spirit shook his head, "He actually doesn't know who I am for I took the appearance of a scepter and identified myself as a wandering divine-grade weapon that is looking for a master and also a way to reach my peak."

"So, he is your master?" asked Mark with a hunch that the answer is no. After all, he doesn't believe that a weapon couldn't lie to its master.

Just like he thought, the divine spirit made it clear of its independence, "Obviously, he isn't. While he is a potential candidate, he was still a servant that serves the heavenly palace. There's no way I would accept someone like that as my master."

"Then, that means..." Mark wondered whether this divine spirit wanted him as his master.

The divine spirit nodded, "Yuqiang might have sent you here for his own mission but I cannot ignore the fact that you even managed to reach me. Not to mention, you are quite different from every other candidate who participated in this trial for the past four thousand years.

I don't know who your master is but I see that you could unleash powerful skills with an attack power of atleast two realms above your cultivation realm. It is the primary reason that I think that you will be suitable to wield my power."

"Okay, thanks I guess." Mark wasn't that keen on taking a damaged divine-grade weapon but he doesn't want to reject free credits either. Once the system becomes online, he can sell it and earn credits.

However, there was a small problem here. What if this spirit can read out his thoughts after entering into a contract? If the system is online, it would be different, but without its support, he wasn't that confident that he would be able to protect his mind.

While Mark was thinking of how to deal with this matter, the divine spirit continued, "In my present state, I will be able to transform into any type of weapon that you imagine and would be able to store enough energy to launch the full power of a Minor God (12-circle).

I can also imprison people inside this place and force them to battle against my transformations just like you earlier went through. However, my abilities will largely be affected by the person who launches that skill whether he is my master or not.

Lord Yuqiang is in Saint Realm (12-circle). Hence, the toughest monster I could conjure is an ancient beast named Xiezi, which we encountered once during our travels.

And in your hands, since you are currently in the Supreme realm, I would be able to conjure the strongest legendary realm beast you have encountered in your life. Your memories will tell me that.

There are other amazing abilities that I can help you out but I think you will be more satisfied with my memory prowess.

I have roamed numerous places with Lord Yuqiang and will help you acquire countless treasures that mortals couldn't even dare to dream of.

If by chance you were able to repair me, naturally, my abilities will be enhanced further.

But, yes, there is a risk too. Unless you are as strong as a major god, I won't recommend you to enter the celestial plane in the future. A long time might have passed but I'm not sure whether the heavenly gods will turn hostile against you if they sense my presence in your mindscape.

I think I have said everything that needs to be said. The rest lies in your decision. You have five minutes to think. After that, I will send you back to the outside world and we will treat it like this proposition from me had never occurred."

Wang Zuo might have liked Mark as the latter passed the trial with flying colors but that doesn't mean that he will beg him for the contract. After all, he was once the divine throne of the heavens and he had his own pride.

At the same time, he was also confident that Mark would accept him. After all, which mortal would dare to resist such an offer?

Unfortunately for the divine spirit, Mark had different thoughts. He wasn't interested in the first place.

Upon hearing its abilities, the first thing that came to his mind is to use it as a personal gun, but then, he realized that it will access his memory.

It would also mean that he will not only expose the existence of the system but also his intentions of dismantling it to earn credits. That is enough for Mark to make his decision without any hesitation.

After brief thinking, Mark said, "Wang Zuo, I'll keep you in my storage ring for now and form the contract after I return to my home. You see, I'm currently on a vacation, right now. It's already disturbing that I was

forced into participating in this trial without being given any choice. So, I don't want to think about complicated issues for the rest of my vacation."

The divine spirit didn't know why this is a complicated issue when it only requires a single drop of his blood to form the contract. But, as a spirit that has less intelligence than even a teenage human, all he could think was that Mark was wary of the heavenly palace and probably wanted to see its abilities beforehand to see whether it is worth the risk to form a contract.

As Mark asked him to wait for only three weeks, the divine spirit agreed to the arrangement.

"Alright." Mark let out a smile and proceeded to close his eyes as the divine spirit sent him back to the real world.

Meanwhile, on the island, Lord Yuqiang was in the middle of a chat with Song Yue, although it looked like he was interrogating her with a strange set of questions about her personal life.

He asked her how she grew up, how is her relationship with her parents and relatives, what does she think of her best friend, her happiest moment, her saddest moment, how she met Mark and how they fell in love, etc...

Song Yue was obviously uncomfortable but his identity as the god of seas and Lan Ju's insistence made her give honest answers to Yuqiang. Of course, those weren't the only reasons. Mark is currently in the middle of a trial and she doesn't want to anger this god over such things.

At first, she thought that this eccentric god probably wanted to learn about the important moments of her life as he had business with her fiancé. But soon, her thoughts changed as Lord Yuqiang asked, "So, when you slept, have you ever felt like a god, for example, being able to manipulate and reconstruct the world in your dreams as you wish?"

"Ehh?" Song Yue flinched in surprise and Yuqiang didn't miss that either, "You did?" He asked.

Chapter 345 Mark's Price To Fulfill Lord Yuqiang's Mission

Song Yue had been facing such dreams since she was a child but she never told about them to anyone except for her parents.

After learning that they were called lucid dreams, which are rare but not unheard of, she no longer paid attention to them. However, when Lord Yuqiang questioned her in a way that indicated that he might know the exact details of her dreams, Song Yue fell into deep thoughts. She didn't answer it right away and took her time as she wasn't comfortable for some reason.

Thankfully, before she gave her confirmation, Lord Yuqiang dropped their conversation in a jiffy and rose to his feet, announcing that Mark is out.

Followed by Lord Yuqiang, the others also left the house and started walking toward the beach where the glowing scepter was floating earlier.

After walking for a few steps, Lord Yuqiang halted his footsteps with a look of surprise on his face, "He's accepted by Wang Zuo. Hmm? Supreme realm?"

Everyone saw icy-winged Mark flying toward them with the scepter in his hand.

Soon, he landed before them with a smile on his face. The worried Song Yue sighed in relief upon seeing that he was fine and well. She wanted to rush forward and hug him but controlled her emotions because of the presence of people around.

Meanwhile, Lan Ju also sensed the changes in Mark's cultivation realm. Before anyone pointed it out, he directly spoke of the matter, "Lu Zhen, what in the hell did you face in the trial that you became a Supreme Being?"

As soon as the question escaped from the zheng, the others looked at him in shock, especially Song Yun.

Song Yun, like the rest of the humans, doesn't possess the ability to sense one's real strength. All he could calculate is one's cultivation realm based on the amount of ether energy. So, in his view, Mark was still in the 6-circle realm. This is why Lan Ju's question greatly shocked him. He wondered whether this future son-in-law of his was deliberately hiding his cultivation until now.

Thankfully, his knight's helmet hid his expression and no one else is paying attention to him.

On the other hand, Mark's expression was frozen. His smile was wiped off his face and he looked at the only stranger around before giving a chilling answer, "courtesy of a sea god who had a disregard for people's opinions because they are weaker than him. I was forced to raise my strength."

Lord Yuqiang's expression was also changed by Mark's rude reply. He furrowed his brows for a second but quickly calmed down and spoke in a polite manner, "I apologize if I made you angry with my actions. It's just that I had to be sure that you can handle such situations even when you are unprepared. After all, my mission involves the fate of all the worlds located inside the entire mortal plane."

Mark didn't respond to him right away and instead, he activated his Sage eyes to inspect the god without many expectations. Fortunately, a holographic screen with enough details appeared before his eyes.

Yuqiang

Species: Human/Serpent/Celestial

Status: Humanoid form.

Grade: Ancient

Rank: low-12-circle (real: peak-12-circle)

Description: A descendant of the Yellow Emperor (father's ancestor) and a celestial serpent (mother's ancestor), Yuqiang is the god of Sea and wind.

**

After looking at his details, Mark realized that it is indeed foolish to challenge him as advised by the divine spirit, and with Song Yue and others around, he didn't take the risk and swallowed down all of his anger.

Trying to be as calm as possible, he then said to Lord Yuqiang, "Okay, I'm willing to listen. Tell me. But, before that, I want to inform you that Wang Zuo accepted me as his master. You shouldn't have any problem with it, correct?"

Lord Yuqiang took a glance at the scepter and replied, "Those who weren't acknowledged by Wang Zuo couldn't even touch him, much less carry him. The moment I saw the divine scepter in your hands, I realized it already. But, still, I would like to hear it directly from his mouth."

The sea and wind god closed his eyes and connected his consciousness with the scepter without even grabbing it. After a couple of seconds, he opened his eyes and said, "A contract hasn't been established between you two, nevertheless, he wants to travel alongside you. I will respect his wishes."

"Okay." Mark nodded and finally placed the scepter in his storage card. He then asked Yuqiang to get to the matter, right away.

In response, Lord Yuqiang snapped his fingers and created a noise-canceling barrier. Mark went through a similar experience a while ago. Hence, he wasn't alarmed and calmly stared at the sea god.

"You might have already heard about me from Wang Zuo but let me introduce myself before we get into the matter..." The god of sea and wind explained his back story.

It was the time when mankind hasn't existed on this planet.

He grew up in the celestial plane and always wanted to work for the heavenly palace. Unfortunately for him, when he broke through to the Saint realm, he awakened the bloodline of his maternal ancestor, a celestial serpent. It might be a divine beast but still a beast.

As a result, he failed to get his dream job and was allocated a job in the mortal plane, which was protected by the four holy beasts since the time of its creation. This way, it was never been invaded by the forces of the upper planes.

Roughly about ten million years ago, a great evil force known as the Chaos King somehow resurrected and started invading worlds one after another.

Countless gods fell in front of his strength. Even the holy beasts were no exception either. Lord Yuqiang somehow managed to survive the war and even killed a couple of generals of the Chaos King.

Eventually, the jade emperor vanquished the evil once again but the mortal plane was still vulnerable to the threats. Hence, a large number of minor gods and immortals were deployed to act as the guardians of several habitable worlds.

Impressed by his acts of valor, the jade emperor gave two special missions to him. One of them is to restore the heavenly barrier over the mortal plane. It can only be possible once the four holy beasts will be resurrected and get to their peak strength.

The only problem is that the holy beasts are linked to each other and need the blood of an intelligent mortal species to even be born from their respective eggs. Previously, it was a jade emperor who was their master when he used to be a human.

For years, Lord Yuqiang visited several worlds to encounter mortals with the potential to reach the Saint realm. Along the way, he met the wandering Wang Zuo and became friends. The latter helped him to conduct trials for potential candidates, making his job easier.

And when Mark displayed the power of a Saint for a moment during the battle against the dark elves, Lord Yuqiang's attention fell on him. The sea god then learned that Mark also tamed a 10-circle beast emperor.

Because the system is offline, his real cultivation realm was easily found by the sea god. Obviously, the latter was surprised by his 6-circle realm cultivation. He started doing prophecies regarding Mark.

And when Tishanan evolved into an ancient-grade beast, the sea god finally made his move. He could ask Mark's permission whether he wanted to participate in the trial but Mark's low cultivation level made him act directly.

Never in the world did he expect that not only Mark would clear the tenth level of the trial, which required the demigod realm in his opinion, but he would also tame the divine spirit. What's more, he made a breakthrough three times. It is another mystery to solve.

Lord Yuqiang doesn't want to leave this opportunity at all costs. That explains his polite tone.

"And what's the other mission?" asked Mark in curiosity after listening to the whole story.

Lord Yuqiang shook his head in response, "that's confidential. And it was already completed. So, no need to discuss it. For now, all I need you to do is to form a contract with the four holy beasts and become their guardian until they become demigod realm beasts.

They get stronger by absorbing the natural energy from their surroundings. Hence, there won't be any burden on you either. However, their birth would also trigger an unwanted invasion from the other planes for everyone wanted to claim power for themselves. They cannot fall into wrong hands.

Adding on top of this, the golden furred kitten of yours had now become an ancient grade, which will be sensed by its parent, the Golden Demon Cat. It might send its army to take back its child.

According to the verdict from the heavenly palace, no Saint Realm expert or a beast (12-circle) is allowed to enter the mortal plane and I will ensure that not even immortal realm experts will be able to land on this world. But, the remaining must be handled by yourself. Since you cleared the trial, I believe that you can face them.

Once the holy beasts cross the demigod realm, I will come and collect them in order to create the heavenly barrier.

Anyways, this is everything I had to say.

In compensation for everything that you went through earlier and for everything that was about to happen in the near future, whatever you wish, I will try my best to fulfill it.

Do you desire power? Authority to rule the world? My bloodline? Want to become the wealthiest in the entire mortal plane? You name it."

"All the Adamantium available in the mortal plane," replied Mark, right away as if he had already prepared beforehand. "That's my price."

Chapter 346 The Rebirth Of The Holy Beasts

"Adamantium cannot be available in pure form and you will only be given in the form of ores. Will that be okay?" replied the sea god without thinking too much.

Mark didn't expect this sea god would agree so quickly, but since he was already getting what he wanted, he put an end to this matter with a silent nod.

With a smile on his face, the god of the sea then snapped his fingers, bringing out four beast eggs, each of them being as big as the houses the robots built on the island.

Each of the giant eggs had a different appearance too. One was blue and looked like it had scales. One was red and appeared to be quite hot as if it was very angry. The third one was white in color but have stripes all over. And the last one just looked like a giant black rock that fell from the sky.

As Mark and the others were staring at them, the sea god conjured two more things out of thin air.

"Here, I need your blood."

After giving him a special knife and a bowl, Yuqiang gestured for Mark to proceed with the blood ceremony as he wanted to see them born in person.

Mark slashed his own palm with the knife and collected about 10-15 ml of blood in the bowl before handing it over to the sea god.

Yuqiang then placed his palm on the bowl to inject a part of his divinity into the blood. This was insurance. It was done so that Mark doesn't have complete control over the holy beasts.

Once he was done with the process, he flew higher and poured the blood on each egg, hoping that this will finally satisfy the requirements to hatch them.

As the four beast eggs gave off a blinding flash of light, the sea god's face also glowed with happiness for his efforts turned into success after so many years. And soon, he could see himself going back home and working in the heavenly palace.

One by one, the eggs cracked and the holy beasts broke through their respective shells and stepped out.

Mark's eyes fell on them. The first to come out is a giant blue dragon with long whiskers and two arms but no wings. Even then, it was seen floating in the sky.

The second one is a fiery scarlet bird that was bathing in intense flames. It has a chicken head, swallow's chin, snake's neck, fish's tail, and five-color feathers.

The third one to hatch is a giant white tiger cub with black stripes.

And finally, the giant black tortoise was born with its tail surprisingly in the form of a golden serpent. Both of them appeared to be sharing the same body.

As Mark proceeded to use his Sage eyes to find their information, Yuqiang greeted them loudly without bothering to hide his excitement, "Welcome back to the world of the living, Azure Dragon of the East, Vermillion bird of the South, White Tiger of the West, and Black Tortoise of the North. My name is Yuqiang, a servant of the Heavenly Palace."

The four holy beasts responded with their roars. While they were quite loud, as newborns, they sounded quite adorable at the same time too, well, atleast to the god of sea and wind. He just couldn't stop smiling as he pointed at Mark, "This is Lu Zhen and he will be your guardian until all of you become qualified enough to go back to your rightful places. I will be looking forward to the day when we will meet again."

As the beasts turned their heads to look at their parent, the sea god landed on the ground and told Mark that he will fulfill his promise to collect all the available Adamantium in the mortal plane and give it to him within one year.

However, he didn't remind Mark about holding the end of his bargain. With his divinity injected into their bodies, the sea god was confident that Mark wouldn't be able to turn the holy beasts against him in the future.

As for Mark himself, Yuqiang was aware of his greediness and darkness but still, he wasn't worried. After all, he is in the Saint realm and possessed a bloodline that is even more powerful than Blizzard Pegasus. In his view, he can kill the mortal at any time.

Unfortunately, this minor god neither knows about the heaven-defying system that Mark possessed nor was he aware that he completed the trial by defeating an immortal realm beast of ancient grade. If he had known, he would be more careful in giving this task to him all the people. But for now, the situation ended up like this.

Once he left, Mark paid attention to the holy beasts, which have the memories of their previous life according to the sea god, "I'm leaving this place, very soon. If you can reduce your size, I will be able to take you all with me. If you can't, then, you can stay on this island for a while until I return."

Mark quickly received his response from the holy beasts; all of them gave off a blinding flash of light before turning into the size of an average-sized dog.

He let out a pleasant smile and nodded, "Good, now you look more approachable. By the way, these are my family members. She is Song Yue, my wife. He is Lan Ju; he is Black Knight; this is Baltrow and Anan Spencer (formerly Tishanan)."

Mark introduced one after another who were standing around him. The holy beasts observed the fellow beasts and the humans for a few seconds before greeting the golden-furred cat in Song Yue's arms. The rest were ignored.

Maw

The cat raised its paw while continuing to cozy itself in Song Yue's arms as if it is a lord greeting its subjects.

This irked the holy beasts, especially Baihu, the white tiger cub. It took a giant leap at Mark and landed on his shoulder before looking down at Anan and letting out a cute roar.

As the guy whose soul was linked to these beasts, Mark automatically understood what these little fellas were feeling and he decided to put discipline into all of his contracted beasts now that he had such strength to do so. Of course, there's also the intention of showing off and gaining loyalty points hidden in this decision.

Hence, he acted quickly by suddenly calling out to the zheng, "Lan Ju, let's spar a bit. I wanted to know how much stronger I got."

"Eh?" Song Yue and others abruptly turned their heads in surprise, not expecting it from Mark. After all, he just came out of the trial.

"Everyone, move away."

Mark addressed the others in a serious tone, making the little holy beasts flinch for a second before they scurried away like good pets. As the others also followed the suit, only Lan Ju was left beside him.

"Lu Zhen, I know what you are doing but your plan might backfire too as I won't fake it and admit defeat just to show that you are stronger." The zheng warned him in a low tone after staring at him for a while.

To which, Mark responded with a question, "If I win, will you follow my orders without even talking back, atleast for the following two-three months?"

Chapter 347 The Zheng Submits To Mark's Authority

Ten minutes later;

A giant blue-colored fireball was coming toward Mark, who controlled his blizzard wings to block them. The fireball struck the icy wings and disappeared.

The five-tailed scarlet leopard disappeared and reappeared behind Mark in an instant before opening its mouth widely.

It was about to attack him with a Hydro Blast but the lightning not only intervened in perfect time but also threw a punch right at its chin.

The scarlet leopard blasted away for a dozen meters and crashed onto the group with blood trickling down its mouth.

Meanwhile, Mark turned around while conjuring an ice spear. He looked at the leopard, which is slowly rising to its feet, "So, will you finally agree that I'm stronger than you and admit defeat?"

Pushing away the dust from its body, the leopard replied, "I have yet to use my lethal skills, Lu Zhen. Since this is just a spar, I'm not being too serious."

"Well, I'm also the same, Lan Ju. I wasn't also giving my all because this isn't a real battle and there are others around or else, it would have been finished long ago." Mark countered his statement, displaying his confidence, although it appeared more like arrogance.

The scarlet leopard stared at Mark for a few seconds in silence and then said, "Alright, if your clone managed to survive this next attack of mine, I will consider it my defeat."

"Bring it on, then." Mark gestured it to proceed.

The scarlet leopard then stretched its legs wide and raised five of its tails. Soon, each of its tails was covered with attribute energy.

Within seconds, a powerful sphere was being generated above the beast. Mark saw flames, water, lightning sparks, stones, and wind manage to converge into a giant disc to become translucent in color.

"This is my strongest attack that I have only used once in my life, Lu Zhen. The pure natural energy attribute attack is deadlier than any other attribute. Neither fire can burn it nor can ice freeze it." Lan Ju warned him as his skill reached its completion. Strangely, for some reason, the zheng didn't ask him to stay away to save himself from getting killed and only bragged about its mighty prowess.

Is there some sort of plan he had? There might be.

However, Mark doesn't seem worried in the least.

He was quite calm as he stared at the translucent sphere. "Ke Long (Clone), get behind me."

The lightning clone quickly got behind him as the translucent sphere was launched. Mark used the blizzard wings as a shield once again.

As the attack reached halfway, the zheng mumbled in confidence, "He is too proud of his wings. There's no way he's going to survive this. Maybe, after I resurrect him, he will get to his senses and... Huh?" Lan Ju was stunned for a second, all of a sudden, as its attack struck the blizzard wings.

However, no destruction happened as the beast emperor expected.

Forget about killing Mark in the process, not even a feather of his wings was damaged. The so-called pure natural energy, which is the combination of five basic attributes, got defeated in front of sturdy icy wings.

A memory was triggered as he saw the silhouette of Lan Gengxin behind Mark, "master?"

In it, a teenage-looking Lan Ju was chatting with a dashing young man, who looked quite similar to Mark.

The teenage boy asked his master about his strongest attack. In response, the latter replied that his wings were quite invincible.

The scene changes to the battle against an ancient grade beast, Qilin, and its hundreds of servants. As they were rampaging all over the Kunyu mountain range, the zheng hid behind Lan Gengxin, who was blocking a powerful beam of concentrated energy from the dungeon overlord.

"Lan Ju... Oi, Lan Ju... Hello..."

"Ah Yes, Sorry about that." Lan Ju came back to his senses and apologized without actually meaning to do it. Mark was slightly surprised by its tone and apology but didn't comment on the matter, thinking that this beast emperor acknowledged his strength.

Meanwhile, Lan Ju finally realized that Mark indeed has the strength to back up his arrogance. Unknowingly, his loyalty shot up by a significant amount of percentage, enough for him to accept this human as his superior.

After removing the barrier around the island which cut off the place from the rest of the world so that their battle wouldn't alert any hidden demigod, Lan Ju then cupped his fists and bowed, "ready to obey your orders, Sect Master."

Mark felt elated by the zheng's response but tried his best to control his emotions and spoke as he raised fingers one by one, "You have but three jobs to fulfill. One, I need you to look after the holy beasts just like you did with Anan (golden-furred kitten).

Two, using your human identity as Wu Weibao, intimidate every idiot that tries to look down on me or go against me. And if I ask you to eliminate them, do it without asking me for the reasons.

And three, in case of a strong enemy that cannot be handled by Baltrow, your number one priority will be protecting Song Yue. Can you do these three things?"

Lan Ju readily agreed to the orders without questioning him, holding up the end of their earlier wager.

"Good." Mark nodded with a smile before placing a D-Day on the Phoenix Empire's downfall in his mind. "I look forward to that day when you will finally understand how it feels to lose everything, Lan Jingyi."

Imperial city, Leon Empire;

Inside a private chamber of the palace, the ruler of the biggest empire of the vermilion bird continent was staring at Shang Wei, the third prince of the Phoenix Empire as he was discussing the details of the trade and other things with the Prime Minister of the former.

After thinking for a while, he suddenly interrupted them with an unusual comment, "Prince Wei, would you like to become a key bridge between our empires?"

"Eh?" "Huh?"

Both of them turned to look at Emperor Shi Le in a bit of surprise and confusion. The prime minister didn't understand the meaning behind Emperor's words but Shang Wei felt something strange. A vague suspicion came to his mind.

To clarify his doubt, he voiced out, "How may I be of service, Your Majesty?"

Chapter 348 Shang Wei At The Leon Empire

As the third prince of the Phoenix Empire asked Emperor Shi to speak of his intentions, the latter simply let out a smile and said, "What do you think of my granddaughter, Princess Shi Juan? You met her yesterday. I believe both of you are a good match."

The image of a battle-crazy lady in knight's armor appeared in Shang Wei's head, and instantly, his mood soured a bit. Forcing out a smile, he replied, "Your Majesty, I already have a girl that I love."

"Who is it that stole the heart of an intellectual like you?" asked the 83-year-old emperor without showing any sort of displeasure at getting his proposition rejected. It looked like he was quite curious. "Which empire's princess is she? I heard that Western Moon's princess was quite intelligent and wise. Is it her perhaps?"

Shang Wei answered honestly, "She is not a princess but the daughter of a minister. He is the current head of the Lin Clan."

"But, you are going to be the successor to Emperor Shang Fu and will take his place soon," commented the surprised emperor. He further said, "Don't make the same mistake as your father, Prince Wei. You should marry someone of a royal bloodline to match your status."

It is not because she is my granddaughter that I'm telling you this. But, it is because we have cordial relationship with the Phoenix Empire for centuries and I just wanted your future to be brighter.

As you know, Princess Shi Juan isn't just beautiful and strong but she also awakened our ancestral bloodline too. Your descendants will obviously rule the south for the next millennia too.

As a well-wisher, I suggest you take Princess Shi Juan as your first wife and then marry whoever you like. I heard that you are one of the smartest in the Phoenix Empire and I also see your intellectual prowess in person. I'm sure you will make the right choice. So, take your time and answer."

Shang Wei wanted to reject him right away as it hasn't been that long since he watched the princess battling a 7-circle realm beast king without caring about her injuries.

Her bloodied figure on top of the monster's corpse, her barbarian style of eating the meat and drinking the wine, and her straightforwardness in talking, everything is still fresh on his mind.

In his opinion, apart from her pretty face and nice figure, there's nothing elegant about her. Even if he wasn't in love with Lin Xue, Shang Wei would never marry such a person.

At the same time, he was also aware that once the bloodline of Phoenix integrates into his body, his own potential will also become comparable to his second brother, Shang Wen. Perhaps, then the Lin Clan's heiress would finally accept him. Or so, Shang Wei hopes it to be.

Hence, there is no way that he would even try to ponder on the subject but then again, he should consider the old man's identity too.

In the end, he gave a diplomatic answer, "Your Majesty, I'm thankful for your goodwill. I will think about it and send you my reply very soon."

"Good, I'm expecting good news." Emperor Shi was satisfied by his reply and Shang Wei continued to negotiate the terms of their agreements.

It was the time of evening. Shang Wei somehow managed to finish his dinner after being intimidated by the presence of a gracefully looking Princess Shi Juan the entire time. Her younger brother was bragging about her heroics during the battle against a rebel army.

He was explaining how she, with just a unit of 18, faced more than 300 enemies, how she still emerged as the winner and earned the title of Blood warrior.

Killing a monster is quite different from killing a human being without any mercy even if the opponent is an enemy. Not to mention, as a scholar who grew up in the era of peace, Shang Wei had never seen even a small war. So, he wasn't that comfortable with the solution that can result in so many deaths.

Shang Wei felt like this princess believed in violence to solve every issue and stayed away from her as much as possible. Thankfully, the princess didn't care about his presence. So, no harm was being done here and he managed to return to his room without facing any unexpected issues.

But then again, he also grew up as a prince and it is impossible that a person of his stature wouldn't get embroiled in something troublesome.

And it came in the form of a whisper from his trusted imperial guard.

Shang Wei wanted to sleep in peace for he was looking forward to returning home. Just like anyone who has been away for several weeks away from his family, he was quite excited to see them.

There are so many things that he wished to share with his father and there are so many things he would also like to know the details of. After all, many lives have been changed since his departure from the Phoenix Empire.

However, the news from his bodyguard made him lose his sleep completely. He fell into deep thoughts.

"The moment I learned that I will receive the seed of fire, I knew that Eldest brother would try to eliminate me but never in the world did I expect him to be in cahoots with that mysterious "Soul" organization.

According to Shang Bo (fourth prince), even his NET couldn't get hold of the information on this organization. But, they appeared to be quite powerful and did many high-profile assassinations without failure.

As long as I'm in the city, I will be safe. It's quite possible that they try to assassinate me when I travel to Western Yan by sea route. And once I reach home, I will absorb the fire seed and possibly make a breakthrough.

So, how should I survive this?"

Shang Wei thought for a while before he started writing something in the scroll.

Soon, his bodyguard left the palace with the letter and the prince lies down on the bed, "Well, I feel a bit guilty for using Emperor Shi's favorable impression of me to my advantage but I guess all is fair in love and war."

Chapter 349 Shang Wei Gets Abducted

The next day at dawn, surrounded by a unit of twenty elite knights and a General of the Imperial army of Leon, Shang Wei left the palace in a grand manner as if he was announcing to the world that a high-profile target is sitting inside the horse carriage.

Except for the Emperor and his trusted aides who knew the truth of the fire seed, no one in Leon Empire is that thrilled to have Shang Wei at the imperial palace, as in their eyes, he is just a 4-circle realm mage and the third prince with no real power at Phoenix Empire too.

Hence, when he left the palace with such heavy security, the imperial family members only looked down on him further and were rather happy that this leech was gone. As for the emperor's favorite granddaughter, she doesn't care.

The day went on for the rest of the people as usual.

Roughly four hours after his departure;

In the palace, there was an argument going on in the courtroom between the crown prince and the Emperor's nephew.

"Your Majesty, the Imperial Palace has pumped more than eight hundred thousand gold coins into this project for the past year and it wasn't going anywhere due to constant rains," spoke the crown prince in a loud tone with his chest puffed out. "I suggest that we should cancel this project and not fund anymore."

As he put out his proposition in a firm tone, Everyone's eyes shifted to the Emperor's nephew who is ruling one of the five provinces of the empire as a vassal for the throne.

Sun Reqiang then rose to its feet and argued back in an imposing manner, "Crown Prince Shi Qiu, you probably don't understand the significance of the bridge considering you have never stepped outside this palace.

Tianjin Bridge is not only a dream project of Emperor Shi Xun (the current emperor's late great-grandfather) but it is also a way to connect the western provinces. Do you know how much we can shorten the distance once the bridge is completed? It will be reduced from 12 days of travel to just 1 day."

"Oh, really?" The crown prince let out a meaningful smile and he counterattacked right away as if he was prepared beforehand. He pulled out a scroll from his sleeves and spoke, "It came to my notice that the construction workers were receiving meager wages and only a single-time meal. I heard that even children were being hired."

As Sun Reqiang's face darkened by his statement, the crown prince of the Leon Empire further suggested that they should redirect the funds to build Emperor Shi Xun's statue instead as it will at least improve the image of the Imperial family. As for the Tianjin Bridge, he commented how it was being used by some people to earn money.

The crown prince closed his argument and turned to his father and bowed, "Your Majesty, I request for a full investigation on the management of the funds on the Tianjin Bridge and stop the funding until it is over."

"You... don't go too far, Shi Qiu." The Emperor's nephew raised his voice. Anger was clearly evident on his face.

"Lord Sun." The Emperor furrowed his eyebrows in displeasure, "this is a courtroom. Please mind your tone."

Sun Reqiang hurriedly apologized and commented that the crown prince is misusing his position to slander him with baseless accusations.

The Emperor was about to react to it by siding with his son but before he did that, an injured royal knight stormed into the room without waiting for permission and fell onto his knees.

While the crown prince got angered by his behavior and expressed his intentions to punish him, Emperor Shi gestured for his son to sit down and told the knight to speak of the matter.

The royal knight rose to his feet and said, "Your Majesty, we were ambushed by unknown experts around the outskirts of the city and General Wan was heavily injured in the process. Prince Shang Wei was abducted along with his imperial guard."

"What did you say?" The calm-looking emperor suddenly flared as he rose to his feet. The others also got up from their seats as it is disrespectful to continue sitting when the emperor is in a standing position. "Who is that dared to abduct my guest?"

"I apologize, Your Majesty. It happened very quickly. By the time we understood what was going on, everyone was knocked out." The royal knight proceeded to plead for mercy.

The Emperor told him to rise and then looked at the crown prince, "Shi Qiu, I need you to send messages to all the sects and tell the Supreme Commander to meet me right away. Put up a 500,000 gold coins reward in all the guilds to save Prince Wei and bring him alive. Make sure this matter gets resolved as soon as possible. We need to prevent a war with the south at all costs."

"Eh?" The crown prince and the others were quite shocked by the emperor's reaction. 500,000 gold coins are by no means a small amount even for the Imperial palace.

Is that weak southern prince that important? The ministers couldn't help but wonder.

While the rest stayed silent, the crown prince didn't stand still. He quickly opinioned against the order, "But father, it is our General who was harmed by their adversaries and we are the victims. Besides that, our military is far stronger than the Phoenix Empire. A timid Emperor Shang won't dare to wage an unnecessary war against us. So, there's no need to send our city into chaos by announcing such a hefty reward."

"Shi Qiu, this is an order from an Emperor and I don't give you permission to defy it..." Shi Le raised his voice with a stern look and the crown prince immediately shut his mouth. He no longer tried to reason with his father who had already taken his decision.

Cupped his fists, the crown prince respectfully bowed, "It will be done, Your Majesty."

Meanwhile, somewhere in the mountains, far away from the Imperial City, a group of cultivators was seen carrying an unconscious Shang Wei and his imperial guard.

After an hour of travel, the group entered one of the caves and put both of them on the ground as they removed their hoods.

The leader of the group looked at the prince and spoke in a low tone, "Wake them up."

Following his order, one of his subordinates took out a potion from his storage ring and opened its lid. A pink-colored gas escaped the bottle and entered Shang Wei's nose.

Just like his bodyguard, Shang Wei opened his eyes after a couple of seconds and looked around.

As his eyes fell on the middle-aged fellow with a goatee, a pleasant smile appeared on his face and he greeted him, "It's been a while, Grand mage Wang."

The leader of the group nodded and then said in a serious tone, "You can rest here as long as you like and stay hidden from the rest of the world. The food and water can be arranged too. I hope you will hold up the end of your bargain too."

"Once I return to my home safely, I will talk to my father and provide you with the things you have asked for. It's my promise," replied the prince.

Chapter 350 An Alliance Proposition To The Eastern Sun Kingdom

Three days later, Helios City;

At the entrance of the capital city of Eastern Sun, which lies on the northern coast of the southern province of the kingdom, an army of about three to four hundred soldiers was on standby with each one having a rifle in his/her hand while their general was staring at the sky in anticipation in order to proceed with the orders came from above.

As the soldiers were staying in this position since morning without any movement, some of them became busy scolding Mark in their hearts.

The sun is on their head, they didn't have any food or even water, and their legs were about to give out. However, not one of them dared to speak or even move from the spot for the orders from a King are absolute. Because of that, even the nearby citizens who gathered on the sidelines out of curiosity couldn't leave either as it would be disrespectful to their king.

And then, finally, when a majestic raven with two pairs of eyes appeared in the sky, some became excited to see these important royal guests while the others sighed in relief that they won't have to stand in the sun any longer.

Looking at the kingdom's Supreme General and the guests standing behind him, General Li Jun, the third strongest soldier in the royal army, ordered the soldiers, "The royal guests are here. Begin..."

bang Bang* bang* bang*

The loud shots of rifles reverberated in the surroundings as a part of this ceremony invented by the king, specifically for Mark as a sign of respect for his firearms.

Of course, that doesn't mean those weapons will be sold in the Eastern Sun kingdom. The king doesn't want civilians to possess them at any cost as he believed it would cause chaos. For now, it is just for the usage of military personnel only.

Mark wanted to convince the kid and change his opinion. It is one of the reasons for his visit. However, he cannot appear as someone who was seeking something from the Eastern Sun. After all, his status has changed from a while ago.

Right now, Mark is in the Supreme realm. Even though he doesn't possess an adequate amount of ether particles, he was confident that he can crush anyone below the immortal realm with his eyes closed. Theoretically, he is probably the strongest human on the planet. Naturally, he felt that he was in a higher position compared to the king.

As a result, staring down at the rifle army in a calm manner, Mark gave a nod, "Your king really knows how to welcome a guest, General Li."

This comment made the supreme general frown in displeasure as he doesn't like the fact that someone is talking about his king in such casual speech much less acknowledging a weapon seller like Mark.

However, he was quick to hide his emotions, not intending to offend the supreme realm expert on Mark's side. In the end, he simply forced out a smile and thanked this royal guest.

As the beast went past the crowd, General Xianjun dismissed the crowd and followed them to the royal palace on a winged horse.

Soon, Mark reached his destination and was welcomed warmly by Lan Jing and 12-year-old Ouyang Zen (the king of the eastern sun) in person. Along with them, there was also Princess whose past was connected to Mark's past life, although at the moment, she appeared to be distracted by a tiny squirrel playing on her palm.

After the usual greetings and introductions are finished, everyone was led to the royal guest rooms to rest. But, there was no talk happening at a later time of the day too.

For two days straight, forget about important meetings between Mark and the king to fulfill their respective agendas, Mark and Ouyang Zen didn't even talk in private.

Instead, the weapon seller from the phoenix empire just enjoyed the privilege of being a royal guest, spending his time with Song Yue as they toured around the capital city.

Fortunately, it wasn't as if nothing important happened during these past couple of days.

For Lan Jing, Mark's visit turned out to be fruitful. When he saw the zheng in human form, his legs actually shivered and his speech stammered while addressing the guests.

Lan Jing later told Ouyang Zen that the guest is someone anyone in the kingdom shouldn't dare to offend no matter the cost. The king thought that it is because the person named Wu Weibao is too powerful for them to handle. But, the real reason was that he was afraid of the zheng.

Surprisingly, Lan Ju asked for a meeting with Lan Jing in private and ordered him to assist Mark in reviving the sect branch if he wants to repent his selfish actions for running away.

Lan Jing had planned to take his grand-nephew to his home and would never support the revival of the sect branch at Kunyu mountain range. However, at the same time, he also knew that he cannot fulfill his mission with Lan Ju against him.

Hence, for now, he promised the zheng to support the Lan Sect branch's revival and he will do that. But, when the time comes, he won't hesitate to go back on his word.

However, on the third day, he finally became aware that the current Mark is vastly different from the one he met a while ago.

The time was around two in the afternoon. Song Yue and others left for their respective rooms after having a delicious lunch while Mark asked for a private meeting with Lan Jing and Ouyang Zen to discuss the matters.

The king obliged his wishes and went on with the meeting.

As soon as all the servants were dismissed from the meeting chamber and Lan Jing went on unleashing a noise-canceling barrier to protect their conversation, Mark's first action was to reveal his real identity to the twelve-year-old kid.

Looking straight into the eyes of the king of the eastern sun, he spoke in a serious tone, "King Ouyang, before we speak about other things, let me reintroduce myself in case Prime Minister Lan Jing didn't tell you my secret."

As the kid's expression changed to that of curiousness, Mark continued to speak, "I'm a bit quite ashamed to say this but I'm the son of Emperor Shang Fu and Queen Consort Lan Jingyi."

"Lan Jingyi?" The Eastern Sun's king furrowed his brows and immediately turned his head to look at his prime minister. The latter nodded in response and said, "Your Majesty, Shang Zen is my grand nephew who inherited the Blizzard Pegasus of our clan."

"It's Lu Zhen, Mr. Lan," corrected Mark right away with a disapproving look. He further added, "From the moment I was thrown away by Lan Jingyi and swapped with Shang Wei, I ceased to be a member of the imperial family. At the moment, I'm nothing but the grandson of late Lan Gengxin."

Ouyang Zen stared at him for a few seconds and nodded as he quickly absorbed the shocking information, "okay, that was unexpected but why you are telling me this? What do you want from me?" He asked the weapon seller directly while wondering whether this weapon seller would ask his help to reclaim the throne of Phoenix Empire or something.

In response, Mark surprised him once again with his reply, "Soon, I will be engaged to the princess of the Western Moon kingdom. I wish to form an alliance between your two independent kingdoms."

"What did you say?"