

Seller 351

Chapter 351 Do You Know Zan Rong?

From the start, Ouyang Zen had expected Mark to put forth a proposition regarding the weapon store. After knowing about this Supreme realm expert on the guest's side, he planned to ask for time instead of directly rejecting it. After all, no one in the right mind would offend such an expert.

Little did he expect that Mark would turn out to be a prince of the Phoenix Empire and also related to his prime minister, Lan Jing.

Had Mark would ask for his help regarding manpower and wealth, Ouyang Zen would gladly provide it, although in an indirect manner, as the Eastern Sun doesn't have any relations with this southernmost empire of the Vermilion bird continent.

But, Mark's revelation about his link with the Western Moon kingdom followed by the proposition of an alliance caught him off guard for a moment. He couldn't help but fall into deep thinking, trying to analyze this weapon seller's real motive.

"For what reason has he revealed his real identity? Why did he become a mediator between Western Moon and the Eastern Sun? Are these two things related?"

There are questions in Ouyang Zen's mind but he wasn't close enough to Mark to confront him in a direct manner. So, he had to respond with the reply that was already on his mind from the start.

Mark also agreed to give him three days of time before departing for his next destination.

As Ouyang Zen expressed his thanks, Mark then quickly switched to the next topic by handing a scroll to Lan Jing.

The legendary realm expert took a good look at the contents of the scroll and informed the king, which is procuring rare metals from the eastern sun while selling the spirit beast corpses directly to the palace. Since it isn't a big deal to give him a priority when Mark offered to purchase them at a market rate, Ouyang Zen agreed to it without much thinking.

Once those two things were done, Mark once again surprised them by stating that these two were the only things he had as an agenda regarding this visit.

"Only these two?" Ouyang Zen didn't understand what was going on in Mark's mind. After all, these two weren't serious things and can be accomplished even by talking through communication talisman. There's no need for a personal visit unless there's a deep meaning behind those propositions.

As the king fell into thoughts one more time, Lan Jing opened his mouth, speaking in a bit of favor toward Mark, "Lu Zhen, you sure you don't want to talk about opening your store's branch here and selling firearms?"

"Not anymore," replied Mark as he firmly shook his head in response. He further stated, "As long as the royal palace is interested to buy the weapons from my store, it will be enough for now. As for opening a branch here, I'm confident that it will happen sooner or later and it will be done at the formal request of King Ouyang Zen. After all, the future belongs to firearms."

Lan Jing's question followed by Mark's reply forcefully brought Ouyang Zen back to reality and he saw a trace of arrogance in Mark's tone. He wondered where Mark's confidence is coming from. Is it because of that mysterious expert, Wu Weibao?

If it is, then, in Ouyang Zen's eyes, Mark was too delusional to think a power of a mere individual can change the ways of society. People, whether they are commoners or rulers, don't like change and will try to eliminate the one who is trying to bring it. Hence, this twelve-year-old thinks that Mark's grand ambition will go unfulfilled.

But then again, saying this out loud will only bring nothing but a useless argument between them. Who knows, the argument might even escalate to something worse, which he doesn't want for it was not only bad for the eastern sun but also for the mystery about his adopted sister's past might go unsolved.

Hence, Ouyang Zen kept his mouth shut and simply nodded as if he was agreeing with Mark, although not commenting on whether he would permit the sale of firearms to the public.

However, at the same time, he also knows that there is a possibility of merchants importing firearms from the phoenix empire and selling them to the commoners.

And seeing confidence in Mark, Ouyang Zen realized that perhaps, he shouldn't take this lightly. This resulted in a thought appearing in his head about implementing a law on owning firearms. He decided to discuss with Lan Jing and announce it later on.

After a while, Mark returned to his room and Ouyang Zen returned to the throne hall. Strangely, for the same reason, neither of them brought up the topic of the princess and ended the meeting.

Coincidentally, it appeared that both of them don't want Lan Jing to hear of this matter and they thought of talking about it when the time is right.

And that right time arrived at midnight when Lan Jing was away from the palace.

Before going to bed, Mark was spending his time drawing designs of some of his creations from his past life. While he was in the middle of thinking about the material composition for a cruise missile, the door was knocked on twice.

He stopped his work for a moment and asked who it is, wondering whether it is Song Yue or Lan Ju. However, there was no response from the other side and the knocks continued.

"Hmm?" Mark furrowed his brows after his question went unanswered once again. Putting away his designs back into his storage ring, Mark opened the skill list with his finger almost touching the gravity dome. He knew that the enemy wouldn't knock on the door like this, but still, he couldn't help but become cautious as he wasn't inside his home where he is a god.

He slowly opened the door and found a familiar-looking kid wearing a robe and covering his head with a hood.

"Ouyan..." Mark was about to call him by his name in surprise but the kid put a finger on his own mouth and slowly slipped inside the room, gesturing him to close the door.

As Mark did it while dropping down his guard, Ouyang Zen removed his hood and placed a scroll on the floor before pouring his ether energy into it.

The scroll lit up and unleashed a noise-canceling barrier.

Once the barrier was finished, Ouyang Zen let out a sigh of relief and spoke, "Sorry about that, Mr. Lu. I just need to be careful."

"Uh... okay... So, what is it that you want to talk about that you had to visit my room at this hour and this secretly?" Mark asked him. He was indeed curious about what this kid had to say.

Ouyang Zen then took a deep breath and said, "It is about my sister, Zan Rong. Do you know her?"

Mark took a step back in surprise as soon as he heard that. At first, he wanted to feign ignorance but then the king went on to reveal that during the auction, he heard how Mark had addressed Zan Rong as "Mari" when no one should have known that her real name is Marina Zan.

After thinking about the pros and cons while staring at the kid for a few seconds, Mark came to a decision and spoke, "Very well, I'll tell you what I know about her and her family. But, before that, I need to know how she ended up in this palace."

Chapter 352 The Eye Of Talim

Roughly 15 minutes later;

The atmosphere in the room fell quiet as Mark and Ouyang Zen were digesting the information each of them received from one another.

As a person who wants to help his sister, Ouyang Zen was honest. He didn't leave a single important detail like how her grandfather was investigating an unexplored ancient ruins site and discovered mountains of gold, jewels, and top quality equipment that includes a divine grade item.

However, it wasn't easy for him to get those things out of the place as the main underground chamber was guarded by a white dragon.

The former king fought with the dragon and emerged victorious while receiving fatal injuries in return. As a result, he lost his cultivation and a great Supreme Being like Ouyang Ru ended up being a mortal.

But, this isn't the end of the story.

Before the white dragon died, it handed Zan Rong who appeared to be sealed in crystal, and informed Ouyang Ru that her real name is Marina Zan. After revealing that she is from a different world and her cultivation is vastly restricted, the white dragon requested Ouyang Ru to protect her in exchange for a divine-grade item and became a corpse.

And by the time Zan Rong was unsealed from the crystal and opened her eyes, she had no recollection of her identity and the king gave her a new name and title.

In the following year, the king dies in an assassination plot and Ouyang Zen would become the new king of Eastern Sun.

As for Mark's side of the story, he wasn't that honest for his past life is linked with hers. Hence, he didn't speak about his actual connection with Zan Rong but instead told them that he met her at a place called Vienna during one of his travels with his master.

After that, he saw her once again in another world where a race called the dark elves looked slightly different from the traditional elves of this current world. However, he didn't meet her as his master urged him to leave that place due to certain circumstances. Later on, he met her for the third time during the auction. Mark claimed that this is why he was so surprised to meet her back then. There's nothing more to the story that he can add to.

There were two reasons behind this false story narrated by Mark.

One, obviously he doesn't want to reveal that he transmigrated for the manipulative people of this world would try to term him as some kind of demon instead.

As for the second, his abnormal growth of strength and the unknown modern weapon technology will give rise to a lot of suspicions as his fame attracts the attention of Supreme realm experts.

It wasn't that he was afraid of being targeted. It is just that Mark is a businessman whose income depends on the public.

Hence, he had to give a bit of information about his background so that the commoners think of him as their own, not some otherworlder or a guy who sold his soul to the devil. It was also one of the reasons why he revealed his birth secret too and plans to make it public, later on.

With this, now, his story will go like a prince who had been wronged since birth, then, lived his life as a normal fellow until he encounters a mysterious expert by coincidence, changing his life upon accepting him as his master and selling firearms on his behalf.

As for the identity of his master, no one would dare to enquire about a guy who can travel between the worlds (i.e., atleast a demigod) and create such advanced weapons.

Anyways, back to the present, after sorting out his thoughts, Mark asked whether they have any ideas about how to forcefully jog one's memory before adding that his master is currently out of reach.

Ouyang Zen looked at him like he want to scold him, are you an idiot? If I know how to retrieve her memory, why would I bother talking about this with you? Can't I do it myself?

Thankfully, Lan Jing responded quickly by telling them about a piece of treasure.

"Lu Zhen, it is called the Eye of Talim, a dwarven artifact that can help you do that. It is said that the artifact is usually used to only store the memories of any number of people so that their experiences and knowledge of techniques can be passed down to new generations. However, you can also use it to recollect a forgotten memory as long as it was there in your brain."

As Mark became mildly curious about this artifact, Ouyang Zen asked him where he can find it.

Without a bit of hesitation, Lan Jing then said, "it was currently in the possession of the Wuji Sect. However, it is impossible to steal it from them as it was too precious."

"Wuji Sect? Never heard of it. Is it strong?"

Perhaps, Mark grew too arrogant after the power boost earlier that he no longer cared about these powerful organizations no matter what kind of prestige they have.

He wasn't even worried about the overall strength of the sect and just casually asked his granduncle to speak about the trump card of the Wuji sect.

Lan Jing answered, "According to what we know, the Wuji sect's leader is a Supreme Being (peak-9-circle), and has five Supreme realm experts and more than a dozen legendary realm experts as backing."

Mark's expression slightly changed for a moment but the calmness returned quickly to his face.

Lan Jing continued to speak about the power of the Wuji sect, which is based in the Leon Empire.

Excluding countless treasures, powerful guardian beasts, and two divine-grade treasures, the sect has a defensive formation, which will restrict the strength of invaders.

"Even with 'his' support, you cannot bend the will of Wuji sect elders." Lan Jing indirectly warned Mark to not take foolish steps for he knows what kind of person this grandnephew of his is.

But, will Mark listen to him? Naturally, he wouldn't.

In the end, he promised them that once he acquires the artifact, he will send a message and ask them to bring the girl to the Imperial city of Phoenix.

Ouyang Zen and Lan Jing could only look at each other and shook their heads as Mark left the room.

Chapter 353 The Coachman's Fortuitous Encounter

Three days later, Mark and his companions left Helios City and journeyed to the western neighbor, the Kun Empire.

As the empire's capital was far away from the shore, Mark chose the land route, traveling by the traditional carriages instead of LMVs.

Those carriages and their respective coachmen were provided by the palace. Obviously, they weren't your typical horse carriages either. Both of the carriages were pulled by bicorns, which are 4-circle Spirit Beasts of the dark attribute. These dark horses with two horns could run faster than the maximum speed attained by LMVs.

Adding on top of that, the presence of the royal family's crest helped Mark to cross the border without facing any questions from the guards posted at checkpoints or worrying about the directions.

As a result, Mark not only got qualitative time alone with his fiancée and saved the effort of driving but he was also able to cross the border before sunset.

Of course, these Spirit Beasts can also travel through the darkness but Mark was against the idea, not because he thought it was unsafe or anything. It is just that he doesn't want to sit in a carriage all day long.

Hence, he ordered the coachman to stop nearby a pond and went on setting up the tent to take a rest for the night.

As a woman, Song Yue had a tent on her own and slept peacefully while the manticore stood outside as a guard and kept an eye on the surroundings.

Lan Ju had gone on a stroll in his beast form as he felt like it and no one objected to his decision.

And Mark ended up sharing the tent with his future father-in-law.

As for the poor two coachmen, they neither have the luxury to sleep in tents nor do they have the courage to rest inside the carriages. As a result, they could only sleep beside one of the campfires.

But, it doesn't mean that they were being mistreated or anything. Generally, all adventurers won't set up tents and campfires as they would attract unnecessary trouble. So, they were comfortable with sleeping outside, on the ground. If there is anything that is troubling them, it is actually the presence of the manticore.

These coachmen were just 3-circle realm Spirit Warriors while the manticore is a legendary realm beast king. It was no surprise that they were afraid of its presence. Hence, they slept as far away as possible from the beast.

Eventually, everyone fell asleep.

By around 3 a.m. in the morning, the flames were gone from the campfire and the cold air struck the two coachmen, making them shiver involuntarily. While one of them doesn't want to disturb his sleep because of the mere chilly atmosphere, the other one named Dai Qiu woke up and looked around.

Because the dark clouds covered the moon, there was absolutely no light around him and he couldn't see anything. Perhaps, the manticore was closing its eyes; he couldn't see the beast either.

"Too dark... maybe, I should relight the campfire. The chunks of dry wood are also nearby, although it would be tough to locate them in this darkness... Ugh... should I just go back to sleep, then?" As the guy was wondering what to do, all of a sudden, out of nowhere, there was a light in the sky.

No... It wasn't just simple light. It was a portal that was emitting light. "What is going on?" Dai Qiu panicked and instantly tried to reach out to his left where his other colleague was sleeping.

It was just then, he saw two figures exit from the portal and started falling from the sky with their back facing the ground.

Dai Qiu didn't know what came over him. Instead of waking up his partner or caring about the manticore which also opened its eyes and was curiously looking at the portal, he just rose to his feet and foolishly rushed in the direction these strangers were about to fall.

Thankfully for him, the portal didn't disappear and continued to emit light. Hence, he didn't have a problem reaching the spot only to find two teenagers being enveloped by light as they were floating just one foot above the ground. They didn't crash and died.

"Phew... it looked like they were alright." Dai Qiu let out a sigh of relief and approached them.

The two unconscious teenagers suddenly fell to the ground and a floating ball of light appeared in his sight. Meanwhile, the portal disappeared and the darkness loomed over the region once again.

But for Dai Qiu, his immediate surroundings up to 5 meters are still visible. So, he clearly saw the appearances of the teenagers. One is a boy and another is a girl. The boy looked ordinary and had the attire of a martial artist while the girl was pretty and wore a luxurious dress.

Neither of them looked injured but seeing the boy's clothes torn apart around his right shoulder and waist, Dai Qiu wondered whether they have gone through the battle and if someone healed them before sending them through the portal.

"What to do with them?" Dai Qiu stroked his chin, not knowing whether to take them with him or leave them. After all, he wasn't with his adventuring buddies. He was on an official mission given by the king, and his clients were the royal guests of the kingdom.

He doesn't have the guts to even speak with them. Not to mention, that manticore that is constantly keeping him on his edge just with its presence.

Earlier, Dai Qiu only had the thought of saving the misfortunate, but now that he remembered his reality, Dai Qiu became clueless.

After much deliberation on the matter, he made his decision. Dai Qiu sat on the ground and spoke to himself, "Okay, I will guard these two until sunrise and then leave. At this time, let's try to wake them up."

Dai Qiu stretched his hand toward the boy. Suddenly, the ignored ball of light, which was on standby until now, suddenly flew forward and floated before his hand and moved left and hand.

"Eh?" Dai Qiu was taken aback. "You don't want me to wake him up?"

He commented just in surprise but didn't expect the ball of light would respond to his words by spinning up and down as if it was nodding its head.

"You can understand my words?" asked Dai Qiu while pinching his arm, not being able to believe the scene.

In response, as the ball of light spun up and down, Dai Qiu asked with curiosity, "What are you?"

The ball of light then released a bit of light attribute energy and shockingly wrote a reply in the air. It introduced itself as a light elemental spirit and has no name or master but was still a servant of the Wen sect.

Dai Qiu scratched his hair in confusion. He never heard of it and asked more questions.

As time passed, Dai Qiu and the ball of light continued to converse with each other. Perhaps, it was because it wasn't a human and the two teenagers were unconscious; Dai Qiu shared the stories of his small-time adventures with it while spending the time.

Eventually, the darkness in the surroundings started fading away and Dai Qiu saw that it was time for dawn.

Since he couldn't stay, he apologized to the ball of light and told it that he needs to go. But, to his surprise, the ball of light shot toward his forehead and he too lost consciousness.

"An elemental light spirit? Interesting indeed..." a voice came from above. A five-tailed scarlet leopard was staring at the figures from the sky.

Chapter 354 The Representatives Of Kunlun Sect

Sometime later;

After having a night of good sleep, Mark slowly wakes up in the morning and lazily stretches his body, "Yooo...shaaaa... Today is Day 17 and less than two weeks away from the completion of the system upgrade. Hmm, I guess there is enough time... Anyway, let's go and resume our journey. We should reach the palace by evening... Hmmm..."

Clang Clang* Clang*

The sounds of metals clashing with each other disturbed his thoughts and made him focus on the outside. Wondering what's going on, he raises the door only to witness two strangers having a swordfight, not just far away from his tent. His other companions were staring at the teenage couple.

Mark stepped outside but it appeared that no one but Song Yue paid attention to him as everyone's eyes were on the strangers who were moving at a crazy speed.

Meanwhile, Song Yue walked toward him and greeted him good morning, asking about how his sleep went.

Mark asked about the strangers in reply.

"Oh, those kids were brought by guardian Lan... I mean, Mr. Wu," replied Song Yue. After taking a pause, she further added, "It appeared that Coachman Dai had a fortuitous encounter. Yesterday, he was at 3-circle, and today, he suddenly became a 5-circle warrior. Those two kids were demanding him to return with them and serve their sect."

If it was previous Mark, he would have gotten quite interested in the treasure that this adventurer turned coachman acquired. But, at his present stage, only divine-grade artifacts might interest him.

Mark didn't think too much about it and placed his focus on the teenagers before speaking out loud, "*clap* *clap* Alright. That's enough playing around. Now, everyone, gather here..."

Upon hearing Mark's voice, the two teenagers who just started their sparring suddenly halted their movements and looked in the direction of the sound.

Meanwhile, the others quickly left their positions and went toward Mark. Seeing the others, the teenagers also followed them.

Mark then enquired about their identities, wanting to listen to their story from their mouths.

While the girl appeared to be slightly nervous, the boy took responsibility to answer the questions. From the others, he heard of Mark and he had also seen the royal crest on the bicorn carriages. Hence, he made sure to be as polite as possible.

Cupping his fists, he greeted Mark before retelling his story, "Lord Lu, we are the members of Leon Empire's Kunlun sect. My name is Dong Fang, and she is Zi Ling, the granddaughter of our Patriarch."

Mark took a glance at the girl, who immediately dropped her head in shyness. As he looked back at the boy, he continued the story.

They were on their way to Kun Empire's Xianshu sect for the Dragon Warrior Tournament, which is conducted every decade where every talented individual can participate as long as they fulfill three conditions.

One, the individual should belong to a sect, which should be located in the vermilion bird continent.

Two, the individual should at least be in the cultivation realm of 4-circle but he/she cannot have a cultivation realm greater than 6-circle.

And three, the individual's age should be below 30 years old.

Because the Kunlun sect is quite well known and is one of the top 10 sects of the continent, the sect received four seeded spots where the selected individuals wouldn't need to participate in qualifying rounds.

Dong Fang claimed that while he and Zi Ling along with three more companions were on their way to the destination, they were ambushed by their bitter rivals, the members of Wuji Sect.

Mark was slightly taken aback upon hearing a familiar name. He planned to go there anyways to retrieve the artifact. Now, his interest in these teenagers increased a little bit.

Meanwhile, Dong Fang continued to speak with a look of frustration on his face, "That traitorous bitch Ai Qing colluded with the enemies to take down our elder and another sect member. If not for our elder's sacrifice, we would have died too."

"Dong Fang..."

Zi Ling couldn't help but raise her head and pat his shoulder in pity as the boy grit his teeth in anger.

Mark didn't want to know how close they are to this person Ai Qing or the late elder. He was just interested in knowing whether these two could be helpful to him in some way or whether it is just a waste of time to talk with them.

Hence, he asked the boy, "so, what do you plan on doing? Will you return to the sect?"

Dong Fang shook his head and answered with a determined expression, "there's no way we would return empty-handed and make a joke out of the sacrifice of our companions. We must return victorious."

"Hmm..." Mark fell into thoughts for a while. Upon thinking about how to use them, he turned to the shy girl, "Ms. Zi, I have a question for you."

"Yes?" She yelped in surprise and looked at Mark directly before looking down at the ground. "Please speak..."

As Dong Fang and others curiously looked at Mark, wondering what he wanted to ask, the latter put forth a proposal, using the opportunity, "I'll help the both of you to safely travel to your destination and I will also help you take your revenge to return to your sect with the heads of your enemies. In return, I want you to arrange a meeting with your Patriarch and the other elders that have the power to make or break the laws of your sect. Will you be able to do that?"

"Eh? Why?" The girl's eyes widened and she abruptly raised her head to look at Mark for a moment before going back to her shy mode.

Not only her, but even the others were also thinking that this proposal is quite strange and wondered what was going on in this handsome fellow's mind. After all, the sects won't use firearms as it would go against their principles.

Hence, if Mark has only a weapon-selling deal in his mind, then, generously helping these teenagers in such a way is a bad idea. However, is that everything? Perhaps, Mark has a different motive for helping them. Everyone wondered but didn't voice it out.

Chapter 355 The Unfortunate Crown Prince (?)

"So... do you agree to this proposition?" Mark steadily gazed at the girl who couldn't understand the reason.

In response, she commented while staring at the ground, "You would unnecessarily offend the Wuji sect if you help us. Is there a need for the senior to go to such lengths just for a meeting?"

She was kind enough to think of the welfare of others but not everyone would reply in kindness. Mark wiped off his smile and sternly told her that it is a matter of adults and she should only answer with a yes or a no.

Dong Fang tried to support her but Mark also acted coldly toward him, stating that it isn't his place to answer unless he can take decisions on her behalf.

As Dong Fang shut up his mouth, Zi Ling bit her lip and slowly nodded, "Yes, I promise. Please seek justice for my seniors."

As soon as she gave her promise, Mark's smile returned to his face once again as if he was a cheerful person in the first place. He said, "Alright, then, it is settled."

Dong Fang looked at Mark like he was wondering, is this fellow a good guy or a bad guy?

Roughly a couple of hours later, the bicornes started running in the wilderness at their top speed. Dong Fang and Zi Ling joined the carriage Mark and Song Yue were sitting in, although in reluctance with the weapon seller appeared to have a lot of questions to ask them.

Mark asked them about the powerful sects in the Leon Empire, the imperial palace's strength and the ideologies of their emperor, the wealthiest merchants and individuals, etc...

Within a couple of hours, Mark got a rough understanding of everything that he needed to know in order to decide whether it is okay to involve the Leon Empire's forces in his grand plan or not.

Imperial City (Jingyu City), Kun Empire;

On the streets of the city, a middle-aged fellow in luxurious robes was walking with a look of depression on his face. He was sighing over and over again. It is none other than Qin Yu, who doesn't have a great daily routine if one should say.

He gets up early in the morning, goes to the training ground to hone his skills and strength, returns to the palace, gets bashed by the ministers left and right for his foolish opinions on the affairs of the empire, goes out once again, this time to his secret residence where he meets an adventurer's wife with whom he had an extramarital affair with, returns to home and quarrel with his main wife (title: crown princess) over one issue or another, and finally going to sleep with one of his five other wives (title: secondary consorts).

Unless something special happens, usually, this is how the life of Qin Yu went on for years.

Qin Yu expected to change his life after introducing those 500 battle tanks he acquired from the Western Moon kingdom as a part of his share but he was only mocked by the officials in the end.

He had forgotten that no one in the Kun Empire possessed the knowledge of firearms yet, much less operating them. And battle tanks were more advanced than mere firearms.

How could the soldiers operate them just based on the instructions provided on the paper? It isn't the same as mastering the techniques recorded in skill books.

Because of Qin Yu's high ambitions, dozens of destructive battle tanks that went out of control caused a lot of property damage to the training grounds and injuries among common soldiers, but thankfully no casualties.

Qin Yu's plan failed terribly with the Emperor ordering him to submit all of them to the palace.

As a result, his 500 battle tanks were taken away by the palace without giving him any contribution.

And the worst has yet to come.

After the Emperor took away the battle tanks, he assigned his favorite, the public's favorite, the fourth prince to look after those tanks.

Soon, the fourth prince, Qin Zhi was going to be formally appointed as the General of the battle tanks division once the soldiers under him manages to control them properly.

What else can Qin Yu do if his own father is against him?

With no supporters to stand by his side and fight, the crown prince can only give up on his ambition while finding solace in his extramarital affair.

It was around the time of dusk when he would leave to meet his secret lover.

However, Qin Yu couldn't meet her as the woman's husband is at home and he was as depressed as he can be, at the moment. After walking for a while, the crown prince decided to relieve his stress by visiting a beautiful courtesan.

"Damn it. I shouldn't have sent them away." The crown prince blamed himself for sending away his servant along with his horse carriage for wanting to spend time alone on the streets earlier. Now, he would need a carriage to get to the brothel.

As he was hoping for a private carriage to enter the street he was standing on, two carriages pulled bicorns passed by him instead.

Qin Yu's eyes fell on the crest of the banner placed on the carriages and his eyes lit up. "A sun with a sword. Is it an envoy from the Eastern Sun making a trip? Let's see what the imperial palace is up to."

As the bicorns were just slowly walking in the street, with a quick dash, Qin Yu managed to outpace them with ease and then stood in their path.

The front carriage stopped followed by the behind one.

Seeing his luxurious clothes, the coachman thought that he might be a noble and it might not be good to unnecessarily offend him. Hence, he decided to politely deal with him.

"Greetings Mister, we represent the Eastern Sun's royal family. Please make the way," said the coachman.

Qin Yu nodded, "I know that. Inform him that the crown prince of this empire wishes to meet him."

"Crown Prince?" the coachman was taken aback. Just as he was about to step down and tell the people sitting in the back (i.e. Lan Ju, Song Yun, and the manticore), the zheng already passed the info to Mark through their telepathic connection.

By the time the coachman stepped down, the door of the second bicorn carriage was already open and Mark stepped out.

Chapter 356 Plan To Create A Puppet Emperor

Silence filled the carriage traveling at the front as Qin Yu became completely honest with Mark, who left Song Yue and joined the other one.

The crown prince expected to get snubbed by Mark after revealing his current situation, but instead, he saw the weapon seller break into a peal of laughter and commented, "It is perfect, Prince Yu. It made my job a lot easier."

Qin Yu misunderstood that he was being mocked by him too and felt a bit angry. However, in the next moment, his eyes widened as Mark continued to say, "How about I solve your problems? There's a simple solution."

"Eh? What do you mean?" Qin Yu wondered whether Mark was suggesting the assassination of the fourth prince and he planned to reject the idea as he was against such a thing. Not to mention, the repercussions in case the plan will fail. Thankfully, he didn't voice it out and his patience rewarded him quite well.

The misunderstandings cleared when the weapon seller went on to explain the details of his proposition.

"500 battle tanks are nothing... I can provide you with manpower, better weapons, and required ammunition. You just need to establish a guild.

The robots are puppets that won't betray their owners like the people. You can trust them and create a private force that will be loyal to only you and no one else. They will be strong enough to contend against any army with only a few weeks of training.

Using your influence, bring tasks to your guild and then complete them using your army. The more your fame grows, the more elite adventures will be willing to join your guild. Eventually, it leads to support from the ministers and nobles.

Now, the only question that is remaining is, are you willing to put your future in the hands of a stranger like me?" Mark asked while looking straight into the eyes of Qin Yu.

The crown prince of the Kun Empire was obviously tempted by the offer laid out by Mark. It felt like a devil's whisper and he who was on his wit's end couldn't resist the offer, fearing that the opportunity will disappear once again

Mark expected Qin Yu to ask for time but the latter only thought for five seconds and gave a nod, "I'm willing, Owner Lu. As long as you are on my side, I'm confident that I will gain everything that I have lost."

Mark let out a smile, inwardly rejoicing that he easily acquired a puppet that he needed, and then said, "As a gift for the beginning of our friendship (more like the beginning of Qin Yu's servitude), today, I will do you a favor. If you are lucky, perhaps, you might have a small victory against your brother."

"Hmm?"

Imperial Palace of Jingyu;

The Emperor of the Kun Empire was in the middle of having tea with an old man. The latter was a grand elder of the Xianshu sect and he visited the palace to formally invite the emperor to the Dragon warrior tournament.

The opening ceremony and the finals are both equally important days for the tournament. Hence, the sect elders wanted the Emperor to grace them with his presence.

Other than that, there was one more thing that the old man wanted to discuss with Emperor Qin Mo.

It is about the fourth prince, Qin Zhi's marriage. Unlike the families living in cities, sects weren't interested in things like marriage and having kids, etc... The members of the sects were usually more interested in finding a cultivation partner.

The top sects have these qualitative dual cultivation techniques that will help a couple to speed up their cultivation progress if they practice it together. There will also be several other benefits and it cannot be practiced just with anyone.

As someone said to be born with enormous potential, it is impossible for Prince Qin Zhi to stay single with everyone having eyes on him for different reasons.

"Your Majesty, our Xie Mei will legally turn adult (16 years) in a couple of months and Patriarch Xie wanted his granddaughter to be wed to Prince Zhi and both of them to become cultivation partners."

Emperor Qin was slightly surprised, not because of a marriage proposal but more because of the fact that the girl is just 15 right now. She is just a teenager. And his son is at least twelve years older.

By the time she enters her mid-20s, an ideal age for marriage (in his opinion), Qin Zhi would be already in his late thirties.

However, he cannot make fun of the guest's mindset when it was his ancestors who wrote that rule in the empire's constitution in the first place. Moreover, he had to be careful when dealing with a supreme realm expert.

Hence, Emperor Qin tried a different method to reject the proposal.

He grabbed his chin as if he was contemplating and said, "Hmm... Xie Mei, huh? Can't believe the little girl already reached that age. I guess time flew very quickly.

As far as Xie Mei is concerned, I have no problems with her. Just like my son, she is also considered the heavenly child with the potential to become a demigod. They are a good match.

However, when I talked with my son about his marriage, he informed me that he is fond of Princess Shen Ling of the Western Moon kingdom.

Soon, we are already planning to send a marriage proposal to King Shen. It would be extremely unfair for a girl like Xie Mei to end up as a secondary consort."

Emperor Qin thought that this guest would back away after hearing this explanation but little did he expect that he would be the one to get surprised instead.

"But, Your Majesty, Princess Shen Ling was already engaged to that weapon seller. How could Western Moon even accept your proposal?" The supreme realm expert responded with a question. He looked at the emperor as if the latter had gone crazy for going to do such a stupid thing.

"Eh? Weapon seller? Who?" Emperor Qin looked clueless on the matter.

The supreme realm expert felt the urge to slap his forehead but forcefully calmed himself down with a deep breath and explained, "Those chunks of metallic puppets you snatched from the crown prince and gave to Prince Zhi were actually sold by the weapon seller named Lu Zhen.

He is a commoner from Phoenix Empire with no special background but surprisingly has a supreme being on his side and sells powerful weapons known as firearms.

If I should say, those things he introduced to the world should be called an abomination as they defy all the hard work our ancestors had done over the centuries to create fighting techniques.

King Shen Niu might have not made an official announcement but it is true that he betrothed his daughter to Lu Zhen. "

The supreme realm expert had a serious look on his face as he warned the emperor to not go with the proposal.

Meanwhile, Emperor Qin quietly stared at the old man with a goatee as if he wanted to say, aren't you guys mountain dwellers who were cut off from the rest of the world? How in the hell is it that you guys know so much about the matters of the south when he, the emperor of Kun was left in dark?

With the matter of Shen Ling being resolved, the supreme realm expert then once again urged the emperor to consider the Xianshu sect's proposal.

The Emperor now was thinking about how to respond. It was at that moment; a soldier entered the room and informed him that the crown prince is requesting an audience.

Chapter 357 I'm Here To Do Business

Using his authority as the crown prince, Qin Yu took Mark and the others into the imperial palace without the need for any invitation or permission letter, followed by allotting them their guest rooms before hurriedly leaving to meet his father.

Perhaps, his luck also turned around after meeting Mark. His father, who never easily sees him when he was in a meeting with someone else, suddenly allowed him to walk in.

With great enthusiasm, Qin Yu walks inside and spots a familiar-looking old man. He stops in his tracks involuntarily and apologized for the intrusion. "I didn't know that you were in a meeting with Venerable Yang. I'll come at a later time."

The reason why the emperor let his good-for-nothing son interrupt this meeting is that he wanted some time to think of a way to reject the marriage proposal from the Xianshu sect now that the Western Moon kingdom is out of the picture.

Why would he now send him away? The Emperor sternly ordered him to speak about what he was for.

Qin Yu took a glance at the supreme realm expert and then said, "An acquaintance of mine wishes to meet you. He is a weapon seller from the imperial city of Phoenix Empire who came to the north because of an official business with the Eastern Sun's royal family. Since he was already here, I took the opportunity to invite him."

"Phoenix Empire?" The Emperor and the supreme realm expert took a glance at each other; they were just talking about a certain individual from the same place and had the same profession too.

Since the person is already a guest at their palace, the emperor thought that he can spare a couple of minutes to meet this fellow.

He gave a nod to his son, "alright. I will see him later."

On the other hand, the Xianshu sect's grand elder had a different thought. He felt like it was too much of a coincidence that the crown prince's acquaintance is a weapon seller, who also happened to have official business at the eastern sun.

But, at the same time, there is no reason for him to meet a weapon seller even if it turns out to be Lu Zhen. After all, their worlds are different. Hence, he kept silent as the crown prince walked away.

It was then a sudden thought popped up in his head, and once Qin Yu left the room, the supreme realm expert made a suggestion, "Your Majesty, why don't you send the crown prince to our sect to supervise the competition? I'll talk to our Patriarch to arrange it.

This might give him a chance to prove his usefulness to the palace. If he can pull it off successfully, you can probably try sending him as an envoy to other empires like the other princes."

"Eh?" Emperor Qin was slightly surprised by this old man's comment but he was secretly happy that the topic might be diverted because of this. Hence, without any hesitation, he started talking about his woes because of his eldest son's activities.

The supreme realm expert didn't know whether to laugh at the emperor's misfortune or pity the crown prince as Qin Mo continued to undermine his son behind his back.

But then again, it wasn't his nose to poke into the matters of the imperial family. So, Yang Bingwen kept quiet and let the old emperor speak as long as he wants.

Meanwhile, Qin Yu appeared to be quite elated with his request becoming successful.

He went to the guest quarters and informed Mark about the situation.

However, Mark didn't feel that impressed by the emperor's decision as Qin Yu was.

He left his room and entered the neighboring next room where Lan Ju was taking a rest.

Mark woke up the zheng and told him to follow him to meet the Emperor.

"Huh? Brother Lu, my father is in the meeting. It is not appropriate to meet him right now without his permission." The crown prince was surprised that his guest would lack so much patience that he would get ready to barge into the private chamber and interrupt Emperor's meeting with a supreme realm expert.

Mark then halted his footsteps and looked at the crown prince, letting out a smile, "Prince Qin, this is why you are getting stepped on, every single day. You need to learn to fight back to protect your interests."

He then looked at the zheng and gestured to him something. Lan Ju nodded in understanding.

Seeing the exchange of glances between Mark and Lan Ju, the crown prince felt like they were going to do something reckless. "What are you going to do?"

As soon as his words ended, a powerful aura was released and put pressure on everyone in the palace, save for a few individuals (Mark's companions including Qin Yu).

Within ten seconds, Yang Bingwen was already standing before them alongside Qin Mo with both of them having serious expressions on their faces. "Who are you?" The supreme realm expert asked. Meanwhile, Emperor looked at his son.

Mark raised his hand and Lan Ju retracted his aura; the old man shifted his attention to Mark. A trace of surprise appeared on his face, "this young man looks like that powerful sect leader, Lan Gengxin."

"I heard that I cannot meet your emperor without permission. So, I thought it is better for him to come to me," replied Mark without wiping off the fake smile on his face. Inspecting the emperor, he further commented, "Who in the world could have expected that Emperor Qin is a Supreme realm expert himself? The world is really full of surprises."

"Eh? Eh?" Qin Yu was looking right and left in confusion, wondering whether he had listened correctly. His father is a Supreme realm expert? Lu Zhen must have gone nuts. After all, it is well known that Qin Mo was once an Exalt realm expert who received heavy injuries during an ambush and had his cultivation realm dropped to 6-circle.

During the past three decades, his cultivation remained the same. Qin Yu was under the impression that this guest of his has made a mistake but his father's reaction gave the truth away.

"Both of you and Qin Yu, you too, follow me." Emperor Qin ordered them and turned around to walk away in seriousness. The supreme realm expert and the crown prince quietly followed him.

However, after walking a few steps, the Emperor realized something amiss and he turned around only to see that Mark didn't move an inch from his spot and neither did his expression change.

What was the meaning behind this smile?

Don't think you are in any position to order me in that tone? The Emperor understood that way and he concentrated on Mark once again. This time, he was quite surprised as he cannot sense anything from him.

Is this young man, a hidden expert? The Emperor turned a bit wary of Mark and cleared his throat before speaking a little bit more softly than earlier, "*Ahem*" It is uncomfortable to talk in this place. I believe you want to talk things in private too."

Mark replied while continuing to maintain his smile, "No, I'm not here for an important talk. I'm just here to do business by selling a certain type of weapon. Since you are already here, then, let's go to a remote location where I demonstrate its prowess to you. If I did it here, the entire palace might turn into ruins."

The Emperor narrowed his eyes and stared at Mark and the Supreme Being behind him, wondering if this fellow is Lu Zhen, the one Yang Bingwen earlier warned him about.

Chapter 358 The Clash Of Egos

It won't be a lie to say that Mark's attitude irked Emperor Qin very much. He was the ruler of an empire that is far more prosperous and stronger than the Phoenix Empire.

How dare a weapon seller born in a commoner family try to cause trouble in the imperial palace and even talk to him like they were equal?

Is it because of the Supreme Being by his side? So what if it is? Qin Mo not only had authority but he also possessed strength.

Sure, Supreme Beings (peak-9-circle) stood at the top of human society but that doesn't mean they can defeat multiple Supreme realm experts (9-circle). The only reason they were feared by even the experts of the same realm is because of the factor known as a breakthrough.

Once a Supreme Being makes a lucky breakthrough to the next realm and becomes a demigod, their strength would increase so much that if they want to destroy an empire, any number of supreme realm experts couldn't save it.

However, Qin Mo was different. Unlike the façade he was putting up in front of the whole empire, he was actually a supreme realm expert and recently reached even the advanced stage.

Adding on top of that, he received the knowledge of a formation left behind by his ancestor, who was a demigod. Upon activation, their ancestor's spirit will come to life and protect him.

Of course, it doesn't mean he can use this trump any number of times he wants. The number might be limited but it is still enough for him to stay arrogant.

Qin Mo believed that by the time he uses all the remaining attempts of this protective mechanism, his fourth son won't be far away from becoming a demigod.

That is why he didn't submit to the aura displayed by Lan Ju, unaware that the latter actually was holding back his strength.

If Lan Ju transforms into his original form and releases the aura of a demigod, then, the situation might completely turn in Mark's favor but the latter was planning to keep it a secret as one of his trump cards.

As a result, Qin Mo still thinks that he has an upper hand and didn't exactly listen to Mark's request right away. Instead, he said, "If you want to talk to me, then, I will spare my time on the account of my son's request. However, if you are looking to do business in Kun Empire, then, contact the minister of trade.

And if you are looking to do business directly with the imperial family, then, any prince of the first rank (son of the legal wife of the Emperor) would be fine to witness the demonstration.

The prince then passes the proposal to me and I will take the decision after discussing it with my chief advisor. That's the protocol and I expect you to follow the same."

Perhaps, Mark had already expected the attitude from Qin Mo as soon as he discovered his real cultivation. He didn't get angry inside and neither did he display any other emotion on the outside.

Continuing to keep his fake smile on the surface, Mark replied, "Well, I believe that there is always an exception to every rule."

"However, you aren't privileged enough for me to make an exception," Qin Mo countered immediately, not intending to give a face to Mark or his aide at any cost. He felt like he was already doing a huge favor by not demanding them to apologize.

So, in this situation, what will Mark do?

Will he get angry? Will he yield to Qin Mo's authority and become polite? Will he leave the palace, feeling humiliated?

The supreme realm expert on Qin Mo's side was wondering how the situation will unfold now. He was worried about the eruption of the battle.

But, to his surprise, Mark calmly spoke, "well, if I don't get a privilege, then, I guess my weapons will also have the same place. That would mean the imperial family isn't business-friendly."

Then never mind, Emperor Qin. I will be on my way and sell my advanced weapons elsewhere. It is not like I don't lack clients.

I thought that I should give preferential treatment to Kun Empire because Qin Yu is my friend but it is a pity I guess.

Not only the Eastern Sun will get the warships to rule the northern sea and the Leon Empire will get the opportunity to buy the C4 (advanced), but your 500 battle tanks will also soon going to become vehicles of transport rather than a military asset.

Well, none of this is related to me anyways. So, I thank you for your hospitality and leave at dawn for my next destination, the Xianshu sect to deliver justice for my companions. You can be on your way. Farewell and Good night." He waved his hands with a smile.

Mark talked down to Emperor and didn't take him seriously.

Mark then boasted about the power of his weapons.

Mark then indirectly threatened the emperor of the consequences if the latter don't listen to his request right away.

And in the end, he even purposely revealed an important thing like leaving for the sect, knowing very well that this old man is a grand elder there.

From start to end, Mark didn't show his original emotion on his face and just smiled as if he was delivering good news but his words left a huge impact on the listeners.

The crown prince didn't know what was going on. The Emperor narrowed his eyes and fell into deep thought. No one knows what he was thinking about. And the worried supreme realm expert suddenly exclaimed in surprise, not expecting that this man would visit his place for delivering justice. To whom?

What feud does his sect have with this weapon seller? Unlike Qin Mo, he wasn't arrogant enough to underestimate this Supreme Being, who was rumored to be the man behind the death of every expert in the battle of fire seed. It is just a rumor as no one witnessed the events in person but still, why is there a need for a fight when one can resolve it peacefully?

"Mr. Lu, there's no need to travel all the way to the Xianshu sect. I'm the grand elder of that very sect. Tell me your issue and I will solve it for you."

As the old man correctly guessed Mark's identity just through the words and extended his hand of help, the weapon seller waved his hand, "Relax. I have no issue with your sect. I'm only traveling there for the competition where I will deliver justice. I appreciate your help though."

"Dragon Warrior tournament?" Yang Bingwen was taken aback at first but then he inwardly sighed in relief that his sect isn't in the picture.

Meanwhile, the Emperor's frown deepened as he saw a change of tone in Mark when he was speaking to the old man beside him. It was soft and friendlier. Why? I'm the Emperor and I'm stronger than this idiot. Why is he more respected than me? This brat is purposely doing this to rile me up... It is not like my empire needs those things and neither I'm afraid of enemies possessing them. Hmpf...

Silently, standing behind Mark, Lan Ju was observing the Emperor. As a demigod realm beast, he could easily sense the change in one's emotions just with a look. He felt like this situation isn't getting anywhere because of these two egoistic individuals.

In the end, he decided to intervene and said in a calm tone, "Emperor Qin, give me some face and follow my master's request."

"Master?" "Eh?"

Chapter 359 The Might Of C4 (Advanced)

The moment Lan Ju spoke, all the arguments were shut down and the matter is settled.

Perhaps, it is because of his powerful cultivation, or perhaps, it is because Lan Ju had admitted that he is a servant of Mark, not his backing. Or it might even be because Qin Mo wanted to get back at Mark for giving more respect to Yang Bingwen.

Whatever the case, Emperor Qin had agreed to witness the demonstration of the weapon that Mark intended to sell to the imperial family.

However, Mark wasn't happy. He felt the same that Qin Mo earlier felt.

After killing immortal realm beasts in the trial, Mark was under the impression that he is more powerful than the zheng even in its peak state.

With Lan Ju's loyalty crossed 50% and behaving really like a loyal servant lately, Mark was already feeling superior to the zheng and that is why he didn't like the sudden change in the behavior of the emperor.

But, then again, since he planned to remove him from the start, for the sake of achieving his goal, Mark suppressed his useless pride and followed the Emperor to a remote location within the city. By the time they reached it, it was already too dark and the lack of street lamps only made it darker.

Of course, the low visibility shouldn't be a problem for supreme realm experts. Hence, neither the emperor was uncomfortable nor Mark was worried. Night vision is a passive ability of Supreme realm experts that don't need any training. So, Mark could see the area around him without any problems.

However, Qin Yu wasn't strong enough to have such abilities. Hence, he couldn't see a thing. But, still, since Mark promised him that the lack of night vision wouldn't hinder him to watch the demonstration, Qin Yu stayed hopeful.

Upon confirming that there were no civilians in a hundred-meter radius, Mark started walking forward alone while taking out a white-colored round object that looked more like a digital weighing machine.

After walking for a while, he stopped at a five-foot big rock and placed it on top of it before returning back to his companions who were standing at least 90 meters away from the spot.

"Is that the weapon, Mr. Lu?" asked the grand elder of the Xianshu sect. "And what will happen now?"

Mark let out a smile and raised the remote in his hand, "well, you can find it out with your own eyes."

"Okay, do whatever you want to," said Qin Mo, displaying a bit of impatience.

Mark ignored him and went on explaining to Qin Yu instead. He showed the digital meter on the remote.

"After we set the timer, it will be displayed here. Right now, I didn't set anything. So, it was showing 0.

Anyways, I will tell you the details on the way. But, first things first, keep your eyes on your 1 o'clock."

As Qin Yu nodded and looked in that direction, Mark went on to press the big red button placed at the bottom of the remote.

Boom

Once he pressed it, in just a fraction of a second, an enormous explosion occurred before their eyes, turning nearly three acres of land into barren.

The loud explosion startled the people living within a one-kilometer radius and even the others roaming the streets of the imperial jingyu city couldn't help but panic for a moment.

Qin Yu stepped back in surprise and lost his footing, falling on his butt while his father, the Emperor turned serious. "More than eleven thousand sq. meters of land was impacted with the explosion power of a low-5-circle."

He remembered Mark's threat about the enemies possessing these weapons.

If a single weapon can do this much damage, then, what if a hundred of them get detonated at once within the city? Not to mention, these can be operated by civilians. No, he cannot allow that to happen.

Qin Mo's mind already started to think of a strategy for using these weapons and he asked in curiosity, "earlier, you pressed that button and the explosion happened. From how far can you do that? And how many can you provide within one month span of time?"

"Yes, the fish is hooked..." Mark wiped off his fake smile and replaced it with a genuine one upon realizing that the client is now curious about buying this.

He turned his head and looked at the emperor, "100 meters is the maximum range one can operate this advanced version of C4 through this remote control. If not, you can set the timer beforehand and enjoy the explosion from far away too.

As for how many, at the moment, I have a limited number. But, if you order in advance, by next month on the same date, I can sell you not more than 1000 in number. However, each one is priced at 700 gold coins.

If you need a basic version, which has the power of a 4-circle strength detonation, a 25-meter radius, and comes without a remote, then, it will cost you 150 gold coins per each.

And if you wish to sell these explosives only for the imperial family, then, it will cost an additional 1 million gold coins per year. That means during that time, our weapon store will exclusively sell it to you and only you.

Of course, we will also pledge that our store will guarantee to sell you atleast 10,000 of them during the booking time.

So, what do you think?"

"700 gold coins per each and 1 million for exclusive?" Emperor Qin fell into deep thoughts, comparing its worth with a battle tank that costs 500 gold coins.

Seeing Qin Mo pondering on the matter for a while, Mark further told him that he will be staying at the Xianshu sect until the end of the tournament (4 days). The imperial palace can send its reply before he leaves for Leon Empire.

The Emperor didn't say anything and silently nodded. After all, such an amount of money is not a small thing that he can casually spend on one-time usage explosives.

The next day morning;

The bicorn carriages left the imperial palace and started the journey to their next destination, the Xianshu Mountain, which is located nearby the southwestern border of the Kun Empire and Leon Empire.

Inside the front carriage, alongside Lan Ju, Baltrow (manticore), and the Black Knight (Song Yu), the Xianshu sect's grand elder (Yang Bingwen) also appeared to be traveling with them.

He was interested to get into the good books of Lan Ju for his own selfish needs. If the patriarch learns that he had the support of a Supreme Being, his position in the sect will become higher than the other two grand elders. It will increase his probability of becoming the next Patriarch once the current one retires.

This was also the reason he personally made the trip to the imperial palace to invite Qin Mo and put forth the marriage proposal.

Unfortunately for him, Lan Ju, who was sensitive to people's emotions and thoughts, already discovered this. Yet, he played along for the sake of his master's ambition.

It is like they were trying to use each other for their own goals except that Yang Bingwen will likely be abandoned once the tournament is finished.

The time ticked and the bicorns were traveling at their peak speed, eventually reaching the place before sunset.

Chapter 360 Mark Goes To Mt. Xianshu

Violet Peak, Mt. Xianshu;

At the third highest peak of the mountain, controlled by the Xianshu sect, four youngsters were panting hard as they lay on the ground; they just finished their spar with the strongest inner disciple of the violet peak.

Yang Zenchao has already entered the prestigious Exalt realm and cannot participate in the tournament. He was merely giving pointers to these juniors who came from far with their elder, who is by the way his acquaintance.

After stopping the spar, Yang Zenchao praised a couple of them, "Miss Ai and Mr. Wang are really skilled at combat. Both of you geniuses can hold off your own against a higher-realm opponent. If luck is on your side, you can enter the top 30."

"Eh? Top 30?" Ai Qing and Wang Teng were surprised. When both of these 5-circle realm Spirit Warriors heard the praise from this good-natured senior, they were hoping for a better ranking figure, not mere top 30, and that too if luck favors them.

As the representatives of the great Wuji sect, it is like humiliating to them. However, they don't want to unnecessarily get into a feud with this genius who had powerful connections.

Wang Teng swallowed his pride and thanked the senior for his evaluation.

"By now, all the qualification matches must have been completed. I'm going to the main peak to check out the list of qualified individuals. Do either of you want to tag along?" Yang Zenchao liked these two juniors because they not only have talent but don't show their arrogance.

In his opinion, those who know the ways of the world will do great in their lives. They are worth befriending compared to those who go against the world for the sake of pride.

That is why he extended friendship toward these two worthy individuals, not knowing that their impending doom has already on its way.

Meanwhile, at the bottom of the mountain, Mark was arguing with his fiancée, trying to convince her to not climb with them. The others can only silently look at the couple with mixed feelings.

"My Schatz, there's Baltrow here to take you up. Why do you want to trouble yourself? Listen to me. You can see how high the mountain is."

On the other hand, Song Yue doesn't want to be treated like a princess. She said, "No thank you. I can climb up there. It is only 5 kilometers of hiking right?"

"It isn't as easy as you say." Mark tried to make her understand that trekking is different from walking on the ground. "The path isn't that good. It is narrow and irregular. Or else, we would have taken the carriage to the top."

"That's fine with me. It is not like I'm a civilian and I don't want to depend on it too much." Song Yue continued to be stubborn.

Having no other choice, Mark bent his body and suddenly picked up his fiancée, taking her by surprise.

"Markie, let me down. It is too embarrassing..." Song Yue covered her face in shame as the people were staring at them.

While Lan Ju and Yang Bingwen didn't think anything, the two young couple looked away while blushing, not being able to see such romance in the open as it is too much for them.

As for Song Yun, his feelings were a bit complex. He was after all a conservative man. But then again, after seeing how happy her daughter was, he can only bless them in his heart and acted as if he didn't exist. The two coachmen also behaved like they didn't see anything.

Mark didn't listen to her and said, "I will give you two choices. One, Baltrow will take you there. Two, I will carry you like this all the way up to the top. What will you prefer?"

"You always do things for me and don't let me do anything on my own." As Song Yue puffed her cheeks and complained in a mumble, Mark leaned his head to her ear and whispered, "Well, then, don't do it for free. Let's see... A kiss for every kilometer. How about you repay me with five kisses tonight?"

Song Yue's face immediately turned red upon being teased by her fiancé. She tried to get free while playfully pushing away his chest, "Get lost..."

As Mark refused to put her down, in the end, she resigned to the ultimatum and reluctantly agreed to sit on the manticore's back, although not forgetting to complain that he is a bully.

"Hahaha... cute..."

Mark let out a laugh and put her down before proceeding to Violet Peak, leaving their bicorn carriages at the stables located at the foot of the mountain.

As no one is in a hurry, the mountain hiking lasted for about a couple of hours before finally passing through the gate.

The sunset hasn't arrived yet. So, everyone could clearly see the grand elder escorting Mark and others. Combined with Mark and Song Yue's great looks, they attracted so much attention that none of the spectators could turn away their heads and look elsewhere.

As Yang Bingwen was personally escorting them to the lodging areas, from the other side, Yang Zenchao appeared to be walking with the beauty. Both of them were all smiles as they were in their own world, chatting with each other and almost ignoring their surroundings.

Both of the parties were now in a distance where they can see each other and Dong Fang's expression turned sour as soon as he saw them. He couldn't control his emotions and roared in anger, "Ai Qing..."

The beauty beside Yang Zenchao startled for a moment and looked in the direction of the voice. Her face darkened instantly, "Dong Fang? Zi Ling? These guys are alive after all."

As Dong Fang was ready to charge forward and attack her, his arm was caught by Mark. "This is not the right time." Dong Fang didn't dare to move after being warned by Mark but he couldn't help but look at her with hatred. Zi Ling was silent but she too hatefully glared at the woman who she thought was a friend but instead turned out to be a spy from their rival sect.

The two parties walked toward each other amidst the curious gazes of the participants and the inner sect disciples of the Violet Peak.

Yang Zenchao observed the expressions of the girl beside him and the strangers who were beside the grand elder. He neither asked her nor did he leave her side. He accompanied her and calmly greeted the old man. "Grand Elder Yang."

The old man didn't pay attention to either the girl or the people beside him, not intending to involve in their matters. He calmly nodded in response and said, "Zenchao, Go and bring Elder Yang to my residence. Oh, and also inform Patriarch that I'm busy accompanying a distinguished guest. Hence, I cannot meet him at the moment."

From the corner of his eyes, Yang Zenchao took a glance at the people who were tagging along with his great-granduncle. His attention was mostly grabbed by the silent middle-aged-looking fellow and the manticore. As for the others, he didn't spare a glance and cupped his fists, "understand."

"Miss Ai, come..." Yang Zenchao dragged the girl along with him, taking her away from Mark's group. She too was silent after realizing the identity of the grand elder, based on earlier conversation.