

Seller 421

Chapter 421 Mark's Next Move

The room was filled with silence once again as everyone stared at Mark, who was thinking deeply.

In the end, he let out a fake deep sigh and said, "Fine, I'll tell you the horrific truth that none can bear to hear."

The last Mark said in such a way, he revealed the details of the firearms that almost made them lose motivation to proceed with their plans of the war.

Now, there's more to hear?

Even a supreme realm expert like Song Tai couldn't help but stare at Mark without blinking his eyes.

"If you want to win the war, you have to face not one but two supreme beings. One is a demon and the other is a beast emperor.

Jinlong used to be the guardian of the Wuji sect. After the sect disbandment, he followed us by his own will.

Atleast, that's what we thought until recently we realized that he and Feng Wu appeared to have some sort of history and now Jinlong is gone to support his old friend.

But, before he left, he informed us that Feng Wu had contracted with some powerful demon.

And that demon should be the one who attacked the imperial palace cuz Jinlong was with us, at the Eastern Sun kingdom, when it happened.

The most Wu Weibao can do is to keep one of them busy. Even for that and also to make sure to save the citizens from not getting caught up in the middle of their fight, what you were offering might not be enough.

If the target is that gold dragon, it can be done. After all, Jinlong cares about the lives of people.

But, if the target is the demon, the job is extremely difficult as it loves to cause destruction and wouldn't even care to explode if that's what it takes to bring down its opponent.

You might have to throw in another high-quality semi-divine grade for the job. And lend him divine-grade equipment to face the enemy. This is what it takes me to involve in your headache and solve the situation."

After a while;

Mark was boarding his new vehicle for the air travel and the Emperor personally escorted him to the vehicle to bid goodbye to his guest. The princes were forced to tag along and the crown prince looked quite displeased.

Surprisingly, he wasn't the only one who wasn't pleased. Even Mark was in the same state as he entered the vehicle without turning his head to look at his biological family.

"Allen, let's go."

Soon, the vehicle rose into the air like a spaceship and flew toward its destination.

As it disappeared from his sight, the Emperor turned around to walk away and said in a low tone, "Song Tai, you follow me to the treasury. I will lend you something that will help you take down the dragon. Shang Wei, you also follow me. We need to talk."

"Understood, Your Majesty." The ancestor of the Song clan and the third prince bowed and followed him. The remaining people went on their ways.

Meanwhile, inside the flying divine throne, Mark clenched his fist and muttered, "Dammit."

Allen understood what his master was feeling after reading his memories. He commented, "I guess this is also not a bad thing."

Mark raised his head and looked at the android, "How it isn't a bad thing? None of our plans succeeded except for intimidating them. I guess we went too far that they didn't speak a word against me.

I wanted them to be non-cooperative by purposely acting like a big shot in front of the Emperor. They ignored it.

I even tried to humiliate the crown prince to get them angry and make a wrong move. But, it didn't materialize either.

I revealed that their main enemy is the one I let slip away from my control. But, no one blamed me.

To force them to accept Feng Wu's terms, I put two great obstacles in the form of supreme beings but instead, they asked for my service.

I raised my fees so high that anyone with a brain would reject it. But, they accepted it.

Even if they believed that the enemies have two supreme beings, I thought they would let Lan Ju handle the dragon and we could just put up a drama in front of everyone while Bael kills the rest.

Instead, Shang Wei somehow convinced the Emperor to accept all of my absurd demands just to lend them Lan Ju for a day so that he will handle the demon none of them had ever seen.

If Lan Ju handles the demon, it is going to be a problem. Jinlong is a noble dragon and wasn't loyal to me completely. He wouldn't kill others even if I order him.

I don't understand why Shang Wei seemed so obsessed with reclaiming the Western Yan, which wasn't theirs in the first place.

I thought he is a wise person and will choose peace instead of war, although it will accomplish nothing because I planned to make Bael kill the ministers, one after another to trigger them.

Still, I sensed that Shang Wei was more eager for the war than the rest. The madness was clear in his eyes."

Allen analyzed all the conversations that happened in the meeting and said, "Big Bro, I think there's a high chance that the Western Yan is harboring a deep secret, which was only known to Shang Wei. It could be rare materials or a secret treasure buried somewhere.

As for the mission to help them out, you will still get free credits in millions whether the promised divine-grade item is an unbound one or a bound one. Big Bro doesn't need to go back on his words.

If the Emperor hears that Lan Ju died under the hands of demon king Bael, you get to have free credits and the war can still be won by letting Bael go on a killing spree."

"Nah, it isn't that easy to fool the Emperor." Mark shook his head, not being completely convinced by Allen's idea. He pointed out the main problem, "Lan Jingyi is a demigod and we never know when she will stop acting weak. I can be seen as a killer but not a liar. It hurts the reputation of the store too."

"Then, Bael will first capture her," Allen made a suggestion to his master that they will first target the latter's biological mom and then proceed with the plan.

However, Mark wasn't confident of the idea. "Killing would be easier than capturing a demigod. Even Bael cannot detain her for very long. Not to mention, he will disappear after 6 hours. What will be then? The zheng will be forced to come out in the open to tackle her and it will be proved that I deceived the imperial palace for a divine-grade item. It's not worth the risk."

"Hmm..." Allen started looking for the solution through his analytical abilities. About ten seconds later, he asked, "What if the zheng abducts Shang Jiao and threatens Queen Consort Lan to stay out of this war? Technically, Queen consort Lan is still a being from another planet, an alien.

If the zheng says that a demigod of another world like them shouldn't interfere in the business of the internal powers of this planet, then, we will have a logical reason to keep Shang Jiao as a prisoner.

Shang Jiao is her biological daughter and also the Emperor's favorite child. The little girl could even make the Emperor withdraw his plans for the war but I know that you won't like it. So, at the moment, we can only use her to put pressure on Queen Consort Lan."

"Hmm, you are right but..." Mark hesitated to take the decision as a wave of memories hit him. He doesn't want to admit it but she was almost a family at Genesis Weapon Store.

Does he want to stoop so low to abduct his own sister and use her as a bargaining chip to accomplish his goal? Mark was slightly conflicted about this.

Understanding Mark's feelings, Allen went on to say, "Big Bro, when the time comes, who she will choose? Will she choose her estranged brother who was hell-bent on destroying her father's empire or will she choose her imperial family that raised her?

And when she stands in your path, what will you do? You won't kill her on account of a biological relationship but you might have to imprison her, right? Or will you forget revenge altogether as you are too afraid to give her the pain?"

Perhaps, this is what people call A.I. controlling humans. Under Allen's persuasion, Mark eventually took the decision of the dark path.

With a look of seriousness, he firmly said, "We'll abduct her tonight."

Chapter 422 Shang Jiao Has Been Abducted

Around 02:45 A.M., Imperial Palace;

In the Emperor's chamber, Shang Fu was sleeping soundly. The wine glass and the opened jar of wine on the bedside table indicate that he drank before he went to sleep.

Or perhaps, he drank it to get some peaceful sleep. After all, the war in Western Yan is giving him a big headache. Adding on top of that, he found out that his enemies are supreme beings. Obviously, he needs some drink.

knock knock* knock*

It was one of those repeated events where his sleep would be disturbed by the knocks at midnight.

He didn't hear it and continued to sleep while snoring heavily.

This time, someone banged on the door as if there was an urgent matter. There was no response from the Emperor.

At once, the door was smashed with brute force. It was opened, making a loud sound as they collided with the wall.

"What!"

The Emperor abruptly woke up from his sleep and warily looked around. He then saw a blurry figure entering the room. The lights were switched on.

Rubbing his eyes, as the Emperor looked at the stranger who dared to disturb his sleep in such a way, he found it was none other than the second prince.

"What the hell are you doing, Shang Wen?" The Emperor angrily roared at him.

To which, Shang Wen replied in an unpleasant tone, "I apologize Your Majesty but I don't have the time to wait until you wake up."

"Another trouble?" Emperor Shang felt like he suddenly became sober. "What is it this time?" He asked while blaming his bad luck.

Tightly gripping the scroll in his hand, Shang Wen answered, "My sister... Princess Shang Jiao has been abducted by the enemy."

"What did you say?" Shang Fu's eyes widened in shock and he quickly snatched the scroll from his son's hand.

He read the letter. This wasn't a piece of information sent by some scouts. It was a ransom letter except that there was no ransom. Instead, there was a demand.

"Lan surname? But, I never heard of this name before. Who the hell is this Lan Ju? And what business she has with my wife?" roared the Emperor.

Shang Wen answered, "I don't know. Perhaps, you should ask mother... I mean, Queen Consort Lan about it."

Even though they were less than 15 years apart, Shang Wen still addresses Lan Jingyi as his mother because of the fact that she was the only one who treated him as a family after the demise of his mother.

However, he was also a general now, and he cannot address her that way, atleast before the Emperor.

"Let's go."

The Emperor and the second prince made their way to the inner quarters. As Shang Wen stopped at the entrance, the Emperor dragged him along with him, not caring about formalities in such a terrible situation.

Of course, that doesn't mean he would barge into his stepmother's room. And even the emperor wouldn't allow it. He just waited outside the room. A minute later, the Emperor also came out and stood with his son as the door was locked.

A couple of more minutes later, Lan Jingyi then hurriedly came out of the room in normal clothing as she cannot come out in her pajamas. Even if it is her stepson who is like her son, he is still a grown-up man. It is highly inappropriate in this world of the medieval era.

"Did you find out who sent this?" asked Lan Jingyi in a serious tone.

Feeling some kind of invisible pressure on him, Shang Wen replied, "The guard informed him that it was given by a middle-aged-looking man."

"Who is this Lan Ju, dear?" asked the Emperor. "What does she want with you?"

Lan Jingyi shook her head, "It isn't a she. It is a he, Your Majesty. Lan Ju is the pet of my late father. It is a son of the beast named Zheng. My father mistook him for a female when he was a baby and gave him a feminine name."

"Zheng?" Shang Fu and Shang Wen looked at each other. They never heard of such a beast.

Lan Jingyi continued with her mix of truth and lies, "It's a beast king he found somewhere. And I know what he wants. He probably wanted to use me to revive the Lan sect since his growth stopped at 7-circle and doesn't have credibility. Using my surname, he could bring back all the former disciples."

"It doesn't make any sense, Mother." Shang Wen opinioned that there must be a conspiracy. "Abducting Xiao Jiao when we were busy with the war and sending us such a letter in the middle of the night, something isn't right here. A beast king wasn't capable of plotting such a scheme. Somehow, I feel like there's a mastermind."

Hearing his words made Lan Jingyi remember Mark for a moment before she shook away such thoughts and said, "Whatever the case, we will know when I meet him. Since he said I know where to find him, I believe he might be at Mt. Lan. I'm going right now."

"What? Are you serious?" Emperor Shang grabbed her arm as she was about to walk past him without bothering to ask his permission or anything. "In the middle of the night?"

Lan Jingyi gave a sharp look at him and replied, "Our daughter is abducted. I would go to hell to take her back if I have to. If you understand it, then, let me go."

Shang Fu and Shang Wen were taken aback by her anger. While Shang Wen was surprised to see such impoliteness toward his father, Shang Fu was more understanding of her behavior.

He was aware that when it concerns Shang Jiao, his wife would become scary. For some reason, he would feel invisible pressure on his soul whenever she takes a decision on their little princess and he tries to object to it.

In the end, he would support her and even now, it was no different. Letting out a deep sigh, he said, "Alright but you won't go alone. What if it turns out to be a trap laid by an enemy? I'll come with you."

"No, Your Majesty, your safety is most important." Shang Wen volunteered to go with his stepmother. As a 7-circle realm Spirit Warrior who had the highest concentration of the bloodline of the phoenix, the second prince was confident enough to protect Lan Jingyi from a beast king of the 7-circle realm.

How would he even know that he was going to face a demigod beast emperor...

Lan Jingyi feared that they wouldn't let her go if she says the truth, and hence, she lied about the zheng's strength and his origins.

Knowing that she cannot go alone anyways, she agreed with Shang Wen's condition and hurried him to prepare for the transport.

Somewhere far away from the Phoenix Empire on an island;

It was the time the sun was about to rise.

Shang Jiao slowly opened her eyes to find herself on a bed, in some kind of wooden house. "Where am I? I snuck out of the academy and I was on my way to watch the fireworks and then, I received a shock of high power..."

As she thought about it, she remembered that someone skillfully struck her neck from behind with some kind of lightning energy ability and she lost consciousness.

Shang Jiao quickly got down from the bed and scurried outside of the room, reaching the living room. She saw decent-quality furniture, although with excellent craftsmanship around. She didn't care about them as she rushed to the exit.

However, as she stepped outside, Shang Jiao halted her movements at once as soon as her eyes fell on a giant dragon of cyan-bluish color (Azure).

"What the hell."

Chapter 423 The Golden Demon Cat And The Mysterious Mage

Roughly seven hours earlier;

The city of Dongyi, Jin Province, Phoenix Empire

A portal opened up in the middle of the city ruled by the Jin Clan (not to be confused with the Ji Clan), and Mark walked out of it wearing black robes, covered his head with a hood, and his face with a blank mask so that no one will recognize him in any unexpected situations like these.

Luckily for him, despite the fact that people are still roaming in the streets, it was dim due to the high distance between each lamppost on the street.

It was just 15 minutes away from midnight and there was no way, any kind of store or restaurant will be opened here in any kingdom. Even pubs will be closed now. Only two businesses are active at night. One is the hotel business and the other is the brothel.

Mark couldn't help but wonder what they were doing. At first, he wanted to stop someone and ask but then as his attire itself is suspicious enough, he didn't bother to do it and looked for a dark alley.

There, he equipped himself with the exo skeleton suit and just look for the academy from the skies. As far as he knows, the Phoenix Academy spreads over 200 acres of land and had a 50-meter large statue of a phoenix built in the academy.

With his night vision, he had no problems searching in darkness. All it needs is time to locate it. Mark felt like he had plenty of it. But, to make this faster, he activated invisibility and followed a civilian with decent luck points for a while until she was alone, knocking her out with a taser gun he purchased from the store and dragging her to a dark alley.

Since he had to absorb 3 luck points and he needed 90 seconds of time while he only had 30 seconds of invisibility, he was forced to act in such a way.

Once his luck points were maximized, Mark was about to fly into the sky and quickly search for the academy and the princess sleeping somewhere in the dorm before his temporary luck runs out.

Before the timeline, he somehow had luck in the random direction he picked earlier and found the academy entrance.

And just as he was about to look for the girl's dormitory, he saw a girl with icy wings go past the high walls of the academy and then landed outside the academy while carrying another girl.

"Lucky..."

Mark grinned taking out Taser Gun as he flew in the direction of his target. Of course, this wasn't the same Taser gun he used against the civilian. This one was a transformation of the divine throne.

For the past couple of hours, Mark has done experiments on the divine throne after getting to know that a divine-grade weapon could also use other attribute attacks than its own.

He realized that he could actually use all of the attributes from lightning to anti-matter through the divine-grade weapon.

However, the task wasn't easier by any means, especially for the guy who completely depended on the system-provided skills until now.

After training for two hours, under Allen's guidance, Mark finally managed to release an electric shock through the weapon.

Whether it is a sword or a spaceship, the outcome doesn't change but Mark chose the form of a taser gun to ambush his sister from behind. The other girl tried to save Shang Jiao by attacking Mark but the latter needed evidence about the abduction.

Hence, he left her unharmed and just grabbed his sister before flying away at his maximum speed.

The zheng received the order through their telepathic connection from a long distance. He went to the imperial palace while partially hiding his public identity by covering his face from the nose. It was how the soldier recognized him as a middle-aged fellow.

Now, back to the present, the night passed away and the morning of the next day arrived. Shang Jiao found herself trapped in a house surrounded by four giant beasts and one far away coiled around a mountain.

Emperor Shang lost his sleep. He couldn't help but just walk left to right for the past few hours while his wife and son were on their way to Mt. Lan on the giant flying stingray.

The gold dragon set off to Western Yan at dawn and successfully reached the palace, where he was greatly welcomed by Feng Wu and the others.

Meanwhile, some of the influential beings of the Empire like the elders of the sects and a few heads of the major clans reached the Imperial City.

Everything is going just as Mark wanted it to go. He was waiting for his father's army to strike Western Yan with full force.

While the Phoenix Empire was in the middle of unfolding a huge event, far away from the world, realms above the mortal plane, another plot was started in the undying lands.

Undying lands aren't the name of a place or a world.

It was the largest region with thousands of worlds in the immortal plane where the strongest beasts in the universe exist.

One of those worlds was the realm of Grima and its ruler is named Golden Demon Cat.

In the courtroom of the majestic golden palace, a little blonde girl with cat ears was sitting on the throne as she looked at her generals and the officials.

All of these officials just looked like little girls and boys with animal ears and whiskers. If Mark would witness the scene, he would definitely think that they are cosplaying various feline creatures like cats, lions, tigers, etc...

They looked cute even with their serious-looking expressions.

Anan Spencer, the golden kitten certainly doesn't share such traits as he looks like a complete human when he transforms. Maybe, it is the environment of the earth. Who knows...

The Queen was addressing her subordinates with full of excitement. "With the surrender of Amphibia, we have finally won the war with them, and from now onwards, the felines will have complete domination over those Canines."

"All hail the Queen" "All hail the Queen" "All hail the Queen"

As the creatures were hailing their queen, a portal was opened up in the middle of the court and an old man with a beard touching the floor stepped out of it.

The place became silent and everyone turned wary of the human mage.

The Queen, who was filled with excitement, became serious. Naturally, she was displeased by this fellow's actions.

"What are you doing here, interrupting us like this without my permission, Dungeon Master Yan?" asked the Queen.

The old man let out a toothless grin where a few teeth are absent for some reason. He replied, "Well, to congratulate your victory over your archenemies, I'm here with a present."

"What kind of present?" The Golden Demon Cat's expression didn't change a bit. She was still frowning. "Did you trap my enemies in a dungeon or something?"

The old man shook his head and spoke, "The heir has been found, Your Majesty."

The Queen stood up from her throne in full of shock and the entire courtroom was filled with murmurings. "Where? Where did you find my grandchild, Yan Luo?"

"Diqiu world of the mortal plane," replied the mage while laughing inwardly, "hahahaha, Yuqiang, you might have hid the person but it wouldn't matter. I will erase that entire world from existence after taking these cats take you out of my way. Once the Chaos Lord revives, the gods shall fall."

Chapter 424 Lan Jingyi And Shang Wen At Mt. Lan

Roughly around 10 o'clock, Shang Wen and Lan Jingyi made it to Mt. Lan.

Lan Jingyi asked him to stay at the foot of the mountain as she intended to battle against the zheng to get back her daughter, but as the second prince insisted on following her due to worry about her safety, she decided to knock him out in case of an emergency.

Amara, the giant flying stingray, the Emperor's mount, made its way to the top of the mountain.

There, they have the zheng waiting in its original form. Looking at the five-tailed scarlet leopard, the 6-circle realm flying stingray was frightened and refused to make its landing.

But then, as the zheng spoke to it in a human tongue, not wanting to see Lan Jingyi getting carried by Shang Wen if the latter was a stepson, the king-grade beast reluctantly landed on the mountain but made sure to avoid the zheng's gaze.

Meanwhile, Shang Wen turned wary of the beast emperor. He felt like this opponent is far stronger than he imagined. He decided not to battle it but instead put his entire focus on how to quickly grab his mother and fly away without caring about Amara.

"Welcome to my abode, Lan Jingyi, and Shang Wen," greeted the zheng.

Lan Jingyi responded with a question, "Where is my daughter, Lan Ju?"

The zheng calmly replied, "First, pay your respects to your parents. Then, we shall talk."

Lan Jingyi started walking toward the gravesite. Just as Shang Wen was about to follow, the zheng looked at him, "Not you, Shang Wen. Outsiders aren't allowed in that sacred place."

"He is my son, Lan Ju," said Lan Jingyi without bothering to hide her anger.

The zheng shook his head, "But, he still doesn't have any ties with the Lan Sect. And neither had he any relations with the dead. He is an outsider in my view. You should be satisfied with the fact that I allowed your husband's mount and his son into this premises."

Lan Ju also didn't hide his disgust as he looked at Shang Wen and the beast. He doesn't like the imperial family, for whom Lan Jingyi chose to betray the wishes of her father.

"You..." Shang Wen clenched his fist but he controlled his emotions, knowing well that he is no match for the beast. Lan Jingyi told him to wait as she walked away.

Once Lan Jingyi was out of sight, the zheng then sat down in silence and closed his eyes.

Shang Wen also kept his mouth shut for a while until he couldn't bear it anymore and said, "I don't sense my sister anywhere on this mountain. I guess it must be behind the human who is helping you."

The zheng ignored his words and continued his nap.

Shang Wen then spoke, "On our way, I had a lot of time to think about your intentions behind this act. My mother is a mortal. My sister is too young and my brother has already awakened the Phoenix bloodline. He would probably become the Emperor someday. So, I highly doubt you want to use them to revive your fallen sect. So, what is it that you are truly after?"

Lan Ju continued to play deaf as if he didn't hear him.

But, Shang Wen didn't back down. He continued with his theory to confirm his suspicions. "I had this friend of mine. You can say he is like a brother and I don't have any reason to distrust his words. He says that the gold dragon of the Wuji sect has aligned itself with Feng Wu.

He also said that Feng Wu had contracted with this powerful demon, which was the one that attacked us and killed the Grand Secretariat. Now, you took this opportunity and abducted Shang Jiao.

A powerful beast like you doesn't need to work with a human unless he/she is your contractor. And you don't accept just anyone as your partner too. He must be related to this sect and should also have a high cultivation realm."

As Shang Wen was speaking out his own theory, something clicked in his head. "The gold dragon left Lu Zhen's side after the birthday event of Ouyang Zen. And Ouyang Zen's prime minister is Lan Jing, my mother's paternal uncle.

The Eastern Sun kingdom has the largest reserves of gold and a long war will bring down our economic conditions, forcing my father to take a loan. Now, everything fits.

Lan Jing is the one who is pulling the strings behind this entire situation, isn't he? He has the perfect reason to take revenge.

The Imperial Palace didn't send any help to Lan Sect during the dungeon break. In our defense, it is because we lack the strength to face it. But, in his view, we probably have betrayed him.

And my mother's marriage to the Emperor has probably escalated his anger. So, he waited for the opportunity to strike us down."

The zheng couldn't help but open his eyes and take another look at the second prince. "This..."

It's not because he was surprised about the analysis of the second prince but it is because his master told him the same thing that the imperial palace will come to a conclusion.

Mark intended to distract everyone's attention away from him by painting Lan Jing as the prime conspirator. Of course, by the time they investigated everything, they will figure out that Lan Jing has no role in this and they have been fooled all along by Mark.

But, it will be too late by then. Mark would have already finished his revenge.

Seeing the zheng look at him in surprise, Shang Wen more felt like he was right. Making a serious expression, he said, "No matter what you planned, I want to tell you that I will go to any extent to keep my family safe. If that involves selling my soul to a more powerful demon, I wouldn't hesitate to do so."

"Interesting." The zheng finally responded to him, seeing that his master's plan is working. "I can sense your sincerity when you said about protecting your family. Answer me, young warrior. What will do if your brothers turn against each other? Or if your mother or your sister turns against you?"

Shang Wen's face darkened. He didn't give an answer but instead asked him, "What are you planning to do?"

"Come back and ask me the same question when you were qualified to have a conversation with me, weakling," replied the zheng before he closed his eyes once again.

Shang Wen's pride was hurt by the zheng but he could only clench his fist and stay silent, not just because of the difference in their strength but it is also because of the fact that Lan Jingyi was still on the premises of the mountain and Shang Jiao's fate was at stake here.

Meanwhile, at Imperial Palace;

In the Emperor's chamber, Shang Fu was anxiously waiting for a message from his son. He was so concerned about the situation at Mt. Lan that he refused all the requests for meeting from various sect heads and clan lords to discuss the situation about the war.

As he was regretting not establishing a two-way communication talisman between him and his son, his thoughts were interrupted by his third son.

"Your Majesty, Sorry for the disturbance but there is someone here to meet you," said the third prince while standing outside of the room.

Shang Fu waved his hand, "I'm not in the mood to talk right now, Shang Wei. I will meet the guest in the evening."

"Your Majesty, he is a supreme being," said the prince, gaining his attention immediately.

"Eh?"

Chapter 425 A Supreme Being With Mysterious Origins

In a couple of minutes, Shang Fu met the supreme realm expert, who came all the way from the Dragon Empire.

He was old with wrinkles all over his body, looking like a bag of bones.

"Emperor Shang, let me introduce myself. My name is Huang Ming and I'm a traveling adventurer. I heard about the war and I'm here to help you."

Unlike Shang Wen who just trusts Mark's words, Shang Fu has already confirmed the existence of the gold dragon in Western Yan.

Just this early morning, Jinlong was received grandly by Feng Wu and he didn't do it in secret either. All the citizens living in Gong City witnessed the majestic dragon too.

This confirmation only increased Shang Fu's worry. And the appearance of a supreme realm expert looked like a blessing from heaven.

However, Shang Wei won't be fooled like his father. He immediately enquired the reason behind his action, "But, why? Venerable Huang, you must know that we have enemies of the same caliber as you."

To which, the traveler let out a smile, "I'm not risking my life for fun either. You can pay me with something I desire."

"What is it?" asked the Emperor. He further added, "Anything you desire, it is yours."

The traveler answered, "Your second child, Shang Wen."

"What do you mean?" Shang Fu abruptly stood up from his seat in shock and furrowed his brows in displeasure.

The traveler continued to maintain his smile as he waved his hand, "You misunderstood me. What I mean is that I want him as my disciple. I heard about his righteous qualities and his talent.

With the power of the Phoenix running through his blood, he is a perfect person to inherit my knowledge. He will still be your son but won't be able to serve as the General.

I'm almost at the end of my life span. And I realized that it is almost impossible to make the breakthrough to become the demigod. Rather than expending my life force to chase an impossible dream, I decided to use my cultivation for something great.

If your son becomes my disciple, within a few years, I will not only make him a master but also let him inherit my cultivation before I die. After my death, he will return to his homeland as the Supreme Being. Who knows, he might be able to even become a demigod within a century or two.

Everything depends on your choice, Emperor Shang. Whatever you decide, take it very soon. I'm leaving after sunset. If not him, then, I will find another. The world didn't lack geniuses with potential."

Shang Wei didn't expect not only this supreme realm expert to turn out to be Supreme Being but he is also interested to make Shang Wen his disciple. Adding on top of that, he will also help them in the war.

Shang Wei felt like the goddess of luck has smiled upon the Empire. Meanwhile, the Emperor stayed silent.

The Supreme Being from faraway lands was taken to the guest room to take a rest, leaving the Emperor in deep thought.

He was reluctant to send him away.

As the third prince returned to the private chamber and saw his father sitting there and thinking, he spoke, "Your Majesty, this is a fortune for us. Brother is very lucky."

"But, for me, it sounded like I was asked to sell my kid for a favor," replied the Emperor. He then looked at him and said, "We don't need his assistance to be honest."

"Yes, but we cannot prolong this war any longer. The more Feng Wu stays on the land, the higher the chance he will discover the existence of the mines and 'that' tomb.

There's a high chance it has already been discovered by the third party who was helping him out. But, we should be fine as long as the Leon Empire or the Dragon Empire learn of it. Or else, it would be a huge trouble.

That is why we need him. And don't think too much, Your Majesty. Just think of it as you are sending him a conquest for a few years."

"Hmmm..."

Meanwhile, at Mt. Lan;

Lan Jingyi returned from the graveyard and confronted the zheng. She demanded the release of her daughter once again.

In response, the scarlet leopard let out a chuckle and replied, "You and I don't belong to this world. You married someone. That's fine with me but you shall not involve in the wars of these natives.

Of course, as your daughter who awakened my late master's bloodline, Shang Jiao shall not involve in the war between Phoenix Empire and the Western Yan either, whatever the result might be.

Until this is over, your daughter will be safe with me and you will not cross the Imperial city. You are allowed to defend your family at your home though. I hope you understand what I'm saying, Lan Jingyi."

Lan Jingyi stared at him in silence.

Meanwhile, Shang Wen was filled with confusion. Lan Jingyi getting herself involved in this war? She is just a mortal without any ether energy. Shang Jiao might have some impact with her 6-circle realm cultivation but the enemies are supreme beings.

It just doesn't make sense unless Zheng was actually protecting them out of his affection for the Lan family.

Then, what of his conspiracy theory about Lan Jing being the mastermind?

His views didn't change much.

Mankind is always afraid of the unknown. Rather than thinking that there might be a mysterious enemy, even a righteous person like Shang Wen couldn't help but believe that the Eastern Sun kingdom is the enemy because, then, everything would just make sense.

Genesis Weapon store, Imperial City;

There was a strange silence in the store and everyone appeared very bored.

Sigh "It's been two days since the last customer." Placing her head on the desk, Song Yue complained.

Well, it's not like they went out of popularity. It is just that the entire city is in a lockdown state where the soldiers aren't even letting the people leave or enter the city without permission.

With the markets closed, the food supply was being taken care of by the imperial palace.

Of course, Mark has no problem with the ingredients as he has already procured 1-year worth of food and meat from various sources and loaded them into his inventory before the start of the war.

However, his business has been impacted slightly. In the current situation, he cannot go to the western moon's branch for business purposes as he wants to lie low and make sure he doesn't gain any suspicion from the imperial palace.

Hence, he decided to send a trusted subordinate to sell the weapons. Allen is out of the equation as his movements also attract attention. Xie Mei isn't trustable. Mark cannot bear to send away his fiancée. The zheng and the gold dragons are doing their own missions. Mark was left with only Chang Bo, the welpire.

However, he won't send him away alone. For this project, he has a card up his sleeve.

That ace is none other than Meng Tao, who was recruited during the Dragon Warrior Tournament but wasn't used yet.

Today is the day Mark decided to use this hidden ace. Everyone else was waiting for a customer while he was waiting for Meng Tao to arrive.

Chapter 426 The Flames Of War: The Phoenix Empire Battles The Western Yan

"Here, you know the prices and I leave all the managing to you. It's your wish on how many servants you want to hire and how much salary you will give them. I'm allotting a maximum of 500 gold coins for the salaries.

As for Meng Tao, he is already hired as the assistant manager and his salary is percentage basis just like you. It's just that you will get 2% and he will get 1%. Depending on the earnings and the sales, you might get a bonus or a salary hike.

The most important rule you will have to remember is that you have to sell it from the store just like how we do here. I will you the best of luck in your new journey, Chang Bo.

Meng Tao, I hope you too will do your job without disappointing me."

After reminding him what he needed to know, Mark gave a send-off to Chang Bo and Meng Tao.

As a result, Allen returned to his original job, although there won't be any customers for a while for the android to sell the weapons.

A couple of days later;

The preparations for the coronation ceremony of Western Yan's new king are going in full swing.

The kings of the Eastern Sun and Western Moon have already confirmed their participation. On that day, they will gift the new king with their formal acknowledgment.

As for the other empires in the continent, Qilin Empire and Kun Empire outrightly rejected the invitation as they don't want to become the enemies of the Phoenix Empire.

The Dwarven kingdom cannot interfere in the matters of the humans. So, the dwarves will also be absent.

The Leon Empire, on the other hand, neither rejected nor accepted. The Emperor of the Shi dynasty decided to wait until the Phoenix Empire finally acts.

Depending on the result, they will change their stance.

But spiritually, the Emperor was on the side of the Western Yan as it would lessen the strength of the Southern Empire.

And the main player, Shang Fu, gathered his three current generals, two retired generals of which one of them was reinstated as the stand-in for the northern army, sect leaders and their elders, Elite Adventure teams from various guilds, and finally, the three supreme realm experts (including Lan Ju aka Wu Weibao).

While the army was slowly marching to the west, the three supreme realm experts flew at their respective paces and reached their destination in different time intervals.

Lan Ju was the first to arrive there and he didn't attack the soldiers on the front line. Instead, he zoomed past them and put up act with the gold dragon in the skies by the time the remaining two caught up with him after they casually attacked the enemy soldiers standing in their way.

As a result, Western Yan lost a couple of LARS systems, seven rank-5 robots, more than twenty rank-3 robots and robot dogs, and roughly about 120 foot soldiers.

Song Tai and Huang Ming reached Lan Ju who appeared to be on a stalemate with the dragon.

As they were about to support him to slay the beast emperor, the zheng first warned them not to interfere in his battle and further reminded them to go on their way in order to fulfill their respective missions.

According to what they have discussed earlier, Wu Weibao (Lan Ju) will handle the gold dragon while the remaining two supremes will take of Feng Wu, his guardian, and his contracted demon (if exist).

Following the plan, Huang Ming and Song Tai left the gold dragon and flew toward the palace.

Surprisingly, no guard stood outside of the palace to even block their way. Adding on top of that, their senses cannot penetrate the building.

The two experts assumed that it is probably done by the so-called Feng Wu's demon and further concluded that Feng Wu's soldiers were hiding in the palace to ambush them.

However, with the two of them working together, they felt only a demigod has the power to defeat them. Hence, they confidently barged into the palace without caring whether there are traps or not.

It was there they received another shock. The whole palace was empty. No soldiers were hiding. No maids, no Feng Wu, and no hostages either. Instead, they could only sense one presence.

Huang Ming and Song Tai looked at each other and meaningfully nodded before going on their way to the courtroom, where they saw a handsome youth sitting on the throne and welcoming them with a smile.

"Hello there, my human friend said I should be courteous with the both of you. He asked me to give you a choice, especially for you, Mr. Song. So, here it is." Demon King Bael put forth an option before Song Tai as Mark thought that Song Yue would feel sad if her ancestor dies in the war. "Surrender yourself and become our prisoner or be punished along with your companion. What will be your decision?"

Song Tai furrowed his brows in displeasure. "We knew about you from the start and we are here to kill you, demon."

The demon king lets out a fake sigh and commented, "Each to their own decision. Nothing can be done about it."

He stood up from the throne and his two opponents went into their battle stance.

It was then Bael raised his hand and snapped his fingers with a smile on his face. The surroundings changed immediately to that of an endless barren land without anything else.

The eyes of Song Tai and Huang Ming widened in great shock as they looked around.

"An illusion?" Song Tai wondered out loud.

Huang Ming shook his head in extreme seriousness, "This isn't an illusion, Brother Song Tai. This is called the domain."

"Domain?" Song Tai's heart skipped a beat for a second and abruptly turned his head to look at his comrade.
"A demigod?"

As Huang Ming nodded seriously, Song Tai didn't hesitate to take out a Bo staff from his storage ring and shocked his teammate as well as their enemy at the same time.

"A divine-grade weapon?" Huang Ming and Demon King Bael sounded at the same time.

Placing the Bo staff with a golden ring around its center firmly on the ground, Song Tai spoke, "You underestimated the Phoenix Empire's imperial family. They might not have a strong expert within the army but there is a reason why the Shang Dynasty has been successfully ruling this southern empire for more than 1780 years.

Earlier, you gave me the option to choose. Now, I will give you a choice. Return to your underworld and sever your con... Ugh..."

Before he finished his warning, all of a sudden, a sharp pointy energy broad blade erupted from the ground and pierced Song Tai's body at an unimaginable speed.

Upon piercing his body, the energy blade transformed into demonic energy and invaded his body, paralyzing him.

Thud

The bo staff fell to the ground and Song Tai was frozen like a statue before falling onto his back.

Looking down at Song Tai, the demon king snorted, "Hmpf, a fool talking nonsense in the middle of a battle. You are the one who underestimated me. You should actually be thankful that my friend doesn't want you dead."

Meanwhile, Huang Ming rushed toward Song Tai in a flash and grabbed the Bo staff, and spoke to the weapon while creating an ether energy barrier around himself, "I don't know your name but please grant us your strength. I request you to allow me to wield you for a while."

The Bo staff glowed for a second and became lighter. At the same time, a divine energy shield was formed over him.

"Thank you."

Huang Ming didn't waste in speaking dialogues and charged forward with the Bo staff.

Bael looked untroubled. He calmly stared at the opponent as the latter reached him and swung down the Bo staff.

Bael ducked in a timely manner and raised his right hand. Lightning bursts out of his palm in the form of a concentrated beam of energy and struck the divine shield.

The shield couldn't block Bael's attack and the lightning beam broke through his defenses, making a hole out of his chest in the middle.

Bael fell onto his right knee. Clenching his fist, he tried to heal his wound by using ether energy but for some reason, the hole wasn't closed and the blood continued to pour down.

Pfft

The demon king broke out into laughter, "Did you forget that you are in my domain? Here, I set the rules. And one of my three rules bans the healing altogether. Hahahaha."

Huang Ming could only raise his head and look at the laughing demon in deep hatred.

Chapter 427 The Flames of war died out before it properly burn

In the skies of Gong City;

Lan Ju was in a fierce battle against Jinlong. The latter was in the form of a gold dragon while the former was using a weapon that looks like the imperial Phoenix bow, also known as the Bow of the Shangs.

The Imperial Phoenix Bow is first used by the Shang Dynasty's founder to overthrow the Xia Dynasty and is passed to one emperor and then the next.

Emperor Shang lent it to Wu Weibao/Lan Ju to defeat the gold dragon but Mark has entirely different plans for the weapon.

It cannot be subdued and Mark doesn't want to subdue it or erase its will either. He intends to destroy the Shang Dynasty's pride.

But, for the weapon to fall into his hands for good, he would have to stage Lan Ju's death.

And it should happen in front of the soldiers of the empire so that he would have enough witnesses for the weapon getting looted by the dragon and their morale also gets reduced in the process.

Of course, Mark wouldn't take the risk of letting the divine-grade weapon escape to its master as soon as its current wielder falls down.

Hence, he placed it in the inventory and handed the divine throne to Lan Ju.

The divine throne was transformed into a bow resembling the imperial bow. Lan Ju, on the other hand, has five basic attributes.

Hence, he used fire energy arrows to make it seem like the bow was a real deal.

The fight between them went on for atleast seven hours.

During this time, the LARS systems operated by Rankk-3 robots were randomly firing missiles at the incoming freelance adventurers and volunteering sect disciples to keep them away. And those who escaped it and advanced forward were hunted down by the snipers (rank-5 robots).

The rank-5 robots might not be able to pour ether energy into their sniper rifles but they have a perfect aim. With just normal ammunition, they were able to target the eyes and other vulnerable parts of the enemies.

After a few losses, the elite adventurers and elite disciples of various sects managed to protect their eyes and other vulnerable parts with an energy shield but they still couldn't get near Feng Wu's army as the bandits turned soldiers were using grenades of various types and rocket launchers to defend their home.

Furthermore, the weapons in Feng Wu's hands have far higher than the traditional archers from Phoenix Empire. Hence, even the ranged attacks couldn't become successful.

Hence, everyone could only hope for 6-circle and 7-circle realm experts to arrive as fast as possible and make a way for them.

And seven hours after when the supreme realm experts broke through the enemy's frontline, Phoenix Imperial Army arrived and surrounded the enemies from three different directions. Sect leaders, clan heads, guild leaders, generals, and all invited powerful individuals were also in that bunch.

However, they weren't attacking and only set up camps around. They were waiting for the results from their three trump cards that were currently in the middle of the enemy's territory.

In the Emperor's camp, Shang Fu and the other important figures were waiting for the result.

The gold dragon and Lan Ju were seen in the skies but the other two were nowhere seen. Even Feng Wu, his nephew, and the others weren't sighted anywhere by the spies.

Obviously, Shang Fu was anxious.

And, about an hour later, around 3 p.m., when the temperature outside slowly cooled down because of the cloudy weather, the Emperor's fears had come true.

An elder of the Mt. Hua sect entered the tent with a panicked expression, "Your Majesty."

"What happened?" The Emperor turned more anxious as he rose from his seat. The others followed suit as they cannot sit when the Emperor is standing.

The elder replied with his voice shaking in worry, "Ven... Venerable Wu is no more."

"What? The gold dragon won?" Emperor Shang was naturally shocked to hear it. After all, the gold dragon and Wu Weibao should be of equal strength originally but with the divine grade item, the latter still should have won even if he couldn't use it to its full potential because of the lack of ownership over the weapon.

The elder nodded, "Everyone has witnessed Venerable Wu has fallen and was eaten by that monster."

Shang Fu quickly closed his eyes and raised his hand. He attempted to summon the Imperial Bow back to him but there was no answer. "My connection to the Imperial Bow has been severed?"

Shang Fu felt heavy pain in his chest. His legs lost their strength and his body collapsed on the seat.

"Your Majesty." Bai Xun attempted to grab him in concern. The Emperor waved his hands while taking heavy breaths, "I'm alright."

Meanwhile, some of the clan elders and the crown prince were rejoicing in their heads, thinking that the weapon seller has lost his greatest backing and he doesn't seem invincible anymore.

At the same time, Shang Zexi also thought that he got an opportunity to ascend to the throne.

As for the others who were genuinely worried about the welfare of the empire, their morale was hit.

Heaven Sect's representative, an 8-circle realm expert named Chen Hong, then tried to showcase his optimism by stating, "Your Majesty, there's nothing to be worried about. Venerable Huang and Venerable Song are a great threat to them. That is probably why they were dragged away from the city to someplace far away. I'm sure that they will return victorious."

"Do you really think so?" Shang Fu looked at him in hope.

Cheng Hong nodded with a smile, "Our Patriarch once said that Huang Ming is invincible under the demigod realm if he fights seriously. There's no way Feng Wu's demon will defeat him."

Shang Fu then thought of the untamed divine grade item he secretly gave to Song Tai on his son's advice. His mood became slightly better and replied, "Lu Zhen is a friend of our imperial family. Today, he lost a great asset but we will not let Venerable Wu's sacrifice to go waste. We will defeat the enemies and end this war before the sunset."

Before anyone else react to his bold announcement, everyone heard a voice in the surroundings.

"You are right. The war will end before the sunset but I'm afraid you won't be able to avenge him."

As everyone in the tent became extremely alert, Shang Fu shouted, "Who is it? Show yourself."

As everyone in the tent became extremely alert, Shang Fu shouted, "Who is it? Show yourself."

In response to his shout, a figure materialized out of nowhere with two unconscious bodies, each on a shoulder.

Thud

Bael threw them onto the ground, stupefying everyone before making an announcement in the form of a warning, "Consider this as our mercy. Within an hour, all of your forces must leave the borders, or else, you will see thousands of dead bodies."

The demon king disappeared without bothering to hear the other party's response.

But then again, no one is in a state to speak out. They were scared to death at the moment and their morale was at the bottom.

Even this optimistic Chen Hong had his legs shivering as he was staring at the two unconscious supreme realm experts, whose cultivations were destroyed. They were nothing more than two old men, now.

"Your Majesty?" Bai Xun looked at his brother-in-law who was staring at the two men for a while.

As there is no response, Bai Xun shook Shang Fu's shoulder and forcefully brought him to reality.

"What just happened, Bai Xun?" asked the Emperor as he came to his senses.

Bai Xun bitterly smiled as he replied, "We lost the war, Your Majesty."

Chapter 428 Weapon Transmutation

As Shang Fu was discussing their next course of action at the border of Western Yan, meanwhile, at Genesis Weapon Store, Imperial City;

Despite there being no customers for the past few days, the store was still kept open so that people know Mark is at his house.

Usually, he sits at the counter and chats with his fiancée but right now, he is in his room. Of course, he wasn't sleeping.

Mark was staring at a specific item in his inventory and wondering whether it is really okay to destroy it just because he hates the Imperial family.

"The weapon is bound to Shang Fu. So, it can never be mine to use. It is quite possible that the weapon could escape the moment I let it out of the inventory.

To sever its connection with Shang Fu and forcefully bind it to me requires a billion credits. I don't have such an amount of money to give to the system. Even if I have, I wouldn't still do it. This bow is not just worth it.

Hmmm... I can keep this with me and use it as a bargaining chip in the future but I will lose 25 million credits/125 million gold coins if I do that.

But then again, neither 25 million nor the Phoenix Empire would become important in my life. If only I could find a way to extract the materials and use them to build... Hmm? Wait a second..."

All of a sudden, something clicked inside Mark's head and he quickly went to the system's store and clicked on the skills section.

He stopped scrolling down after finding what he was looking for.

"Yup, this is the one..."

He then scroll down to the bottom and explored the unique skills. He stopped scrolling down after finding what he was looking for.

"Yup, this is the one..."

His face beamed in excitement as he pressed his finger on the skill, "Weapon Transmutation."

*Ding! 1,000,000 credits have been deducted. Weapon Transmutation has been added to the skill section.

Weapon Transmutation (Level-1): With a touch on an item, the user could extract all the raw materials used in making it. Currently, it only works on ungraded items. Cost: N/A. CD: 12 hours.

Seeing level-1 glowing beside the skill name, Mark wasn't discouraged by its description and clicked on the level.

*Ding! Proceed for the upgrade? 1 million credits will be deducted.

"Yes." Mark proceeded without hesitation.

*Ding! 1,000,000 credits have been deducted. Weapon Transmutation skill has been upgraded to level-2.

Mark read its new description. "Hmm. The upper limit is increased to bronze. Let's continue."

*Ding! 1,000,000 credits have been deducted. Weapon Transmutation skill has been upgraded to level-3.

*Ding! 1,000,000 credits have been deducted. Weapon Transmutation skill has been upgraded to level-4.

*Ding! 1,000,000 credits have been deducted. Weapon Transmutation skill has been upgraded to level-5.

"Okay, I reached platinum but it isn't enough. From here, the fee will increase but it's alright. I have enough credits anyway."

*Ding! 2,000,000 credits have been deducted. Weapon Transmutation skill has been upgraded to level-6.

*Ding! 3,000,000 credits have been deducted. Weapon Transmutation skill has been upgraded to level-7.

*Ding! 4,000,000 credits have been deducted. Weapon Transmutation skill has been upgraded to level-8.

"Damn, the price is getting skyrocketed for the divine-grade items. But, it doesn't matter. I will sacrifice all of the semi-divine weapons if I have to earn more credits. Let's proceed..."

*Ding! 10,000,000 credits have been deducted. Weapon Transmutation skill has been upgraded to level-9.

*Ding! 20,000,000 credits have been deducted. Weapon Transmutation skill has been upgraded to level-10.

*Ding! 30,000,000 credits have been deducted. Weapon Transmutation skill has been upgraded to maximum level.

"74 million credits... 370 million gold coins..." Mark couldn't help but stare at the remaining balance in a daze, realizing that he had indeed spent too much.

It was then he remembered about a certain side quest.

"System, Open the Quest list"

Side Quest-III: Spend a total of 100,000,000 credits in the system store (99.2%)

Reward: Staff of Blessing, the Lamp of Wishes.

"Well, in the end, despite trying to postpone it in order to save money, I almost completed it after all. Should I go ahead and purchase something now?" Mark fell into thinking.

The war is almost over and Alina would still need a few upgrades to qualify to help him now that she lost her weapon. Of course, he can still give her another semi-divine weapon but none of the possessed items were suitable to her as the Doom Scythe.

"Anyways, let's not care about those things right now and focus on the present. We will handle one problem after another." Mark doesn't know the exact reason but he just doesn't want to resurrect Alina yet, at least not before he takes revenge against her culprit, the Necromancer King.

In the end, he abandoned the idea of completing the quest and closed down the window. He opened the skills, once again.

Weapon Transmutation (max): With a touch on an item of any grade (ungraded-God), the user could extract all the raw materials used in making it. Cost: N/A. CD: 5 seconds.

Mark clicked on the skill and activated it.

*Ding! Touch the object you desire to use the skill on.

"Open inventory."

He clicked on the bow. Only details appeared.

*Ding! You need to physically touch the object for it to work.

The system reminded him without asking.

"I see..." Mark nodded and then took a deep breath before summoning it to the outside world.

The imperial phoenix bow probably realized the situation. A powerful screech escaped from the bow while it turned into hot flames.

"Ugh..." Mark groaned in pain but it only lasted for a second before the majestic bow was surrounded by the golden glow and eventually turned into specks of light.

*Ding! The Imperial Bow of Phoenix has been salvaged.

*Ding! You extracted 2.8kg of Adamantium, 12.4kg of Mythril, Phoenix orb (78% purity), 40kg of Heavenly Jade Dust, and the hair of the White Dragon Emperor. Check out your inventory.

"A phoenix orb? Heavenly jades dust?"

Mark opened the inventory and click on the raw material he was hearing for the first time.

*

Phoenix Orb

Purity: 78%

Description: An orb that contained the energy of the mythical beast, phoenix. The purity has been lost because of the mixture of the energies of various wielders across history.

Effects: The orb can be used in making a semi-divine or higher-grade weapon. It can also be directly consumed by the user to acquire the Phoenix Bloodline, although the process has a high risk of death.

**

Heavenly Jade Dust

Status: Crystalline

Weight: 40kg

Description: An element found only in the celestial plan. Jade crystal is the gods' equivalent version of the ether crystal.

Effects: Useful in making mithril and celestial grade items. Useful in making an aphrodisiac that works even against the gods.

**

Reading the description made him remember the ether powder he unlocked in the gallery. A doubt rose in his head.

He asked, "System, I want to know the grade of ether crystals your ether powder is made of."

The system was ready with its reply.

*Ding! After extracting the ether energy from the crystals, the system prepares the ether powder as follows.

1) Copper-grade ether powder is purely a powdered form of a low-grade ether crystal.

2) Silver-grade ether powder is purely made from middle-grade ether crystal.

3) Gold-grade ether power is a mixture of middle-grade and high-grade ether crystals with a ratio of 3:1

4) Platinum-grade ether powder is the same mixture as earlier but the ratio this time is 1:3

5) Semi-divine-grade powder (Diamond, Crystal, and Ruby) is purely made from the powdered form of high-grade ether crystals.

6) Mithril grade needs peak-grade ether crystals.

7) Celestial-grade ether powder can be made from various elements like the heavenly jade crystals, Black Jade crystals of the Hell realm, Obsidian of the mortal plane, Qing Jing and Zhen Zhu of the undying lands, and so on. The system prefers to use the jade crystals of heaven.

8) God-grade ether powder can only be made from cosmic dust, also known as interstellar dust from space.

**

"Obsidian? Are you fucking serious?" Mark's jaw dropped in shock as he saw that obsidian powder is used to make celestial-grade weapons.

Obsidian is nothing but volcanic glass that is formed when lava cools rapidly and solidifies without crystallizing. It is most commonly found in areas where volcanic activity has occurred and is probably the easiest to acquire.

"Damn, I should have asked you about this earlier. By now, I would have collected tons of obsidian from all over the world."

Chapter 429 Mark demands the emergency assembly

30 minutes later, Emperor Shang Fu ordered the withdrawal of troops.

60 minutes later, the demon king made a visit to Mark and handed over the divine-grade weapon, the Bo staff, as he cannot take it with him to his world.

"This weapon..." Mark frowned as he read the details.

It turned out to be Ruyi Jingu Bang, the weapon of Sun Wukong from the legends. However, it was slightly a disappointment for Mark as a weapon with such legendary status is nothing but a low-quality divine-grade item (Mythril grade).

Mark kept it in his inventory as he has yet to decide what to do with it. The system recommended it for Allen but as he already had a better divine-grade weapon, Mark felt like it doesn't make any sense to hand it to him.

At the same time, he couldn't extract raw materials through weapon transmutation or dismantle them through Devil Hand because of the availability of upgrades.

As long as he uses superior-grade upgrade stone on it, he could upgrade it to Celestial grade. Then, he can decide whether he should dismantle it or not.

After sending away the demon king back to his realm, Mark then thought about his next move. But, as it cannot be rushed, he waited for the right time.

About 7-8 hours later, Emperor Shang Fu and the other officials reached the Imperial city, which is currently protected by the second prince and his troops in the absence of the Emperor.

It was already dark by the time he arrived and he was probably so affected by the result of the war that he forgot about informing Mark regarding the death of Wu Weibao. He slept without eating any food that evening.

However, Mark was quite happy to not get any formal letter from the imperial palace. He felt like he found an opportunity to get into a feud with the Emperor.

The following morning, Feng Wu's messenger turned official ambassador, Huo Fen, along with his royal tutor arrived at the palace with their official proposal of peace, although it's more like a list of demands.

According to it, the entire Western Yan, which used to be in the control of the Feng Dynasty before it was overthrown by the Phoenix Empire, will be handed back to them.

The Phoenix Empire will not only formally acknowledge Western Yan as an independent kingdom but also give a written guarantee that the Empire's army will never start an unprovoked war in the future.

As a part of compensation for looting the Feng Dynasty for several years, the Phoenix Empire shall be giving 1 million gold coins a year for the next decade.

Finally, the Emperor or any prince shall attend the coronation ceremony of the king which is happening in two days of time.

In return, the war will be stopped. All the hostages will also be released.

Of course, the royal tutor of Western Yan didn't forget to add that there were no negotiations on their terms. It's all or nothing.

Emperor Shang was trying his best to control his rage this time. He wanted to kill both of them, but he couldn't do it as it will only invite doom to the Empire with the loss of two divine-grade items and Song Tai turning mortal.

In the end, he agreed to the conditions and stamped the imperial seal right away.

After their job is done, both of them left the palace and made their way toward the Hanga district, located in the outer sector of the imperial city.

As Mark already knew about their visit beforehand, he opened the store.

"Good morning, welcome to Genesis weapon store." Allen greeted the customers with a genuine smile on his face. He was really happy to see someone coming in even if it is a familiar face.

Mark was also happy but for a different reason.

As the android greeted the customers, his master spoke, "I was waiting for both of you."

"His Highness ordered me to give this to you," replied Huo Fen as he took out a storage ring from his pocket and placed it on the desk.

Mark grabbed it and poured his consciousness into the ring to check the contents. It didn't have any treasures or gold as Huo Fen expected. There were only the destroyed robots and weapons inside.

But Mark exactly wanted them too.

He specifically instructed Feng Wu to collect them and send them back after the war is over. The system could repair them for a fee, but Mark is interested in studying them in his free time.

As for why he couldn't just buy it and break it down to study them, Mark had that thought a couple of months ago, but the system warned him not to do that as it is considered disrespectful.

Mark cannot go against the invincible, stubborn, and sassy system head-on. Hence, he could only find loopholes and exploit them.

After confirming that the goods were there, Mark bid farewell to the both of them without intending to talk about their affairs for too long. He was aware that there are spies watching his store for a couple of days.

As they left, NET's spy on the roof of a nearby residence quickly took out a special note from his pocket and wrote something with ether energy.

Some time passed away and the Sun reached its peak position.

Once again, the spider-shaped spaceship made its appearance at the Imperial Palace, this time without any appointment or so whatever.

Perhaps, the imperial family has already guessed the reason for his visit. They sent the second prince to escort Mark and Allen to the Emperor's private chamber.

However, Mark's intentions were never about claiming compensation, asking for an apology, or something. He wanted to break off the relationship with the Imperial family he developed until now.

Hence, he had to act like he was mad.

Giving off an angry look at the noble second prince, Mark rejected to have a private talk with the Emperor and further said, "General Shang, the things I wanted to talk about, I needed the imperial courtroom. Would you be able to arrange a full audience of the ministers right now? At the very least, Nie Rougang should be here."

To which, Mark shook his head in response, "Not exactly."

"Is this about Venerable Wu?" asked the second prince, wondering whether Mark wants to complain or something.

To which, Mark shook his head in response, "Not exactly."

"Then?" As the second prince tried to press for the truth, Mark replied, "I will only say that in the court."

"Brother Lu, His Majesty isn't in a situation where he can attend the courtroom session. And suddenly summoning the ministers without telling anything to them might create unnecessary panic. Please understand and..."

As the second prince was trying to convince Mark to attend a private meeting with the Emperor instead, Mark interrupted him with a statement, "I'm a weapons seller and I cannot prefer one over another. Everyone who walks into the store is a customer no matter what kind of relationship I have with them. This is what the motto is. I put my ethic aside for the sake of the imperial palace and sacrificed a supreme being. I should deserve at least this much, right?"

"This..."

Chapter 430 I'm Not Here To Seek Answers

Sometime later;

The six ministers and other important officials were arriving one after another and found Mark standing silently at the center of the court. Shang Wen was standing beside him.

"Mr. Lu? What are you doing here? Is everything alright," asked the current patriarch of the Lin clan, Lin Wuying.

However, Mark didn't speak a word. He just folded his hands and stared at the throne in silence.

As Lin Wuying gestured for Shang Wen to ask what this is all about, the general of the south could only shake his head, indicating he has no idea.

The officials started murmuring as they were glancing at Mark every once in a while.

Soon, the crown prince and the third prince also arrived with the Emperor. Until Shang Fu sits on the throne, Mark was mute and turned a deaf ear to his surroundings.

He was in fact conversing with the Emperor in his mind, going through the series of possibilities and how he should respond to each statement. The last time he came, he failed. But, this time, he won't fail.

"Greetings, Your Majesty," spoke Mark in an unpleasant tone. The disrespect is clear in his behavior.

Sighing inwardly, Shang Fu nodded and said, "I was informed that you want to speak in the presence of everyone. What is it?"

Mark finally opened his mouth, "Your Majesty, let me start with something obvious. Two days ago, we made a deal. I lend you Wu Weibao for a day and in return, you pay me 6 million gold coins and 1 high-quality semi-divine weapon (ruby grade) after the war.

Then, yesterday, you start the war and then decided to end it. You happily make a peaceful pact with the enemy after costing the life of Song Tai too.

You didn't honor your promise, Wu Weibao died for no cause, I didn't get to bury him, and the imperial family didn't even bother to send me a letter."

He raised his voice as he asked, "Why I had to hear the news of the death of Wu Weibao from your enemies? Tell me..."

His voice sounded like thunder as he echoed in the courtroom. The minister shuddered for a moment and the Emperor was forced to stand up in shock. He realized that he was so engrossed in the humiliation from the defeat that he forgot to inform Mark about the matter.

Seeing the Emperor looking at the floor in silence while tightly gripping the handrest, Mark pushed him further, "Do you think he is a hired mercenary? He is a supreme being. Maybe, you don't care because he is not a servant of the imperial family. Or is it because you just didn't believe my words and thought that it is impossible to have two supreme beings on the side of the enemies?"

"Owner Lu... the thing is..." The third prince wanted to speak on behalf of the Emperor but Mark didn't give him such an opportunity.

He raised his hand, gesturing for him to stop. As Shang Wei shut his mouth, Mark said, "Whatever reason you might give me, I don't want to hear it as I'm not here to seek answers but to relieve my frustration and leave the judgment to your subordinates. Please sit down and listen. Yesterday, I lost a servant who can even win me a kingdom. So, I think I deserve at least that much."

His 9 points of charm worked very much on the third prince and the other listeners. They stayed silent and let Mark speak everything he wants.

Mark felt secretly happy that his plan is working very well. He decided to use his charm to its full extent and make sure to create an atmosphere of distrust in the courtroom by the time he leaves.

Mark then returned his gaze toward his biological father once again and continued, "Now, coming to the second matter. Nie Rougang, please stand up."

"Yes?" Nie Rougang's heart skipped a beat for a second, wondering what this madman wants with him. As far as he can remember, there is no personal grudge between the both of them, except for the fact that he hired the Xu Sect to attack the third prince once and Song Yue almost died that day.

However, Mark went on to speak about a completely different matter.

Without looking at him, Mark spoke, "On the dawn of the day during the time when the Western Yan is captured, a few powerful assassins of the organization named Soul tried to assassinate a friend of mine named Xie Mei. After digging around, I found out that you are the one who gave them the task. Do you accept my accusation or deny it?"

At that instant, everyone's gaze fell on Nie Rougang. Meanwhile, sweat beads appeared above the forehead of the crown prince. The minister of revenue looked in the direction of the nervous prince.

The crown prince quickly reacted by rising to his feet and started acting as if he was betrayed, "Minister Nie, you are still in touch with that middleman? I told you that he is a bad business. Look where it got you now."

"Prince Zexi, please explain yourself." The Emperor reacted for the first time. He was displeased upon realizing that his son was really involved with that mysterious terrorist organization.

Previously, he thought it was something Shang Wei made it up and only put his son under investigation. However, he wasn't serious and was only trying to ease up the successor that he decided on. But, it looks like he had to take this seriously.

The crown prince turned toward his father and bowed, "I apologize, Your Majesty. I want to keep this under wraps but I had to reveal the truth now. The truth is that I and Minister Nie have been in touch with the Soul organization for a while.

We regularly use them to eliminate the rebellious elements to safeguard the empire from the shadows. I was afraid of getting punished by revealing it to His Majesty and it is a huge crime to lie to his majesty either. So, I could only keep it a secret.

After the arrest of Song Yun, the revenue department was put under heavy scanner and we couldn't use the funds to do the job anymore. Hence, we decided to stop.

But not so long after, Minister Nie met a stranger who somehow knew about our relationship with the Soul organization. He brought missions and used to give him a 25% commission.

I was against it as it is too risky, but Minister Nie thought that we can resume our operation using those funds coming from the middleman. I told him to not trust strangers who unnecessarily give too much money, but he didn't listen.

Your Majesty, I request you to forgive him for his mistake. Minister Nie is working for the welfare of the Empire even if it is something that didn't reward him."

As the Emperor's gaze softened, the crown prince then shifted his attention to Mark and apologized to him while putting aside his ego.

Rather than denying the facts, he thought it is better to cook up a story on the spot. More than easing up his father, he was afraid of this weapon seller who doesn't care about the background of his enemy and just go wild.