

Seller 551

Chapter 551: Mark's second annual auction (part-1)

The entire event of auctioning was put on Chang Bo's shoulders, and Xie Mei was just there accompanying him as a 17-year-old beauty who just had the job of announcing the item name and bidding amount.

Even though she had mastered and even created a new fighting style using firearms, she wasn't as knowledgeable about firearms as Chang Bo. Well, at the very least, Mark thinks so. Hence, she was just there to please the audience with her presence, that's all. After all, the nobles and wealthy individuals who came from far away wouldn't want a male to be the host.

Chang Bo was doing it for the money as he would get 1000 gold coins as his remuneration and Xie Mei was doing it as Mark promised her this thing called a 'date', where both of them spent their time alone and he would accompany her anywhere she wanted to go.

The motivation was there but there was also this nervousness as neither of them ever handled an auction before.

The bidders are influential people and of great status, and if either of them messed it up, not just Mark's reputation but even the entire Western Moon's reputation also could take a hit. It goes without saying Mark would be disappointed. Such thoughts only increased the mental pressure on both of them even more.

As for Mark, he was accompanying his wife and son, sitting in one of the VIP rooms as a spectator; Sylvandria was also in the same room as the Godmother of the child. However, Princess Shen Ling, Mark's official fiancée was with her father in another room as she had to represent the kingdom.

The auction started after the servants passed a brochure to each guest sitting in the VIP room, surprising them. It listed all the items available in the auction with their abilities.

Unlike in the previous auction conducted by Mark, this one doesn't have any reserved prices or new weapons. They were entirely comprised of platinum-grade sets and semi-divine weapons/artifacts (half of them belonged to Mark and the remaining were from the palace treasury), and Mark's ether weapons lying in inventory but were too weak for him to use.

As the VIP guests, who mostly were the ones to become winners, knew of the items, Chang Bo's job became easier and his mental stress had been lessened greatly. Seeing her co-host becoming calmer, Xie Mei's mood also improved.

As time passed by, both of them became more confident in doing their roles and they were quite pleased with their jobs. But, Mark, on the other hand, doesn't look pleased at all.

The reason?

All the items sold only amounted to 212 million gold coins, which was far less than he anticipated. Even the rank-8 robot was only sold for 70 million. His favorite attack helicopter was only sold for 34 million.

Well, it is not like the bidders purposely bid it for low. It's just that, unlike the Void Temple's grand auction, Mark's auction doesn't have this reserved price. Hence, whatever items were bid, had to be exchanged with the entire amount right away.

Mark realized that he might face heavy losses at this rate. Hence, he thought of a plan and put away three items from the traditional auction method.

Once all the remaining items were sold, he made Chang Bo announce that the last three items would be auctioned through secret bids. Followed by his announcement, the servants rushed into the VIP rooms and handed everyone a blank scroll with their names written in ink, on the top.

The secret bidding system doesn't exist anywhere in this world. Naturally, everyone got confused when they heard it.

As the rank-9 robot put forth three items on the table, side by side, Chang Bo explained to the bidders in a raised tone as if he was representing Mark when he was saying the words, "These three are the top three items of the auction; The Augmented pill of strength, The Peak Potion, and the Sword of Light.

Top 3rd item, the augmented pill of strength will increase the realm of any cultivator permanently as long as they are below demigods.

Top 2nd item, the Peak potion will make any cultivator a supreme being for five minutes, as long as they are atleast five-circle realm. The effects will diminish if one's cultivation is below five-circle.

Finally, the top 1 item, Aries, the sword of light. Also known as the King's sword, it is a heaven-grade divine sword capable of increasing one's cultivation temporarily just by holding it, and if you are a light attribute user, its effects will be tripled. According to the historical records, there's a saying from the ancient sages.

Those who hold the Sword of Light will become a King who will lead his people from darkness toward light.

Now, we are going to have an hour break. Those who are interested in bidding for these items will have to send their proposal within the time to win the item. There is no higher bid or lower bid this time.

Once your proposal reaches Master Lu's room, it is considered your final bid. You can bid with gold coins, ether crystals, rare materials, artifacts, weapons, or even land. Anything valuable is considered in this bid.

The winner should hold their promise within ten days of time. After that, you will have six months of reserved period. In this period, a hefty penalty of five million gold coins will be added, every day."

Taking everyone by surprise with his bold announcement, Chang Bo raised his head to look at the first floor, "For those in the VIP section, please use only the scroll provided to you and hand it over to the servant allotted to your room. Do not forget to mention the item you were interested in bidding on."

Chang Bo then glanced to the front where a few dozen bidders who made their entry with money, "As for the interested bidders who weren't handed any scrolls, please do make your way to our guardian and take the slip from him, drop it in the box."

He pointed at the Rank-9 robot with a wooden box placed on a table; beside the box, there were slips of white paper.

The clear difference in the treatment of the two sections enraged many bidders on the ground floor.

As they were already informed prior to the auction that shouting or using foul language is prohibited in the house and they could just go at any time, some of them got up and started leaving already in fury. Their money, unfortunately, didn't get refunded.

A portion of them didn't get up, not just because of the pride but it is also because of the fact that they didn't think they would be able to win any of those items. Some of them are also here to watch the fun. Of course, a few adventurers are also there to mentally note down the names of the winners so that they can rob them afterward.

Fun fact, only three people on the ground floor managed to win an item so far. Most of the items were bagged by those rich elites sitting on the first floor.

As a result, less than ten people swallowed up their pride and walked to the robot to take the slip and pen, writing their bid, and dropping into the box.

Within 1 hour, many proposals came to Mark, and he engaged in discussion with Sylvandria on choosing the correct bid.

And within 15 minutes, the discussion was over and Mark sent back his decision to Chang Bo.

Chang Bo looked at the result and his eyes widened in surprise. Xie Mei, who was standing beside him silently, couldn't help but lean her head to the side and look at the scroll.

She let out a gasp, "seriously? These were the best bids?"

"Well, at least, the last one is worth it. Don't you think?" Chang Bo replied, to which the 17-year-old shook her head, "You don't understand how powerful a heaven-grade divine item is, don't you?"

Chang Bo shrugged his shoulders in response, "Well, it doesn't matter anyway. Let's do our job."

Xie Mei nodded and took the scroll. She then took a deep breath, raising her head and announcing it with a smile, enhancing her beauty, "For item no. 3, the augmented pill of strength, the winning bid is..."

Chapter 552: Mark's second annual auction (part-2)

Trying to build up suspense, Xie Mei paused for a couple of seconds and announced, "Earth-grade artifact, the Pagoda of Shennong. Congratulations, Adventurer Ryu Fang."

"Eh? An earth grade artifact?" Several nobles and princes on the first floor got up immediately; some of them had surprised looks while some of them had angry looks.

One particular guest broke the auction rules by shouting, "What's this, Lord Lu?" Everyone's attention was shifted to the source of the shout. It's King Yan of the Leon Empire, invited by King Shen Niu.

Unlike in other empires where there are provinces and lords or governors, the Leon Empire is comprised of 8 vassal states and the imperial city.

The rulers of 8 vassal states were titled Kings, who could maintain their own army and govern their land as they wished. The premise is that those army generals were appointed by the Emperor and there is a 20% mandatory tax payment to the palace.

While these vassal states are ruled by the same dynasty, who will become the king will be decided by the imperial palace, not the current rulers.

Yan Shengli was not just a ruler. He is a warrior in the legendary realm, the son-in-law of the current emperor, and very influential to the extent of changing a policy implemented by the palace.

Despite thinking of himself as higher than Shen Niu, he still accepted the invitation and came to the ceremony to meet Mark and see if he could fix a marriage alliance for his daughter, who was also accompanied along but was secretly gazing at Prince Feng Wu of Western Yan instead of Mark.

Seeing that her father didn't like the behavior of the weapon seller, feeling insulted to the extent of raising his voice against what seemed like an unfair bid, Princess Yan Jianxin clenched her fist and tried to suppress her smile.

As Mark furrowed his brows in displeasure and looked at him, King Yan continued to speak, "I offered a Sky-grade artifact for the pill. How could you choose an earth-grade artifact over mine? Or is it that you have already made the deal beforehand and was fooling us?"

A moment of silence filled the hall. His voice sounded thunderous as if he was extremely enraged. Some thought he was overreacting; some wondered what will the weapon seller do, now; and some wondered whether the allegations were true...

Amidst several gazes filled with various opinions, Mark got up on his feet and answered with a firm gaze on the guest, "A high-quality item isn't necessarily better than lower quality item. Its usage is more important, King Yan. A person of your status should have already known that. What I have been offered by Adventurer Ryu is far more valuable than yours or anyone else' for that matter.

It wasn't an unfair decision." As King Yan's face reddened in shame, Mark took a brief pause and added, "And please do maintain the decorum of the auction house. Pointless ugly arguments would not only waste our time but also tarnish our own dignity. Please take your seat and let our host continue with the proceedings."

King Yan furiously sat down, after observing some laughs from fellow nobles. "I will teach him a lesson. Who does he think..." As he gritted in teeth, his loyal General leaned his head to the side and whispered, "My King, that pale lady with pointy ears sitting beside him is someone not even His Majesty dares to offend. Don't forget the fact that he had two more demigods on his side.

Who knows how many supreme realm experts are there behind him? Lu Zhen is like a sleeping volcano. Don't make him erupt unnecessarily. Or else, our whole kingdom might vanish in the span of a night. Isn't that the main reason why no one dared to reject his invitation and came from even as far as the Xiezhì Empire?"

At once, King Yan realized his folly, and sweat beads appeared on his forehead instantly. As his servant brought a handkerchief on a platter, he couldn't help but mumble, "Let's forget this matter. It's best if I don't marry off my daughter to a person who won't be able to face any accountability for his actions."

"Really?" The girl's eyes lit up and she couldn't stop her chuckling as she snatched away the handkerchief from the servant and wiped off her father's sweat on her forehead, "Papa, you made a wise decision. But, it would be a waste to return empty-handed.

Isn't it better to form relations with a kingdom, that has its own place in this United Celestial Dominion but is weak enough to be controlled by us?"

"Hmm? What are you saying?" King Yan furrowed his brows, upon hearing the words of his daughter.

She was startled and pointed her finger at her mom, who was sitting beside her, "Mother suggested that. Not me."

"Eh?" King Yan's wife was taken aback at first but taking a glance at her daughter, she nodded, "Yeah, I think Emperor Shang Wei is a great match for our daughter."

"No..." The girl reacted quickly before her father gave his opinion on that. She further added, "Grandfather is interested in marrying off cousin Liufen to that Shang Wei. If she marries him first, she will become the Empress. I don't want to listen to the orders of that arrogant b*tch. I would rather marry Prince Feng than Shang Wei..."

"Prince Feng?" King Yan startled for a second before going into deep thought. Little did he know that his upcoming decision would soon change the map of the invincible Leon Empire forever.

Meanwhile, back at the auction, a hooded woman came out of the crowd and walked to the stage, handing over a prism-shaped locket to Chang Bo. The welpire raised his head to look in the direction of Mark, who gave his nod. Only after that did he give the pill to the mysterious adventurer.

Once she had taken her seat, Xie Mei looked at the scroll and then at the audience to announce loudly, "For item no. 2, the Peak Potion, the winning bid is the seed of light. Congratulations Adventurer Xu Shan."

Once again, the entire house filled with shock, this time as the hooded woman got up from her and started walking to the stage.

"What's going on here?" Everyone had the same thought.

Chapter 553: Mark's second annual auction (part-3)

Amidst curious gazes, as she reached the stage, Chang Bo voiced out his doubt in place of the spectators, "I'm sorry but aren't you Miss Ryu Fang?"

The lady let out a smirk under her hood as she replied, "Is there any rule that I can't use fake names? Also, what is in the name anyway? Do you pick the bids using the names or the items they put forth for the trade?"

An elemental seed is a rare thing, sought by every adventurer, but its value depends on the person. For some, it is useless, and for some, it is priceless. For example, the seed of fire turned out to be a fortune for Shang Wei.

But, what about the seed of light?

If one doesn't have a light attribute or bloodline unrelated to a light attribute beast, the seed of light will give healing powers to the consumer.

Hence, the guests were torn between worth and worthless... Well, since Mark already informed earlier that he wouldn't see the item's price but how much value it will be, to him. So, people are cool with it.

But, more than that, they were surprised to see the fact that one uninvited unnamed adventurer who is in the legendary realm managed to bag both of the top items.

Anyways, what's over is over. They no longer paid attention to the earlier matter as Xie Mei raised the scroll once again.

The following item is the main attraction of the auction and everyone did their best bid to win this.

"Finally, the top 1 and the last item of the auction, the Sword of Light. The winning bid for this item is 50 earth-grade divine items. Congratulations, Adventurer Long Juan. Ah, you can't be serious..." Xie Mei blurted out in shock.

Not just her, this time, every spectator also rose to their feet, as it was the same hooded woman who walked to the stage leisurely while swaying her hips.

As she reached the stage, Xie Mei asked in disbelief, "Why is it you again? Who are you?"

"Just a nameless adventurer," replied the woman as she tossed the storage ring. Chang Bo, however, didn't outrightly hand over the sword to her. Instead, he left the stage and went through the backdoor before rushing to Mark's room for confirmation.

In the meantime, a figure put his hands behind him and spoke loud, although in a calm manner, "Okay, that's it. I'm out of this place without any ethics..." The familiar voice made Mark turn his head to look in the direction of the source, only to find the vice president/second-in-command of the Merchant guild, Wang Ming.

Merchant Guild might not have a great presence because of the fact that individual wealthy merchants occupy almost 30% of the market, but he sure has a great reputation among the masses as every rookie who wanted to be a merchant usually joins the guild to gain experience.

While they hand missions regularly, the Merchant guild is more known as a Business school than a guild.

One can imagine what kind of contacts this Vice President could have. And right now, he seemed offended the most.

Mark shouldn't have cared about it either, as he could even meet the President if he wanted. But, the guest's comment at the end displeased him.

As if that wasn't enough, a few noble guests also seemed to be turning around and leaving their respective rooms.

Feeling insulted by their actions, he made his move, publicly displaying his arrogance for the first time in months. "Syl, stop them."

Sylvandria's demigod aura erupted from her body and filled the house. The ones who are seated aren't affected at all. But, the ones who got up felt enormous pressure on their body. Some of them collapsed right to their chairs while some were forced to their knees.

At once, fear spread among the guests as Mark got up and walked to the edge of the balcony. His gaze was cold and his attention was currently on the old man, who was slowly rising to his feet after the removal of the pressure, "Ethics? Mr.

Wang, I repeatedly warned you not to make a scene, and yet, you people are taking advantage of the fact that you are guests and spouting whatever words came to your mouth without taking our dignity into consideration at all. Since you want to leave so badly, you may leave as you wish.

But, remember from now onwards, any merchant belonging to your guild has no right to conduct business using our firearms."

Some people let out a gasp of surprise, while some stayed silent. Some became serious but didn't voice out their thoughts due to the demigod's presence. King Yan's legs shivered uncontrollably after being experienced the power of a demigod in person. It happened only for two seconds but as someone in the legendary realm, he could understand it more than anyone else in the room.

On the other hand, Wang Ming didn't seem intimidated by Mark's warning. He straightened his sleeves and let out a snort as he slowly walked away, "As if merchants are lining up to buy firearms from you.

Your sales are as dim as a light comes from a single firefly." After commenting in response to the warning, he thought to himself, "I will make sure no one even sells your firearms outside your kingdom. Having strength isn't everything in the world."

"Hmpf, you just wait old man. Soon, the entire continent will flip down," muttered Mark under his breath, staring at Wang Ming's back before sitting down in his chair, again.

Looking at the others who are unsure whether to leave or not, Mark addressed them, "I thank everyone who attended the auction, some of you even traveled here from far away. As a token of appreciation..."

Clap Clap*

Once again, the servants rushed out together with a platter in their hands, although there wasn't food placed on it.

Instead, there was a shining semi-automatic handgun with ten 9mm bullets placed neatly on the side. There was also a scroll accompanying the weapon, with instructions written on it.

For the VIP guests on the first floor, a rifle gun and fifty bullets in a box were provided as complementary. Of course, the scroll with guidelines is a must.

Chapter 554: The mysterious island

The afternoon passed away with most of them started returning to their homes while some with another agenda continued to stay at the palace as guests.

There were a few people who wanted to talk to Mark, but he wasn't even there at the palace to meet them. The siblings were spotted by the guards, as they were leaving the palace alongside the mysterious woman in the hood by riding on the top of flying dark horses.

Together, they traveled for half a day at least without stopping at any location, until they reached an island located in the middle of the ocean, thousands of kilometers away from any mainland.

At one glance, the island doesn't look much different from others. It's a tropical island filled with palm trees at the edge of a thick forest and sandy beaches here and there, etc...

However, when Mark scanned the place using his Eyes of God skill, he saw a mysterious barrier around the island.

Upon entering that barrier, Mark found the change of scenery. Instead of a forest, there were a bunch of large towers and pyramids located on barren land; all of them screamed of ancient structures.

One of such structures particularly attracted both of their attention. It was a stone tablet with mysterious writings.

Shang Jiao couldn't help but point at it, just as Mark was about to ask it too, "What was that?"

The hooded woman shook her head, "Even we have no idea about it. The language is indecipherable."

As they passed by the stone tablet, Mark took a good look at it to commit to his memory to think of it later and continued to observe the surroundings.

"We call these Ancient Mystical Towers or some call it Elemental towers too," The hooded woman started explaining the structures around them, "Fire and Ice, Water, Earth and Metal, Lightning and thunder, Wind, Light and Dark, Space, and unknown. All of these towers existed for thousands of years, long before we discovered this place.

We explored everything but the central one, which doesn't give us access. We had a theory though. As for those pyramids, it was constructed by us. Each pyramid is dedicated to our past leader."

"What do these towers contain exactly?" Shang Jiao couldn't help but ask.

The mysterious woman answered, "They are the pathways to other planes. Each tower will take you to a different plane of existence, although the location isn't fixed. There's a 99% chance of ending up in a world ruled by spirit beasts. The Space tower will randomly send you to a habitable world within our plane."

"and that unknown..." The princess pointed at the central tower and commented, "I guess that is connected to the immortal plane or celestial plane?"

The hooded woman shook her head, "Our predecessors assumed the same first but over the years, we have discovered that the leaking out of that unknown tower had energy similar to the one that binds us to the land. Hence, our assumption is that it is connected to a forbidden realm, like some kind of prison that holds evil souls."

"Hmm?" Mark couldn't help but furrow his brows in deep thinking as a memory came to his head, "Is it the same Void realm, the place that mage came from? The origin of the unnamed box?" He wondered.

Soon, they reached a structure that looked like an incomplete pyramid. Through dimly lit corridors and stairs, they changed directions several times before reaching an altar with the statue of a wingless dragon trying to eat its tail, which was surprisingly levitating in the air.

"It's the Void Serpent God, our principal deity," said the woman, raising her head to look at the beast.

"It looked quite similar to Ouroboros though," thought Mark, scanning its details. Obviously, the name wasn't displayed, but he found out one interesting thing. "Is this the entrance to that place?" He couldn't help but ask, pointing his finger at it.

"Oh, you managed to see it? I wasn't wrong about you, after all," A smile bloomed on the woman's face under the hood. "So, are you ready to get in?" She asked.

Mark simply looked at her and replied, "Yes, but I don't understand why there is a need to hide your identity. Out with it, Miss Xin." Mark followed by reaching out to her hood and lowering it down. She didn't resist it too and revealed her face to them.

Shang Jiao never met her. Hence, she wasn't that unfazed by her. However, Mark looked a bit displeased, "is there a reason why you use different identities to buy them?"

"Then, people would know that I was related to Void Temple," replied the woman. She looked back straight into Mark's eyes, turning serious, "You killed the Werewolf Lord and our Matriarch, and that divided our organization into several factions with everyone wanting to claim the throne. It gave me a window of opportunity to steal our treasury to make a deal with you.

When the news of fifty earth-grade divine weapons used to get traded in your auction reaches the temple, they will eventually figure out the truth and probably start hunting me down. Before that happens, I need to reach the Supreme Being stage and claim the leadership."

She then took out the strength stat pill she won in the auction and handed it to him, "I need the other pill that you promised me."

"Okay," Mark nodded and threw the pill into his inventory before taking out the intelligence stat pill that would help her. However, before handing it over to her, he warned, "I need to remind you that it is best to be taken when you reach the peak stage of the legendary realm, which you haven't reached yet."

"I know," Xin Rui nodded in agreement. She then pointed her finger at Shang Jiao, "Your sister here will help me. She has managed to inherit the Orb of Time from the spirit of this world. Once we remove the curse on her, I'll help her learn how to master it and in return, she helps me by using that power to create a time dimension for me, where the time runs extremely slower."

"I see" Mark nodded and then cast a sidelong glance at his sister. The latter also reacted positively, "I understand." Seeing that, Mark inwardly sighed in relief and spoke, "Anyway, let's get moving."

Chapter 555: Honorary Alliance

Xin Rui took out an exquisite staff adorned with gems and had a cobra on the top, which seemed quite lively as its tongue was moving forth and retracted back while its eyes were blinking in a scarlet glow.

"A celestial-grade weapon?" Mark raised his eyes, observing the woman. "It looked like she stole many more things than she admits. Anyways, it is not my problem."

She then raised the staff toward the levitating statue. The serpent shot a ray of beams from its eyes and struck the hollow part of the statue. Suddenly, the statue reacted by turning the hollow part into a portal in a dark background.

"Follow me..." She jumped right in.

Mark and his sister took a look at each other before following her into the portal.

While the siblings of Ice attribute ventured into the land of the unknown, at the Lunaris City, a few things happened in their absence.

First of all, King Yan fixed a marriage alliance with Feng Wu and his daughter.

Secondly, the Acting Emperor of the Qilin Empire also put forth a marriage proposal, which was between his eldest son who is still 15, and Princess Shang Jiao. However, Shang Fu mildly rejected the proposal, stating that Shang Jiao is too young at the moment.

While it ended up in failure, the Prince/acting emperor of Ming managed to strike a deal with Shen Niu instead.

Perhaps, he managed to sense Mark's future move when the latter warned the merchant guild's vice president. Or perhaps, he knew about the giant factory on Fujian island. Or maybe, it is because of the demigods. Or was it because of Mark's assertive behavior during the auction?

Whatever reason might be the case, the Qilin Empire and the United Celestial Dominion drew up a pact of friendship, in which, the Qilin Empire would be a part of the alliance as an honorary member.

However, what it required was acknowledgment from the Council of Kings.

After a brief discussion between Shen Niu and Ming Xianzhi, the King of Western Moon put forth the proposition of an honorary membership for the Qilin Empire.

Luckily, the other kings and emperors were still staying as guests at the palace. Hence, the decision was taken quickly.

As if Ming Xianzhi knew how the Genesis Cabinet works, he even brought up the required terms and conditions too.

Unlike the permanent member, the terms were slightly different for this honorary member.

Being an honorary member, the Qilin Empire's representative can participate in the Council of Kings' meetings and share their opinions but doesn't have the power of voting. However, they can send one permanent representative to the Genesis Cabinet, which makes the laws.

Unlike the permanent members who pay 40% tax, the Qilin Empire will pay a fixed amount of 50,000 gold coins each quarterly as tax. In return, the Empire will have military protection of the alliance, which includes a demigod.

This demigod is neither Sylvandria nor the Zheng. It isn't even Lan Jingyi. It's Eol who is in the body of Fu Sheng, leading his troop as Fu Sheng too, and making it an exclusive army of the Cabinet.

To win everyone's trust even more, the Prince of the Ming Dynasty, representing his father as the acting Emperor, also revealed an important secret of their research on teleportation formation. He proposed making a joint research team, which will focus on building teleportation formations in each capital city so that it becomes much easier to travel between the member states of the alliance.

Perhaps, some of the members aren't satisfied with Mark's behavior in the auction. Or perhaps, they genuinely wanted to expand the group and feared that Mark wouldn't accept it.

Hence, in Mark's absence, the Kings influenced their representatives to fast-track the procedures. Within two days, the acting Genesis Cabinet's president, Shao Ping, the representative of the Western Moon kingdom, made the announcement of inducting the Qilin Empire into the alliance.

One week later;

Song Mansion, Lunaris City;

While Little Lu Shan was peacefully sleeping in his cradle and guarded by a couple of rank-9 robots, and secretly, a rank-10 robot that mostly stays hidden, Song Yue found herself in the special training room in the mansion, although one could say she was dragged by Sylvandria without her consent.

Forcing her to sit on the floor, the former elven priestess sat before her and spoke in a serious tone so that the human pay attention to her words.

"Look, Sister Yue. I know that you are safe with everyone around and you don't actually need any training. But, it was never about getting strong. You cannot ignore the fact that Xiao Shan was born with the chaos element due to the remnants of the Chaos energy inside you. Lu Zhen didn't have the element and probably would have no idea how to train the element.

So, you should be the one who needs to teach him or else, who knows what kind of disaster the child brings, if kept uncontrolled..."

Sylvandria's words felt like a jolt to Song Yue that had passed through her entire body and made her shiver for a second. She couldn't help but ask in curiosity, "Is Chaos element that powerful?"

The elf let out a deep sigh, "Powerful? It's one of the most powerful elements in the universe. With a thought in your mind, you could just transform a tree into a forest, and a block of brick into a mansion. You could manipulate reality to any extent and alter the laws of nature. It is why Chaos is considered the enemy of Gods, who don't like disorder.

Lu Zhen could probably protect his family from even immortals. But, the Heavenly Palace is entirely a different question. The Gods can wipe out this entire world with a snap of their fingers."

"Eh?" Song Yue's curiosity turned into fear with her face going pale and her eyes widened, "will the gods punish my child?" She herself knows that it is a ridiculous thought but being a mother, she couldn't help but become concerned about the possibilities.

"Nothing to worry, a mere child wouldn't come into their vision," replied the elf, patting Song Yue's shoulder before continuing, "But, you can see Lu Shan is only one month old and he is already at the intermediate stage of 2-circle. We don't know how powerful he even become in the future.

Hence, it is important that you become more proficient in mastering your element so that it becomes easier to either train him in the future or suppress his powers in case of an accident."

Song Yue took two seconds to digest what this elf was trying to say and she nodded firmly, "I understand. Please take care of me."

"That goes without saying," Sylvandria let out an amiable smile, wiping off her earlier serious expression and straightening her back, "For now, let's meditate. We focus on ether energy control before moving to the elemental control."

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Meanwhile, on the other side of the planet, Mark appeared at what appeared like a sea bed with a bubble-like barrier covering him. The surroundings were so dark that none of them could see anything.

Before they even get to wonder where they are, a voice is heard in the surroundings, "Oh, there are two mortals apart from my apostle? Hmm... the aura of Blizzard Pegasus? Interesting... Fine, I will grace you with my presence. But, before that, you two have to prove your worth. Here we go, good luck..."

Snap

Followed by the sound of the snap of a finger, Mark's surroundings were once again changed, finding himself in the middle of an endless barren land with undead skeletons slowly rising from the ground.

Chapter 556: The trial of Yuanlong (part-1)

"Hateful moooortallll..." roared the Undead King as its core behind the strong ribcage was destroyed with an ice arrow.

Followed by the disappearance of the undead, Mark dropped to his knees as his vision blurred. He took heavy breaths with sweat covering his entire body.

"Ha..." "Ha..." "Ha..."

"It's just a fuc*ing 9-circle one and yet, so exhausting... cough cough"

From the start of the trial, Mark has been fighting against the swarm of the undead for almost 6 hours straight before he finally faces off with the undead king who is virtually immortal without the destruction of its core.

While the undead were weak individually, there were mages hidden in those thousands of undead that could buff them up and even revive them constantly. On the other hand, there is a law placed on this place where his ether energy recovery rate is null. Even his inventory space was locked by the law, prohibiting him from taking out any robots or weapons to use against the undead.

For a noncombatant like Mark, it proved to be one of the worst nightmares he ever faced in his life. Even the Saint Realm expert probably gave him less headache than this mere test given by Ouroboros.

However, the test isn't over yet.

As the undead king fell, Mark received a voice from the sky, congratulating him on winning the trial but due to his underperformance, it spoke there will be another trial to prove his worthiness. He got six hours of break for the next trial and the laws removed so that he may recover his ether energy and stamina.

Mark couldn't help but curse a thousand times as he lay on the ground to rest.

"Damn, I should have just gone to the Netherworld instead and tried my luck with Demon King Bael instead. He would have given me the appropriate solution to save my sis.

No, this is the fault of Xin Rui.

Just you wait, bi*ch. Once I come out of this, I will skin you alive... Calm down, Mark. Save your energy. Who knows what kind of trial the next one will be..."

As he took a nap and slowly drifted into dreamland, a figure materialized in the sky, a cute-looking rabbit that wore clothes and a top hat. The rabbit had a frown on its face as it mumbled, "I don't see anything special in this mortal. Why is her grace interested in him?" After a brief pause, it stretched his hands toward the ground, "regardless, it's an order from her grace.

Let's do the job and return."

Its palms glowed, shooting a beam of silvery-white light and striking Mark while he was still asleep. He didn't feel anything amiss as it didn't hurt him at all.

Roughly around an hour later, Mark slowly opened his eyes and stretched his body, "Man... that was a good sleep. I wonder how long it passed."

"Ark, how much time do I have?" He asked in his head.

*Ding! 54 minutes have passed, Master. Based on the time you set beforehand, there are still 5 hours, and 3 minutes left till the next trial.

"Eh? Only an hour has passed?" A trace of surprise filled Mark's eyes. "I thought I slept for a long time. Should I sleep again? Hmm... how about just spending the time? Let's just do that."

He sat up in a lotus position and opened the recorded tab. There was a 5 hours 42 minutes video recorded as the latest one. It is the battle video recorded by the artificial intelligence, through Mark's eyes.

Mark scrolled down the list of videos.

After scrolling down enough, he clicked on the video from one month ago.

Soon, the video opened on the holographic screen, which expanded to a 100-inch screen as ordered by Mark.

The video displayed Song Yue sitting on the bed with her back against the headboard; there was a baby lying in her arms smiling as he waved his tiny hands.

It immediately brought a smile to Mark's face, "Lu Shan..."

Five hours later;

"wuwuwu..."

"Argh... so hateful. He only makes such sounds in Changbo's hands. Why not me? Is it because he is welpire, I wonder."

For the past five hours, Mark immersed completely in watching all those little moments he had with little Lu Shan from his birth, often commenting about this and that. He lost track of time, caught up in cherished memories.

Just as he reliving another cherished memory, a voice suddenly echoed from the sky, jolting him back to reality. "Time for your second trial, mortal. Prepare yourself."

"Ah, it's already been 5 hours? Time really passed quickly." Mark closed down the screen and got up.

A couple of minutes later, the surroundings changed to beautiful scenery; he was standing almost at the edge of a cliff, watching snowcapped mountains far away with their peaks covered by clouds, endless grassland beneath the cliff with a river stream flowing in the middle, and numerous animals and birds were seen in their habitats, minding their own business.

Mark knew that his surroundings were nothing more than an illusion but he couldn't help but appreciate the beauty of nature and also felt peace in his heart just by looking at the scenery.

His mood was once again destroyed by the voice from the sky, giving him a mission, "It's time to put your perception to the test, mortal. I'm sure you are aware that everything before your eyes is nothing more than an illusion and yet, your heart and mind don't wish for you to come of out it. You pass this trial when you manage to see the reality of this place. Good luck."

"Eh? That's it?" Mark was stumped by the task given by the voice from the sky.

He couldn't help but chuckle and laugh out loud for a few seconds, "Man, here I thought it was going to be another tiring challenge."

"Ark, open skills list"

Mark scrolled down a bit and clicked on the skill that wouldn't cost him a bit or have any cooldown time period.

*Ding! Eyes of Truth skill has been activated, Master.

During the past few months, Mark did work out on Eyes of God, with the help of artificial intelligence.

Through this, he created a couple of skills, more like variations of the skill.

One of them is the Eyes of Truth which focuses more on illusions.

As Mark's eyes glowed, the scenery before him changed, instantly revealing the truth.

The beautiful snowcapped mountains changed to erupting volcanoes, the grassland changed to dark land with cracks everywhere, and the river streams changed to Lava Rivers. As for the animals and birds, they changed to fire-type demonic beasts. Roars of the beasts filled the entire area as if they were either in deep agony or in rage, forcing Mark to shut his ears.

Fortunately, it only lasted a moment before everything came to a standstill and the voice returned once again. "That fast? Now, this is something I haven't expected mortal. It looks like while you lacked strength, your perception in distinguishing reality and illusion is indeed unprecedented. No wonder, you are favored by Milady.

But, it is still a surprise that you could break the illusion in a matter of seconds. To see through this illusion, one should be above the..."

Mark raised his head to look at the clear sky and interrupted the speech given by the voice, "I'm sorry but can we proceed with the next trial, mister? You can spare me all of those praises once I am done with it." His voice had a hint of impatience and his face looked all serious.

"Mister?" The mysterious being appeared as if he was surprised for a second before letting out a chuckle of amusement, "It's been the first time one addressed me that way. Fine, everything is the will of the Three Pure ones."

Followed by the muting of his voice, the surroundings once again changed. The landscape returned to the barren land. But, the opponent is slightly different.

A shadowy figure appeared in front of Mark's eyes.

"Defeat yourself and it will be the end of tests," The voice told him as Mark's opponent slowly took the appearance of Mark.

Everything is an exact copy of Mark from head to toe, except for its eyes, which are scarlet in color with no visible pupils.

"Good luck..."

As soon as the voice from the sky ended, heavy gravitational suppression appeared in the area, all of a sudden.

Mark was instantly forced to his knees; his eyes widened his realization, "Gravity Dome."

Chapter 557: The trial of Yuanlong (part-2)

The release of a hundred times gravity in the surroundings forced Mark to his knees and before he got to counterattack, Mark's copy charged forward like lightning and gave a kick to his chin.

"Gravity Dome, activate." Mark hollered at the top of his lungs to hinder his copy's movements and also hoped to be free from the suppression.

*Ding! Skill launch has failed.

However, the result was a failure.

"Why?" this was the thought of Mark as his vision blurred while the kick was connected, sending him fly away tens of meters backward. Pain radiated from his chin and blood trickled down his lips, but he gritted his teeth and tried to push himself up, with his muscles straining against the crushing gravity. However, it was to no avail, for he could only barely lift his head.

When his eyes met his copy, the latter was seen smirking, "Is that all you've got?" the copy taunted him further.

Wiping off the blood on his lips, Mark shouted inside his head, "Ark, what happened?" he couldn't help but ask the artificial intelligence for the answer. After all, this was the first time he ever saw the failure of skill launch, especially when it was done by either the system or the A.I.

Ding! The graviton particles in the surroundings are under the control of the enemy. Master needs greater mastery to take back control.

"Greater mastery?" Mark's facial expression became ugly when saw the notification. Forget about greater mastery, he doesn't even have an ounce of mastery to launch the skill on his own as he could do with Bloodline skills, for he always activated it with the help of the system.

He also knew that the Gravity Dome wasn't altering the planet's gravitational force. It's manipulating graviton particles in the air, making them heavier or lighter at the user's will. Someone activating the skill means they're controlling these graviton particles within a certain range.

It made perfect sense that without superior mastery, he couldn't wrest control back.

Hence, he had to think of another method.

Meanwhile, his copy conjured a bunch of ice spears and charged forward.

Having no other choice, Mark conjured his Blizzard wings from the back and used them to cover him up for defense while thinking of a solution.

ting *Ting* Ting* ting* ting*

The copy attacked Mark with the icy spears one after another but Mark's wings managed to block each and every one of them with its superior durability.

This gave him enough time for an idea to pop up in his head and he asked, "Ark, if you take control of my mind, could you do it?"

*Ding! It is not possible for me to take back control from him. However, I can negate it. But, that also means the master cannot activate the skill in the meantime.

"Dammit... Fine," Mark gritted his teeth. He couldn't let his copy win. Summoning his determination, he focused on the faint tingle of his power. He had trained for this. His mastery might not be greater, but he had one advantage—Ark.

"Ark, synchronize with my neural output and take control," Mark commanded.

"Understood. Synchronizing now."

A surge of energy flowed through Mark, and he felt a heightened awareness of the gravitons around him. His muscles strained, but this time, he felt a slight give into the oppressive force.

*Ding! Synchronized. The change in the density of gravitons is no longer effective on the master.

Suddenly, Mark felt lighter than ever. "I wonder if others might have also felt like this, whenever I used this skill on them and remove it later. Anyway, let's get back to the fight."

His copy's eyes widened in surprise as Mark slowly rose to his feet. "Impossible!" it hissed.

With a focused burst of energy, Mark jumped forward throwing his fist at his copy's cheek.

The copy gave a glance to the incoming punch and stayed on the spot, getting hit on his cheek; his gaze was fixed on Mark and he had a smirk on his face as the fist couldn't even budge his face, "It's futile, Shang Zhen. You should know your body the best. There is no way such a weak punch could actually hurt me."

"Hmm?" A trace of surprise appeared on Mark. "Shang Zhen?" The copy tightened his fist too and gave a punch to Mark's face at blurring speeds.

Pow

His nose became bloody and crooked as he flew back and crashed a hundred meters away. "Argh..." He groaned in pain.

The copy slowly started walking toward him.

It was then Mark suddenly started laughing with his gaze on the sky, "Everything now made sense." *Clap* Clap* *Clap*

"Hmm, did he go crazy or something?" Mark's copy wondered aloud before he charged forward, reached his opponent in a jiffy, and jumped high, landing on Mark's stomach with a knee strike.

"Ugh..." *cough* cough*

Mark coughed out a mouthful of blood and collapsed down. His gaze met with his counterpart, who looked down at him. Mark laughed once again.

"What's funny?" His copy asked with a frown on his face.

Mark replied, "Here I thought it was going to be a battle against myself. But, it doesn't look that way. Earlier, you addressed me as Shang Zhen. That's the biggest mistake you have made, impostor."

"Hmm?" The frown on copy deepened, "Whether you wish to agree or not, this is the birth name your parents gave you."

"If you want to pretend like me, tell me what this is." Mark raised his hand and gave a middle finger to the copy.

The copy tilted its head in confusion, "It's missing the storage ring you wore a while ago."

"I knew it." Mark's smile widened further as he proved his hypothesis. He strengthened it more as he spoke in English this time, "It means FU*K YOU, you idiot. Haha, can you follow what I am saying right now? I don't think you do, bas*ard."

The confusion on the copy's face increased even more. "I don't recognize the language you are speaking."

Mark took his confused state to his advantage and spoke in his head, "Activate Singularity."

Singularity formed in the middle of his palms, generating infinite gravitational force to suck the target into it.

"Wha..." Before the copy understood what was going on, he was sucked into Mark's palm; the latter then spoke, "Deactivate the skill, Ark."

The singularity was about to form a black hole but instead disappeared as if it didn't exist in the first place.

*Ding! Singularity has been deactivated. The target has been destroyed.

*Ding! All functions have been unlocked.

This is a spatial skill Mark accidentally created in the elf world when he lost his memories, almost destroying the world in the process, and was saved by the system in the end.

Originally, the skill should have been activated in this controlled manner. As that is unleashed without the system's assistance, the true singularity was created back then.

"Okay, now that the matter is settled, it is time to meet the god or whatever divine beast that wanted to test me." Mark rose to his feet, taking out a bottle of water from the inventory and cleaning his mouth.

As a result of the trial's end, a giant portal, similar to the one at the temple he used to get to this place, appeared not far away from Mark.

As he turned his head to look at the portal, two figures exited it.

One was tall, with a muscular build, wearing silver armor, with a giant broadsword that was as big as him hanging on his back. The other one was a small and cute white rabbit with jade green eyes, wearing clothes and a top hat; it was seen flying alongside.

Mark instantly acted his Eyes of God to get their basic details. Instantly, a frown appeared on his face, "Li and Yutu, the servants of the Moon goddess? I thought it was linked to that Ouroboros-looking kinda thing."

Chapter 558: Chang'e, the Moon goddess

Species: Human

Age: 3000+

Rank: 11-circle (peak-stage)

Spirit path: Swordsman

Attribute: Ice, Divine

Bloodline: N/A

*

Species: Rabbit

Age: 10,000,000+

Rank: 12-circle

Attribute: Divine

Bloodline: The Jade Rabbit

*

Mark was more surprised with the fact that this cute-looking rabbit is a Saint-realm beast and even more absurd is that it is over 10 million years old.

"Is it immortal?" Mark couldn't help but wonder; his gaze was mostly fixed on the tiny thing that was flying beside the muscled warrior.

As they reached him, Mark calmly greeted them with a casual bow, "Hello."

The man returned the greetings with a nod and introduced himself, "I'm Li, the chief of the celestial lunar guards."

"Yutu, Milady's personal assistant"

The rabbit's behavior made it seem like it was annoyed and also looked down on Mark. The latter wondered whether it was because it was in the Saint realm.

Mark bowed to them once again as their information was updated, "Nice to meet you, I'm Lu Zhen."

The rabbit then spoke, "You know we were watching you from the beginning. Your energy reserves don't even reach up to the basic mark that our maids in the palace have. However, your body could take hits. Your magic attacks are abnormal and could even rival this man's power, but you don't know how to utilize it properly.

Milady wants to ask you how you saw through the illusion when you are a mortal who has yet to lose his materialistic desires."

If it was the past Mark, he would have been by the rabbit's tone, but several things that happened during the past year changed him. Departure of the system, reconciling with his parents, his marriage to Song Yue, and becoming a dad; these things primarily had a huge influence on Mark's mind and he had become too soft enough to not mind such words from the rabbit.

In fact, he became even more understanding.

Mark looked at the rabbit and then spared a glance at the warrior beside him, "If your master wants the answer, I will answer to her directly."

The rabbit frowned and commented, "You are arrogant, mortal."

Mark put up his fake smile on his face and gave a cheeky reply, "I passed all of your trials. You must give me a room to be proud, mister."

The jade rabbit stared at Mark for a few seconds in silence and eventually let out a sigh, "Well, I have to follow orders anyway. Follow us."

"Wait, what about my sister?" asked Mark in a hurry.

The rabbit answered as it floated in the air, turning around, "She is still in trials. But, nothing to worry about, even if she fails, she won't die."

"Okay, that's good," Mark sighed in relief and followed the rabbit and the man who turned around.

As they reached the portal, he opened his mouth once again, "Just one last thing. Who is your master, by the way?"

"You will understand everything when you go there," replied the rabbit as it flew into the portal. Li, the warrior, then added his opinion, "I would give you a piece of advice though, Challenger Shang. Show your utmost courtesy in front of Her Majesty." He followed the rabbit into the portal.

"These two individuals sure love to put on airs, but then again, they have the strength to act that way. If they are the subordinates, I wonder how strong their master will be. Syl said one must be in God's realm to remove that curse on Xiao Jiao," Mark muttered under his breath before stepping inside the portal too.

The scenery changed once again; this time, he found himself in the middle of a grand hall, bathed in a soft, silvery-bluish glow that seemed to be emanating from the walls.

There is so much to describe the beauty of the grand hall but Mark's gaze was only fixed on one person, the lady with ethereal beauty.

Since Song Yue, he has never witnessed a beauty that could raise his heartbeat to such an extent.

Her hair is long, flowing, and lustrous. Her eyes are deep and enchanting. They have a serene, otherworldly quality, and when she gazes, it feels as if she can see into one's very soul. Her complexion is flawless and pale. It has a delicate, almost translucent quality that adds to her ethereal presence. Her beauty is timeless and otherworldly.

The woman wore flowing robes made of the finest silks; these robes were adorned with patterns of stars, moons, and celestial motifs, and they moved as if with a life of their own, gently floating around her.

She wore delicate jewelry crafted from gems that looked a bit like sapphire but Ark says it is an unknown element. These pieces are understated yet elegant, enhancing her natural beauty without overshadowing it.

She is also surrounded by a soft and radiant glow of the aura of divinity.

In both of his lives, Mark was confident that Song Yue was the perfect woman he ever saw up close.

But, when the Goddess came near him, he couldn't help but think that even his wife pales in comparison to her.

The Goddess walked up to him as the warrior and the rabbit went down to one of their knees while keeping their gaze on the floor. She eventually stopped, about five to six feet away.

Letting out a smile, she spoke, "Welcome to the Lunar Palace, mortal."

"Who... who are you?" Mark stuttered a little bit, reacting to her greetings. When he realized his folly, he hurriedly bowed, "I'm sorry. I mean, I haven't heard of your identity, Your Grace." He tried to be as polite and formal as he could. It was quite hard for him, who was used to ordering everyone or speaking casually.

After all, this is an entity that has the power to destroy an entire planet at will. Even if he uses everything he has, he won't be able to kill her. Hence, he had to be courteous as he was advised. Moreover, on the way, she experienced how even his inventory was locked. Who knows what powers she might have?

The Goddess let out a giggle but covered her mouth with her hand, "Relax, mortal. I'm not as strict as those gods who care about hierarchy. As for my identity, you can call me Chang'e. If it is too much, you can address me as 'Your grace' as everyone does."

The rabbit raised its eyes and took a glance at her master and thought, 'As if you don't care about hierarchy, you two-faced devil. You are famous for bullying your servants when they are not too courteous toward you and act as if you are the Jade Emperor.'

Its eyes then glance to the right to spot the mortal who was standing toe to toe against his master, 'I really wonder what's in this mortal that Milady was so interested about that she even pardoned him from the formalities, which she only does with other fellow deities of the heavenly palace.'

Mark raised his head to look at her directly and became dazed for a second before he controlled himself and cupped his fists with a bow, "If Your Grace is the one that I'm here for, then, I humbly request you to save my sister from the curse she got from a cosmic orb."

"The Orb of Time," commented the Goddess in response. "Yeah, I sensed it. It's not a problem."

"Then..." Mark looked at her hopefully.

However, the Goddess' following words caused turmoil in his heart, "But, we cannot just do favors on mortals. It goes against the code of the heavenly palace. A price needed to be paid."

"Price? What is it?" Mark didn't promise right away and asked her. He decided to reject the request if it involved his personal life. For example: working for her as a slave for a certain period of time, or something like that.

The Goddess then said, "You have to bring back Hou Yi's soul that was supposedly imprisoned in the Netherworld."

"Eh?"

Chapter 559: Chang'e and Houyi's back story

"It was the time when Emperor Ku ruled the world. Back then, there are no wars around. The beasts roamed the land freely while the humans lived in their settlements without the worry of any invasion.

I was born as the daughter of a noble and Houyi was born in a small village. Usually, we were born in different worlds that couldn't align with each other in any time period.

But, the sudden appearance of the Cosmic Orb of Malevolence plunged our Diqui realm into chaos. People became greedy. The nobles wanted to rule, the commoners wanted to hunt down the beasts to get stronger, and the dragons wanted to loot the people, ugh... that was a decade I couldn't forget even after a long time.

As the ancients often say, heroes rise in turbulent times, Houyi's talents as an archer made him well known all across the world over time; with blessings from Emperor Ku, he became the guardian of the world.

During this period, we met each other, fell in love, and became a married couple.

Just as we thought everything would come to an end, the Sun God gets corrupted for some reason and he multiplies nine times to surround our world, intending to destroy all life for some unknown reason.

Houyi accepted the emperor's plea and set out to save the world.

Armed with his celestial bow and magical arrows bestowed upon him by Emperor Ku, Houyi climbed to the peak of Kunlun Mountain, where he had a clear view of the ten suns.

With unmatched precision and strength, he shot down nine of the ten suns, leaving only one to provide light and warmth while taking all of that remnant energy into him to protect the world, almost dying in the process.

Impressed by his efforts, Xi Wangmu, the Queen Mother of the West and Jade Emperor's wife, gave him the elixir of immortality as a reward. Houyi could drink it and ascend to the heavens as an undying immortal but instead, he brought it back to our home to keep it safe.

He actually planned on using it to brew a magical elixir so that even a poor boy in a mountain village gets to enjoy long life spans with immunity to disease and extraordinary healing recovery. But, he wasn't an alchemist.

The only one he trusts to make such an elixir is the mighty Leviathan, which he had a contract with. Who could have expected his own summoning contract would betray him for the elixir?

Houyi and Leviathan fought for days and nights. They were heavily injured and Leviathan's army wanted to raid the world to acquire the elixir in the absence of the guardian.

To protect it from falling into the wrong hands, I had to drink all of the elixir and become immortal while my husband died due to injuries. But, the story doesn't end there.

That evil serpent dragged his body and soul back with it to the depths of the netherworld, a place where all the Deities, even the Jade Emperor, are vulnerable. On the other hand, as I assumed the post of the ruler of the moons, I'm stuck in this palace, not capable of leaving that place.

Thousands of years have passed and I was waiting to meet a warrior who could help me. And now, look at the coincidence, the one who I was waiting to meet ended up not only our descendant but also the one with a contract of a demon king.

If this is not fate, what else it is, mortal?"

"Wait... wait... wait..."

While Mark found the story very heart-touching, there was something else that disturbed him. "I'm your descendant?" He asked the Moon Goddess, Chang'e.

The Moon Goddess was pleasantly surprised by his question. "Of course," She nodded with a smile as she snapped her fingers.

Instantly, countless light particles conjured in front of Mark, transforming into the image of a couple; one looks similar, if not an exact copy of himself but in traditional warrior clothes and a bow, and the other is the graceful-looking moon goddess, who seemed unchanged at all, except for the divine aura.

Mark couldn't help but stare at the image. As a modern man, the first thought that came to him was, "Is this a photoshop?"

But then, he instantly put that silly thought away as there is no reason why a Goddess who is as strong as Bael would want to lie to him.

Her ethereal beauty also affected his mentality a lot. He just couldn't help but believe her words to his heart.

However, the main problem is still there and Mark had to point it out first.

"Okay, let's just assume that I'm really Houyi's descendant, Your Grace. But, I'm still not strong enough to go into the demon world to do your task. While I could still feel the connection with Bael, there is no guarantee that he will help me. Isn't it the same as committing suicide?" Cautious Mark didn't hesitate to put forth the facts as he didn't want to die and leave his wife and child behind.

In response, The Moon Goddess replied almost instantly as if she was prepared to answer his doubt, "I'm going to come with you. So, no worries."

"Huh?" Mark was taken aback by her response. "Didn't you earlier say that you are not capable of leaving?"

"Oh, I just have to appoint someone as my successor and I can leave. That's not a problem at all," replied Chang'e.

Mark couldn't help but furrow his brows, deeply thinking of everything that transpired so far. If that is the case, how come she has yet to do it? Why did she need him then? Perhaps, she has no way to enter the netherworld itself without an outsider's help. And she wants revenge against Leviathan?

There were a few questions in his head but Mark felt like it would be rude to ask her everything as it would seem like he was interrogating her.

But, at the same time, there is also an issue of security. If the air in the netherworld is poisonous to divine beings, Chang'e wouldn't be much of a help. Her cultivation might be suppressed to Saint Realm and she might not be a match for Bael.

So, is it necessary to take her with him?

After thinking thoroughly, Mark said, "I accept the task but under one condition." He bowed to her once again and cupped his fists, "Your Grace, I request you to heal my sister prior to our journey so that I get to be in peace."

"That goes without saying, mortal," Chang'e's smile continued to stay on her face as she further added, "After all, we need the power of her Cosmic Orb to defeat that evil monster. Before we go, I'll also help you enter the Demigod realm. Moreover, if you want to remove the Mark of the Queen Mother Goddess, branded on your soul, you would have to be in the Demigod realm.

Until we work on your issues, you can stay here as the guest."

"It was from the Queen Mother?" Mark's heart skipped a beat when he heard it. His eyes widened as he thought, 'No wonder the system said it doesn't have the power to erase the mark.'

"Thank you."

One day later;

In one of the gardens of the Moon Palace, Mark is seen meditating as Chang'e was personally helping him with the breakthrough.

Through her blessing of divine energy, his cells rapidly turned into ether particles, increasing their number every second.

In just an hour, they reached almost 1 billion in number, the bottleneck of the Supreme realm. Mark could feel a burst of energy inside his body. He could sense how strong he had become.

While he might have taken a shortcut to reach such a stage, Mark doesn't feel an ounce of shame for it. If it happens by luck, then, so be it. If it happens by taking the help of a third party, so be it.

As long as his goal is achieved, it is satisfying for him.

On the other hand, The Moon Goddess doesn't look good. She has a deep frown on her face as she continuously pours her divine essence into Mark's body, "Why? It's been absorbed but not being refined. There was a huge wall that even I couldn't break? Is this his limit? No, that cannot be.

He is the holder of the Blizzard Pegasus and some unknown power that even I'm not aware of. There is no way his potential is stuck here. What might be the reason?"

After trying it for another hour, she stopped the process and let out a deep sigh, "It's useless."

Chapter 560: To the Netherworld

Mark opened his eyes, filled with excitement, observing his hands for a couple of seconds before getting up in a hurry and cupping his fist to the Goddess, who was seen standing not far away with her gaze fixed on the horizon. "Your Grace, thank you for your help." He genuinely thanked her, as he knew how long he had to suffer to get such a huge amount of ether particles.

With this, he couldn't wait to try out his bloodline skills.

However, Chang'e responded by letting out a sigh once again, "Mortal, I promised to help you in a breakthrough to the Demigod realm, but I don't have the capability to do it."

"Hmm?"

"The only thing that makes sense is your problem doesn't lie in cultivation, but lies with your mind. You have to solve those things that weigh on your mind, in order to make a breakthrough." She said in an apologetic tone. Perhaps, she was ashamed to face him. She refused to meet her gaze with her, unlike before and talked to him while looking away.

Mark instantly remembered his past life. There is a knot in his heart that he has yet to compromise with.

He could forgive Lu Zhen's parents because they weren't his parents in the first place.

But, the betrayal from his trusted comrades and superiors from his past life is something that he cannot ignore. There is also his life mission to reunite with his younger brother.

Unfortunately, these things he cannot share it with the Goddess and has to keep silent for now.

Chang'e perhaps was waiting for him to speak something, but as Mark stayed silent, she kept glancing to the sides for a while, until the awkward silence between them was broken by a beam of ice appearing in the sky, not far away from them.

"Hmm?" "Hmm?"

"It looks like your sister made a breakthrough." Chang'e hurriedly flew away from the spot. Mark stared at her back in a complicated gaze for a while. In the end, he let out a sigh, "Well, Xiao Jiao was healed. That's enough for me. Whether she still holds hope that I could help her or not has nothing to do with me. I just needed to ensure my life.

That will be enough. Hmm... the orb of time, huh..."

Three days later;

Mark and Chang'e were standing together in the middle of the grand hall. Both of them were almost sticking to each other with a large chain over their necks that had an amulet in the bottom.

"Do you think it will work?" Mark asked the Goddess. The latter turned her head and answered, "Of course, as long as..."

Their eyes met and their noses almost touched with each other, making Mark and Chang'e look away as the latter finished her reply, "As long as our energies are in sync."

Pouring his ether energy into the amulet, he mumbled, "I hope I'm doing the right thing." Chang'e poured the energy into the amulet at the same time.

As he closed his eyes, mystical drawings started appearing beneath their feet before demonic energy enveloped their bodies. "Ugh..." Chang'e let out a painful groan but bore the pain, not trying to resist the poisonous demonic energy.

Soon, the seal released a beam of light. As the light disappeared, they too disappeared not only from the room but even from the mortal plane of existence.

When his vision was restored, Mark found himself in the middle of an island located in the middle of a lava river. The sky looked too cloudy and the constant rumbling of thunders could be heard all over the place.

However, Mark finds himself alone. Chang'e wasn't on his side, making him wonder whether they teleported to different locations or whether it failed and he alone got here.

While he was wondering about what happened with the Moon Goddess, Ark, the artificial intelligence spoke in his head, "Master, the magnetic field is too messed up here. The quality of natural energy is too dense. It is not recommended to stay here for a long time."

"Well, I'm a human and you are a super artificial intelligence, Ark. Both of us had one thing in common. We adapt to our situations."

Far away from his location, Bael woke up from his sleep and furrowed his brows, "Lu Zhen? This isn't his spirit. I can sense life force. He is here with his physical body. Is he crazy? Hmm... I can also sense the presence of a deity here." His frown was replaced by an evil grin, "It's been a long time since I have met a dog from the Heavenly Palace.

This should be fun. Forget about Lu Zhen for now. Let's capture this Deity before others make their move."

Meanwhile, in another part of Ars Goetia, Chang'e found herself in the middle of an island, located in the endless sea of lava. She couldn't stop shivering as she mumbled, "We were separated. But, that is alright. As long as I have this, there is nothing to worry about. Even if he dies, I can revive him." She took out an orb that was constantly emitting an emerald-green aura. "Leviathan, here I come."

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Several hours passed away in the blink of an eye;

As Mark started exploring the demon world with his icy wings spread widely, he realized various things about this new world.

First things first, there was a lack of vegetation in this place. Even after traveling for one whole hour, he had to see a single blade of grass anywhere.

While the never-ending Lava River and lakes seemed to be normal here, he realized that this place was rich in minerals and rare metals. Ark, the A.I., was busy scanning the surroundings and reporting him simultaneously, doing his job.

After crossing many regions and hordes of normal demons on the way and creating disturbance everywhere with his presence, Mark eventually landed on an island filled with purple-colored crystals where a demon was engrossed in practice. He was thrusting the spear into the air, over and over, with a hardened expression on his face.

The artificial intelligence naturally cannot get his details, unlike the system, but it sure successfully scanned his strength and abilities, using Mark's God's Eye skill.

Species: Demon

Age: 8,000,000+

Rank: 12-circle (peak-stage)

Spirit path: Swordsman

Attribute: Fire, Demonic

Bloodline: Nianmang

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Mark landed on the ground, not far away from him. However, the demon continued to practice, not sparing a glance at him.

After waiting for half a minute, Mark eventually decided to interrupt him with a greeting, "Hello, sorry for the disturbance, but can we talk for a second?"

His words brought the demon back to reality and it displeased him for sure. With a frown clearly displayed on his face, the demon took a sniff and then growled, "I smell divine energy inside you, mortal. What are you here for?"

"EH? Divine energy?" Mark was first slightly taken aback by the comment but then as he remembered that mark on his soul by the deity, which wasn't removed yet, he composed himself and explained, "I have no ties with the gods. If anything, I'm more connected to the demons. I have a contract with King Bael."

"Bael?" The frown on the demon's face disappeared and was replaced with curiosity. He observed Mark for a couple of seconds and nodded, "Indeed, I can sense the aura of Bael latched onto your soul. That makes you one of us." Putting away the spear, he asked, "So, what do you need from me? Do you want me to show you the directions of his region? Or do you need my help in contacting him?"

You can request anything but a contract with me. I don't like to form contracts with mortals to fulfill their selfish desires."