

The Man's Decree 561

Chapter 561 A Lucky Man

"Why didn't you come out for a word with your grandfather before he left, Lizbeth? I'd thought that you girls weren't home!"

Jared did not answer Josephine as he gazed at Lizbeth in question.

"If he sees me, he'll make me go home," Lizbeth said with a giggle. "I don't want to do that!"

Jared shook his head helplessly. "Maybe you should."

"You haven't answered me, Jared," Josephine pressed on haughtily. "Where are you planning on going?"

"There is an auction for antiques in Jadeborough. Mr. Grange has kindly extended an invitation to me."

"Sounds fun! We would like to come along," trilled Josephine.

"We're coming along," affirmed Lizbeth. "I have friends in Jadeborough. We'll be treated well there."

Jared gazed at them, the suspicion that they had planned to tag along the moment they heard the plan began to dawn on him.

"I'm not getting involved. You tell your grandfather that when you see him tomorrow." Without another word, Jared disappeared into his bedroom.

Luca, Walter's loyal bodyguard, arrived at Jared's residence early the following morning.

As soon as the car stopped, Lizbeth and Josephine burrowed in at once. Jared and Luca merely exchanged a helpless glance before the former got in after them.

Walter was slightly taken aback when Luca arrived with Josephine and his granddaughter in the car. However, he regained his composure quickly and merely smiled at them without saying anything.

In accommodation of his frail joints, Walter was offered in the passenger seat while Jared was forced to be squeezed between Josephine and Lizbeth at the back.

"Look at you—a lucky man flanked by two beauties," Josephine whispered in Jared's ear.

Jared was shocked speechless at the innuendo. He knew that the seating arrangements had been deliberately designed by Josephine to test him.

Lizbeth, on the other hand, blushed profusely. Aside from the incident of her rescue in the hotel, she had never been anywhere this close to Jared.

Trying hard to ignore his overwhelming masculine scent, Lizbeth kept her eyes glued outside and prayed that the others would not be able to hear her racing heartbeat.

Walter glanced at the rearview mirror and smiled at the look of embarrassment on Jared's face.

He knew his granddaughter well. Though Walter could tell how Lizbeth felt about Jared, he did not stand in their way. If Lizbeth ends up with Jared, I can think of no better man for her to be with even if she is one of many.

“Mr. Chance,” Walter began in an attempt to ease the younger man’s discomfort. “There will be many consulting geomancers hired by businessmen in this auction. Hence, there will be no shortage of masters plying their trade. In fact, the top geomancer from Zaprington, Boris Yonce, will be present too. He was personally hired by the richest man in his city to modify a talisman which had kept him unscathed in a horrifying car accident!”

“He was just the first. After him, more rich businessmen in Zaprington who valued their life or possessions treated these mages and geomancers with high regard. Of course, many charlatans jump at the opportunity to capitalize on this developing industry. However, some of them have actual skill.”

“These are all gimmicks,” dismissed Jared with a sardonic smile. “It is no easy task to create an object of such power.”

“Crafting a true talisman requires one to manipulate the very laws of nature and the realigning destiny.”

The knowledge and skills needed are so prodigious that even with all his expertise, the jade pendant that Jared had crafted for Josephine was entry-level at best in potency.

Walter did not attempt to justify his views further for fear of sounding churlish. The only sound to be heard after that exchange was the roar of the car’s engine as it sped steadily on.

After five hours, the party arrived at Jadeborough. Jared gazed at the bustling city in wonder for Horington was incomparable. Even Jazona and Summerbank is no match.

Tall skyscrapers rose like islets out of the unceasing tide of traffic and were reflective of the frantic rhythm of life in Jadeborough.

Chapter 562 Ungrateful

Every single pedestrian looked like they were in a hurry as they rushed to complete whatever tasks they were assigned.

On the other hand, the patrons of the auction house were living in a completely different world which was a stark contrast to the bustling metropolis. Jausden Auction House was located in Jadeborough’s most exclusive business district. It was a building over ten stories tall on a lot spanning over several dozen hectares. At that moment, it was swarming with rich men as they strode amongst the exhibits while appreciating them.

Every item on display had a price tag that made it inaccessible to those from average working-class. Even the rich tread with caution and kept their distance for fear that they might ruin any one of these items on exhibit which could cost a king’s ransom.

“Let’s look for a place to eat before attending the auction, shall we?” suggested Walter.

The party nodded eagerly as they had not eaten a thing throughout the journey.

Jared’s phone rang at that moment. Theodore called and asked him if he was going to attend the auction.

Jared told him that he was already at Jadeborough, to which Theodore expressed his delight by extending an invitation to Jared and his party to dine with him.

Jared was about to reject it as it would involve the mass coordination of too many people but remembered suddenly that Theodore's influence might come in handy during his stay in Jadeborough. With that, he accepted the invitation.

Theodore was waiting at a restaurant with tasteful vintage decor. Theodore stood up to welcome Jared and his party when they arrived.

"Mr. Grange!" roared Theodore with a jovial smile. "What a pleasant surprise to see you here as well!"

"General Jackson!" Walter snapped into a salute.

Even before his retirement, his had to salute Theodore for his rank was lower than the latter.

"There's no need for such formalities, Mr. Grange. You are an elder, so this isn't proper."

Lizbeth and Josephine greeted their host politely.

Theodore ushered Jared into the suite. "Mr. Chance, after you. Everything has been prepared before your arrival."

Without any more words exchanged, Jared and his party attacked the food with relish. We must be really hungry!

"Mr. Chance, there's a huge turnout for this auction," Theodore reported. "Even Sean Cooper will be here. I'll like to implore that you control your temper when you see him. I will also warn Sean accordingly so that he will not be allowed to lift a finger against you."

Though Jared was not afraid of the Coopers, it would not look good on him or on Theodore to pick a fight on such an occasion.

"Don't worry, General Jackson. As long as they steer clear of me, I wouldn't have any cause to fight them."

"Sean is a megalomaniac," complained Walter.

"If it weren't for me all those years ago, he would have died abroad and the Cooper family won't be as powerful as it currently is!"

The Coopers had gained a slow but steady foothold in Jadeborough with the unreserved help of Walter's resources and manpower back in the day. Both families were so close that even Franco had been engaged to Lizbeth. When Franco broke off the engagement, the Coopers had already become a powerful enough family in Jadeborough and had looked down on the Granges ever since.

When Walter stepped down, the influence of the Granges in Jadeborough was not as it was. Moreover, the cancellation of the engagement by the Coopers did them no favor. Walter had never recovered. Even at the merest of mentions of the Coopers, Walter's old grievances resurface like a fresh wound.

Lizbeth frowned. "There's no use bringing up the old sad stories, Grandpa."

Theodore was familiar with the tale of the Granges' downfall. "It is true that the Coopers were ruthless in their quest for expansion back then," he admitted with an awkward chuckle. "You weren't the only one used by them, Mr. Grange. Don't take it to heart."

Chapter 563 Good Judge Of Character

Walter sighed without commenting further. They'd used me all those years ago. What's the point of holding on to the grudge until now?

After their meal, Theodore personally escorted Jared to Jausden Auction House to prevent Sean from finding trouble with Jared.

Jared sensed the movement of spiritual energy upon setting foot in the exhibition hall. Though faint, it was enough to prove that there were indeed some authentic artifacts amongst the exhibits.

The vast space was filled with glass cabinets containing every antique one could imagine. Glittering under the yellow fluorescent bulbs, they told stories of their origins.

"Mr. Chance!"

Jared turned toward the source of the familiar voice only to discover that it was Tristan, who quickened his pace toward the former. "I didn't expect to see you here, Mr. Chance!"

Jared smiled at him. "When did you return, Tristan? How is Ms. Simmons?"

"I've arrived yesterday just to attend this auction," replied Tristan. "Megan is doing well. In fact, she's been inducted into the Crescent Sect!"

Jared felt a huge weight lifted off his shoulders. After all, it was for his sake that her father, Dante, had sacrificed himself.

"Is this Mr. Chance, Tristan?" An old man joined them.

"Yes, he is, Grandpa," introduced Tristan before turning to Jared. "Mr. Chance, meet my grandfather. Samuel Baileys."

Jared nodded. "Mr. Baileys."

Samuel sank into a deep bow. "What a fine specimen of a man you are, Mr. Chance! It is the honor of the Baileys to be at your service."

Samuel's demeanor drew the attention of a large crowd. They could not comprehend how the patriarch of the powerful Baileys of Jadeborough could lower his voice and speak with so much courtesy to such a young man.

"Mr. Baileys has a good judge of character," Theodore said approvingly.

"No wonder the Baileys has such a long legacy."

It was obvious that Samuel was aware of Jared's true identity, which explained his reverence for the latter. It would do the reputation of our family well if the word were to get out that we are acquainted with an energy cultivator!

"General Jackson, you have flattered me. I am sure you could tell that Mr. Chance is no ordinary individual?"

As a testament to his discerning eye, Samuel had managed to deduce that Theodore, too, was aware of Jared's identity.

Theodore laughed boisterously as they exchanged knowing winks.

"This way please, Mr. Chance. So far, all of the exhibits you've seen pale in comparison to this. The real treasures lie behind this door." Samuel gestured smartly.

Jared nodded before following Samuel into the hall.

Before he took more than a few steps, Jared felt the icy-cold sensation of a murderous glare upon him which was followed by the appearance of a middle-aged man who was accompanied by a wizened, white-haired figure.

The younger man was the one who was staring at Jared as though intending to swallow him whole.

Returning the glare without a trace of fear, Jared knew instinctively that his silent adversary belonged to the Coopers.

Sure enough, Samuel stepped out and stood between the man and Jared. "What do you want, Sean?"

"I just want a word with the kid, Mr. Baileys. How quickly you jump in to the defense of your new master."

Samuel scowled. Incensed, Tristan strode forward at once. "Another word out of you, Sean, and I'll--"

"We adults are talking here, kid. Mind your manners!"

Sean's eyes narrowed and without warning, emitted a burst of an invisible force around him that forced Tristan to stumble backward.

Theodore shot out an arm and caught Tristan before the latter fell. "Not here, Sean. We're at the Jausden Auction House. Don't you blame me for being ruthless!"

Chapter 564 Top Priority

Sean smiled pleasantly. "I only want a word with the boy, General Jackson. Is that against the law?"

Theodore didn't say anything but glare at Sean.

Jared stepped out. "You have my attention."

Sean gazed coldly at Jared from head to toe. "No matter what kind of powers you have at your disposal, the Coopers will not let you go for killing Franco. I assure you that you will not be leaving Jadeborough in one piece."

Jared paid Sean's threat no heed. The onlookers were stunned at the realization that Jared was the one who had killed Franco.

How brazen is he to have killed a member of the Cooper family and then strutted back to their turf!

By that point, many had developed an interest in Jared's true identity. He is clearly somebody special to be able to provoke the Coopers by killing Franco, and for Samuel and Theodore to fawn over him in such a manner!

"If Franco's death isn't enough, I'll be happy to send more Coopers to meet him," Jared said with a sneer.

"How dare you!" Sean's eyes widened as his knuckles crackled menacingly. If Theodore and Samuel weren't there, I would have jumped on this little b*stard!

"You've got balls, kid. We'll see how things go." At that final threat, Sean turned around and disappeared into one of the rooms in the hall with the old man.

"Your safety in Jadeborough will be our top priority, Mr. Chance," proclaimed Samuel grimly. "The Baileys will spare no expense for your safety."

Jared smiled and nodded appreciatively before following Samuel into another room within the hall. However, the rest had to remain behind.

At first glance, the smaller room did not appear too dissimilar from the exhibition hall outside. The only difference was that the antique ceramics that were on display in the smaller room was much fewer in number. In spite of that, the spiritual energy was much stronger. Jared could almost smell the age of these items for they were far more ancient than anything displayed outside.

In the center of the room stood a large rosewood table surrounded by chairs. At the very center sat a well-mannered, bespectacled middle-aged man, who was accompanied by an old but serene-looking man.

"That's Galen Zane, Mr. Chance," whispered Samuel. "He's a businessman from Zaprington. Next to him is Boris Yonce, the most powerful mage in their city. It was said that Galen is here with an extremely rare talisman that required the expert examination of Mr. Yonce. As you might have noticed, only the elite of Jadeborough was granted entry into this room."

Jared nodded as he studied the other participants around the table. Though few in number, every single one of them was similarly accompanied by an old man. He hazarded a guess that they were hired to discern between authentic and counterfeit talismans. Even Sean and his geomancer were present.

Samuel led Jared to a seat across from Sean. On Samuel's other side sat a silver-haired geomancer clad in white. Despite being half-closed, his eyes somehow managed to emit a frostiness that made those seated around him shudder.

"Mr. Chance, this is Mr. Barnabus Holt, a geomancer under my employ." Samuel made the introductions before turning to the wizened figure. "Mr. Holt, this is Mr. Chance."

Barnabus did not even glance at Jared. "Is my service not sufficient for you, Mr. Baileys?" he said nonchalantly. "Why is a second opinion necessary?"

"You have mistaken, Mr. Holt," Samuel clarified hastily. "Mr. Chance is only here to watch. Your expertise is still required, Mr. Holt."

Though Jared was a cultivator, Samuel was certain that his guest was nowhere as experienced as Barnabus, who had spent years longer than Jared had been alive specializing in his craft.

“Hmm!” Barnabus grunted, seemingly satisfied by the explanation.

Chapter 565 The Highest Bidder Wins

Galen, who was seated on the head seat, sauntered his eyes through everyone present. “Gentlemen, we have been in alliance for a good number of years, and I suppose I can be as frank as the day. I’ve brought along a few talismans with me this time around, and one of them was crafted by Mr. Yonce himself. It can effectively protect you from harm and even extend your age.”

After the brief introduction, a few wooden boxes were placed on the table. Any average joe would’ve figured out that they contained the talismans that Galen just spoke about.

Everyone’s attention was firmly drawn to them, and they were eager to know what magical items were lying in those boxes. They were dying to see for themselves what the mage of all times had created.

Seeing those zealous stares, Galen smiled faintly. “We’re going to abide by the old rules—the highest bidder wins. If none of you are interested, I shall put it on public auction. I really appreciate our strong fellowship, and that’s why I’m presenting these precious items to you before anybody else.”

“Mr. Zane, we know about the rules. Show us the items.”

One of the gentlemen expressed his keenness.

Galen nodded and opened the first box. The moment the wooden box was open, a chilly gust forced its way out of its captivity. The temperature of the room suddenly dropped by a few degrees, and that shook everyone high into alert!

When they took a closer look, they saw a black spherical bead. It looked nothing extraordinary and didn’t have the slightest sheen on its surface. No one would imagine it to be a talisman if it weren’t for the sensation that hit them a moment ago.

“Gentlemen, this used to be one of Master Genzo’s prayer beads and had been blessed by his persistent cultivation and chants. It’s effective in cooling one’s body and clearing one’s mind. Well, that’s not all. Mr. Yonce had also configured it to utilize geomancy for improving businesses!”

Galen’s tone portrayed his confidence in that black bead.

The rest of the crowd turned to the geomancers they’ve brought along with them, asking if that bead was the real deal.

“Mr. Holt, is this bead authentic?” Samuel whispered.

Barnabus remained skeptical about the object. He hadn’t bothered to look at it further after the first glance. “It’s just an ordinary bead that looked good.”

“But, Mr. Holt, Mr. Zane said that this was one of Master Genzo’s beads and that nippy gush of air? We all obviously felt it when the box was opened, didn’t we?” Samuel looked at Barnabus, confused.

Samuel was convinced that the bead was not like any other beads.

"I don't mind leaving anytime if that's the amount of trust you have in me." Barnabus sounded displeased.

"No, no, no! Of course, I believe you. That's why I invited you, right?" Samuel apologized frantically.

Jared was impressed by Barnabus's prowess and was convinced that the latter wasn't a mere charlatan, who was only after fame and fortune.

That black bead in the box was indeed a regular wooden bead. The cold air that encapsulated the room was a planned deception that had nothing to do with it.

Verbal tussles that took over the room came to silence after some time. It seemed that people had made up their minds.

"So, gentlemen, shall we start bidding for the bead? Remember, the highest bidder wins. We're going to start with three million, and the minimum bid increment will be ten thousand."

Galen made the announcement with a smile after everyone had finished their discussions.

Funnily, people were exchanging glances, but no one was shouting prices. Probably they had figured out that the bead was spurious.

Galen was stupefied and froze for a brief second at the cold response. "Gentlemen, this bead is definitely worth the price. If none of you are interested, I shall put it up on auction elsewhere."

His pitch created an awkward situation, and silence pursued. Galen sneaked looks at Boris with every chance he got.

Chapter 566 Desired By Many

"Mr. Zane, I'm sure you're very well informed about our statures. We have all hired reputable mages concerning the veracity of your items. They might not be as good as Mr. Yonce from Zaprington, but I'm sure that they could still tell if it's fake. What a disgraceful act of you to trick us with a regular wooden bead!" Sean was disgusted by what Galen did.

"M-M-Mr. Cooper, n-n-no, no! It's not a fake!" Galen's face turned as pale as a ghost. "Well, if you doubt its authenticity, I'll just auction it off somewhere else. Why would I want to jeopardize our solid relationship that had been flourishing throughout the years?"

Galen then gestured his man to remove that particular bead from the table and quickly opened the second casket.

There was a bronze mirror dotted with rust. It looked as if it was dug out fresh from the ground.

When he took the mirror out of the box, there were intermittent low hums ringing, and not long after, a blinding ray of light shot out of it.

"Gentlemen, this bronze mirror has a history of more than a thousand years! It was said that Cleopatra was the first owner of this amazing piece, and it will shield you from harm."

Galen then lifted the mirror high and swiveled himself slowly to make sure that everyone saw their reflection on it. They all looked painstakingly ill, and dark clouds formed above their heads!

Shocked to the core, everyone looked up and then around them, but nothing was amiss.

“Gentlemen, all you have to do is look into this mirror every day, and unfortunate events would be at bay!” Galen put the mirror down as he tried to persuade the lot.

“Oh my, it is something extraordinary.” Barnabus, who wasn’t at all convinced at first, suddenly popped his eyes wide open and quivered in awe.

“Mr. Holt, are you saying that this bronze mirror is real?” Samuel was elated.

Barnabus nodded. “This bronze mirror is a talisman. Incredibly, it has the power to repel danger!”

Samuel was screaming joy inside when he heard that and was going to pay for the bronze mirror.

On the other hand, a geomancer was murmuring something into Sean’s ear. It was inaudible to the rest, but Sean’s face glowed with excitement after that.

Galen was gratified with their reactions and started asking for bids. “Gentlemen, this bronze mirror starts at twenty million. The minimum bid increment will be one mil—”

“Twenty million!” Samuel shouted his offer out loud before Galen could utter the last syllable.

“Twenty one million!”

“Twenty two million!”

Bidders were relentless in pushing the price higher and higher!

“Thirty million!”

Without notice, Sean pegged the price at thirty million.

“Forty million!” Samuel upped the bid by ten million with no hesitation. He was fixed on bagging the bronze mirror.

“Mr. Baileys, this mirror doesn’t have the power to ward off danger. It’s just an antique. Besides that, it has also entrapped a good deal of negative energy. I can guarantee that you will have trouble sleeping if you put it in your bedroom.”

Jared tried to lead Samuel out of fascination.

“I didn’t know you are well-versed at talismans too, Mr. Chance.” Samuel was taken aback.

“Just the basics, actually,” Jared replied indifferently.

“Hmph! It is very daring of you to utter such nonsense, young man. Do you know that it takes tens of years for one to cultivate magecraft? One will also need years of experience to be able to authenticate talismans. How much could a kid like you know about talismans?”

Barnabus was seething in fury as he reprimanded Jared.

That was inevitable because if what Jared said was true, then what he said was definitely wrong. On top of that, to be corrected by a lad, who was in his early twenties, was a blow to Barnabus’ pride.

“Mr. Holt, don’t mind Mr. Chance. It’s just a random opinion.” Samuel quickly put a stop to the argument. Who knows if this old man will be offended and walk away?

Chapter 567 The Wise Choice

“Knowledge has nothing to do with age. It’s either you know it or you don’t. In other words, it’s your problem that you need tens of years to cultivate magecraft. I’m not as witless as you.” Jared nonchalantly made his point.

Bam! Barnabus slammed his hand on the table. “You brat, what did you just say?”

Something is going down today! Sean was enlivened to see the drama brewing.

“Take it easy, Mr. Holt.” Samuel briskly got up and tried to calm Barnabus down.

“Mr. Bailey, where is this kid from? Get this arrogant brute out right now, or I’m leaving. There’s only room for one of us!”

Barnabus couldn’t hold his anger any longer and bawled at Samuel.

Samuel jolted to Barnabus’ fit of uncontrolled anger, and his face scrunched.

He couldn’t afford to offend either party, but Barnabus’ threat put him on the spot.

“Mr. Holt, it seems like the Baileys doesn’t respect you as much as you thought. He’s going against your will for that young fellow. Why not be on the Coopers’ side? We will pay as much as the Baileys are willing to offer!”

Sean was adding fuel to the fire and managed to rattle Barnabus further.

“Mr. Bailey, are you intending to offend me for that unruly kid?”

Samuel was on the verge of crying and darted his eyes toward Jared. To his consternation, the latter sat unruffled by the matter as if he wasn’t involved in that quarrel.

“Mr. Holt, Mr. Chance is one of our honorable guest, so-”

“I see. I’ll leave then.”

Barnabus left in a huff before Samuel could finish his sentence.

“Please, Mr. Holt. Don’t go just yet.”

Sean quickly stood in Barnabus’ way. “Mr. Holt, it’s the Baileys lost for not appreciating you, but we do! The Coopers have always admired you, so why not be our authenticator instead?”

Barnabus turned his head toward Samuel and Jared and tilted his head into a nod. “Very well, then. Since it is Mr. Cooper who values my expertise, I shall be at your service.”

Sean immediately gestured for his previous geomancer to leave and let Barnabus take that person’s seat.

Mortified, Samuel sat back down and looked at Jared.

“Mr. Bailey, you’ve made a wise choice today. You won’t regret it,” Jared murmured.

“Mr. Chance, the Baileys shall entrust you fully with our wellbeing from now on.” Samuel humbly expressed his certitude.

“Alright. Forty million from the Baileys! Going once, going twice, and—”

“Forty-five million!” It was Sean!

His exorbitant bid muted the room. People were throwing glances at each other, but none raised the price. Samuel loved the mirror, but without Jared’s approval, he couldn’t do anything but give up the mirror to Sean.

One by one, the magical items were disclosed. However, Jared made sure that Samuel didn’t bid for anything. On the contrary, Sean won almost all the bids at sky-high prices, as advised by Mr. Holt.

Samuel was like a cat on a hot tin roof, but he didn’t dare to make any remarks, whereas Sean was all cheeky and chirpy, vexing the former further.

“Mr. Bailey, it’s interesting how you would choose a dupable brat over an experienced mage like Mr. Holt. That kid might be talented, but unlike martial arts, magecraft requires much more than just that. I can’t believe that you’re deceived by a sprog. You are a shame to Jadeborough!” Sean grinned at Samuel.

Samuel was lost for words to defend his decision. He could only glare back at Sean.

“Laugh while you still can.” Jared took a sip from the cup of tea in front of him.

Chapter 568 Laying A Wager

“Hahaha!” Sean guffawed. “Oh really? I’m curious about what you’re gonna do to rain on my parade!”

“Alright, gentlemen. We are left with one last item that I’ve spent almost all my fortune on it. This talisman is truly exceptional. I’m wondering who will be able to activate the arcane array of this talisman? Are there any honorable mage who would like to try their hands on this task?”

Galen opened up the last box while cajoling the experts to unleash the power of the item. It was a Disc of Eight Trigrams made of redwood, covered in scratches and a thick layer of dust due to its extended period of storage.

All eyes were on that disc, but none saw what set it apart from the others. It looked like an unwanted wooden slab. It would be wholly ignored if someone were to throw it onto the streets.

The mages examined the disc thoroughly, but still, they didn’t find anything unique about it. Mr. Holt frowned and shook his head after inspecting it.

And there was Jared, sitting put. He didn’t even bother to look at the disc. What he thought was an auction for antiques was apparently a scheming maneuver! His hopes of obtaining at least one worthy item were flushed down the drain.

That Disc of Eight Trigrams was nothing but a piece of regular wood. It was neither a talisman nor was there an arcane array embedded in it. The simple reason why those masters couldn't see its uniqueness was it had none!

"Mr. Holt?" Sean looked at Barnabus.

"What's so special about this Disc of Eight Trigrams?" he whispered.

"This disc looked rather ordinary, but there must be something about it. I can't say what it is for sure as I have yet to fully examine it."

"Will you be able to activate the arcane array in this disc, then?" Sean got peppier.

"I can't be certain. I'd say fifty-fifty."

"Gentlemen, you've seen it now. So what's special about this disc? Is there anyone who could activate the arcane array in it?" Galen threw out the question once more.

Those experts hurled glances at each other again and remained silent. They couldn't see what was particularly different about the disc.

"I'm pretty sure that at least one of you could help me out with this since all of you are the cream of the crop of geomancers." Galen turned sarcastic.

"Let me try."

Perturbed, Barnabus placed the disc on his palm.

"Hmph." Jared wasn't impressed. Such foolish men. What extraordinary can they possibly detect from that piece of useless junk?

"What are you to imply?" Barnabus gave Jared a side glance. "Are you trying to tell us that you can activate the arcane array?"

"I'm scoffing at your stupidity, people," Jared said plainly.

"How dare you!" Barnabus dug his fingers into his palms and was about to take it out on Jared.

"Calm your horses, Mr. Holt. Picking a fight with an imbecile would only taint your reputation. Since he's a know-it-all, we could just hold a little match. Let's see who can reveal the secret of this disc and activate the arcane array in it. The loser shall pay the winner two hundred million on the spot. How's that?" Sean tried to soothe Barnabus' temper.

He then looked at Samuel. "Mr. Bailey, this young man seems to be highly regarded in your household. Do you dare to accept this challenge?"

"You know, we're here to buy stuff and not to compete. I don't think that won't be necessary."

Samuel stood against the challenge because he assumed that Jared was out of Barnabus' league. Yes, Jared might be a cultivator, but Barnabus had cultivated for tens of years!

"Hahaha! Are you chickening out?" Sean chortled in amusement.

“Mr. Holt will win without a hitch. If none of us could see the uniqueness of the disc, what more a kiddo.”

“Exactly. Even a halfwit could guess the result. Why would anyone want to lay a wager on this?”

“Two hundred million isn’t a big amount for the Baileys, but to give it away just like that? Even the king would hold back.”

The tittle-tattles were all about how Barnabus was way superior to Jared.

Chapter 569 Raise Our Bets

Samuel blushed at those uncalled-for remarks and cocked his head slightly toward Jared. “You know, Mr. Chance, it’s not about the two hundred million. That’s not a big deal for the Baileys. It’s just that—”

“I’ll honor your request if that’s really what you want.” Jared cut Samuel off before the latter could explain further why he wasn’t keen on the challenge. “But I think two hundred million is too little and not at all intriguing. I suggest that we raise our bets to two billion since that’s all I have.”

Jared then tossed his bank card onto the table and gave Sean an icy stare.

The silence in the room was deafening, and every single soul froze. It was no easy feat for someone of Jared’s age to own two billion. Even the heir to the richest of the richest wouldn’t be given that amount of pocket money to splurge!

Sean’s mind went blank for a moment before he forced a smile on his face. “Wow. Aren’t you a guileful little rat? Do you think you can trick me into believing that you actually have that much on that card?”

Sean didn’t believe that Jared could pay up two billion. He did a background check on Jared and knew that Horington carried no affluent families. More so, Sean was from an average family. How on earth would he be able to accumulate that amount of wealth?

“Sean, if you don’t trust Mr. Chance, you should at least trust the Baileys, right? If Mr. Chance couldn’t fork out that two billion at the end of the day, we will!” Samuel hissed.

That astronomical amount was a costly fortune to the Baileys but Samuel was more than willing to place his bet on Jared in order to earn his favor.

“Wonderful!” Sean flashed his widest smile. “I believe that the Baileys are able to provide that two billion since the head of the household himself had given the word. Two billion it is!”

When Sean was done confirming the bet, he looked at Barnabus steadfastly. “Mr. Holt, I shall trouble you for this endeavor. You shall take half of the bet when we win.”

Those were the magic words that launched Barnabus onto cloud nine. He had never seen a billion in his life!

“Mr. Cooper, rest assured that I will give my all.” Barnabus nodded firmly.

At that moment, all eyes were on Barnabus. Everyone was curious about how he managed to see the secret that lay within the Disc of Eight Trigrams. They also wanted to know how he was going to activate the arcane array.

Galen and Boris' eyes met and exchanged furtive but gleeful glances.

The bet on this disc was two billion, meaning there's a limit to how low this item could be priced. Their decision to come to Jadeborough was unquestionably fruitful in the monetary sense!

Barnabus started chanting to the disc. Samuel was anxious and would steal glances at Jared every now and then. To his surprise, Jared was as calm as a millpond and didn't bother to see what show Barnabus was trying to put on as if this whole challenge had nothing to do with him.

"Mr. Chance, have you figured out what that Disc of Eight Trigrams does?" Samuel couldn't suppress his spirit of inquiry any longer when he saw how Jared remained totally unfazed.

His question drew the attention of many, including Sean, to Jared. They wanted to know if Jared already knew the secrets of this disc. It would be too gutsy of him to bet on something he barely knew, wouldn't it?

All Jared did was shake his head in silence.

"Hahaha! Mr. Bailey, I told you that he's nothing but an inexperienced kid." Sean attempted to bring Samuel down when Jared shook his head. "Does he know what a talisman is? Has he even seen one? It's outrageous that you took him so seriously."

The rest of the crowd brouhaha to Sean's mocking, making Samuel absolutely mortified.

Chapter 570 A Useless Slab Of Wood

While the lot was laughing at Sean's comments, Barnabus suddenly opened his eyes wide, placed the disc on the table, and lightly tapped it with two fingers. In a flash, that once scruffy disc regained its glow. It was so shiny that one could see their reflection in it!

"Whoah!" Muffled exclamations reverberated. "You're really something, Mr. Holt! That's what a mage, who has cultivated for tens of years, is capable of!"

Barnabus was satisfied with his performance. After that, a flick of ruby light exited his palm, and the disc instantly luminesced red. It looked like some magical item was about to be summoned into the room. Slowly, the whole room was encapsulated in red luster, and soon, everyone felt soothing energy flowing through their body.

The rejuvenating luster gradually dissipated in a matter of seconds, and the room was back to its original state. That Disc of Eight Trigrams too reduced to its rough-hewn condition with marks of age.

"Mr. Holt, have you figured out what this disc can do?" Sean was hoping for something explosive.

Barnabus nodded. "This talisman is indeed extraordinaire as it entraps the holy energy. If I'm not wrong, it's a relic of the immortals!"

The greed in everyone's eyes was plain to see after Barnabus declared the disc's stature. Sean's avidity was equally strong as his peers.

The joy Galen experienced when he saw such rapacity was indescribable. That disc could really fetch a handsome payment if he auctioned it now!

“Hey, kid. It’s your turn to unearth the history of this disc. After you’re done with that, shall we let Mr. Yonce from Zaprington be the judge of this match and decide who’s right on the mark?” Sean shouted out to Jared.

All present shifted their eyes to Jared, eager to know how he was going to activate the arcane array.

To their disbelief, Jared left the disc alone. “What history could a useless slab of wood have? I really wonder what expertise you—revered mages—have obtained throughout years of cultivation? All of you were holding this junk with such pleasure!”

All the mages steamed up in a fraction of a second. They might not be able to bring to light the actual function of the disc, but they were certain that it must be something incredible from the way Galen promoted it. Plus, he was associated with Boris. Thus, they surmised that the disc could only be genuine.

They had all judged a book by its cover, and of course, Galen’s deceitful speech reassured them of their thinking. The brutal truth was they weren’t good enough to tell if that disc was a magical item.

It was like the emperor’s new clothes. No one saw neither its beauty nor its uniqueness, but no one dared to be frank about it because if they did, it would mean that they weren’t up to par.

Jared stood his ground and became the “fool” to point out that it was nothing but a piece of wood. Any mage would feel pilloried and agitated, especially Galen and Boris.

They knew it all along that the disc was, like what Jared had claimed, a useless slab of wood. For Jared to say it out loud in front of the public put them in the toughest spot.

“Excuse me, young man? What do you mean? I spent a good fortune on this disc, and it was authenticated by Mr. Yonce! It is a rare talisman that is embedded with an arcane array, and now you’re calling it a piece of junk? You’d better take back your words or you shall bear the consequences.” Galen turned hostile.

“He’s right. Mr. Holt had already activated the arcane array. How could you say that it’s nothing but a piece of wood? Do you know what I think? I think you are incapable of discerning the goodness of this disc.” Sean shot Jared with words of scorn.

“They would know better if the disc was a useless piece of wood. I believe that some things are better left unsaid.” Jared placidly swirled his eyes toward Boris and Galen.

The culpable duo shunned those interrogative eyes.