SPIRIT REALM

BOOK 02

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Spirit Realm

(灵域)

by

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Synopsis

Thirty thousand years ago, the Heaven Fighting Race who called themselves “Gods” invaded the Spirit Realm. Hundreds of races rose up in resistance, but ultimately suffered a crushing defeat. The Human Race was the first to concede, and the rest of the Hundred Races soon followed in succession.

During the subsequent ten thousand years, all of the races were enslaved by the Heaven Fighting Race. They were cruelly treated, and lived beneath the shadow of terror.

The Heaven Fighting Race’s march of conquest did not stop there. With the Spirit Realm as the starting point, they invaded other secret dimensions, and spread war to all corners of existence. After greatly exhausting their combat strength, they were finally defeated by the Hundred Races who took advantage of this opportunity. With no other choice, they fled to the starry skies outside the realm.

Thirty thousand years later, in an era where the Heaven Fighting Race has already faded to become ancient legend, an amnesiac youth possessing the Heaven Fighting Race’s bloodline is being fostered in an insignificant household. Whilst struggling to live on, he silently awaits the day of the bloodline’s awakening.

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First Edition: October 2016

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Chapter 101: Soul Link

Within the valley, smoke flooded the sky as the burning flames raging on sealed all of the ways in. Liang Zhong and the generals of Dark Asura Hall could only anxiously wait and watch outside as they had no way to charge into the valley.

Although Tu Ze, Zhuo Qian, and the rest felt uneasy about Qin Lie, they also had no way to charge into the flames, so they could only anxiously wait and watch the valley.

As the flames continued to incessantly burn at the edges of the valley, the fire further in had already become less fierce due to the destruction of the formation and the frigid air which spewed out of the cold spring.

Roiling heavenly lightning repeatedly descended, obeying Qin Lie as it struck him like a waterfall.

Thunderbolts coiled around his body like dragons, constantly rumbling as every bone in his body crackled. Every vein, strip of muscle, piece of flesh, and drop of blood had already reached the limit of soreness and pain.

Clap after clap of thunder echoed in his ears and resonated non-stop within his mind.

The heavenly thunder and lightning, like a hammer forging a blade, tempered and grinded away at his body, cleansing his muscles, bones, blood, flesh, and soul as it helped him truly form

the Heavenly Thunder Sacred Body.

On the other side, Xie Jingxuan sat atop the Profound Nether Beast, wearing the finely wrought Blackscale Armor. Her graceful body turned stiff as the imprint of the main soul of the Soul Devouring Beast emerged within the pupil of her left eye...

The imprint within her left eye, along with the enormous savage mask which covered her face, caused her to suddenly seem extremely evil at this moment.

“Get out!”

Her chilly voice seemed to be somewhat anxious and angry as wisp after wisp of black colored smoke quietly flew out from within her body like fine black lines and slowly moved towards her body, trying to entangle her so that she would be completely be controlled by them.

The lower half of her right arm, which was snow white as jade, was entangled by the fine black lines. It was as if an insidious evil design had appeared on her arm.

The Soul Devouring Beast’s soul imprint within her left pupil began to become less blurry, clearly up bit by bit as it continued to take over more of her consciousness.

“Qin Lie!” suddenly shouted Xie Jingxuan. A cold light flickered within her bright and clear right eye as it fixated itself on Qin Lie’s

body. “Come over right now! Quick, come beside me! The Soul Devouring Beast’s main soul has invaded my body through my spirit artifact. Get over here now and use heavenly lightning to attack me, don’t hold back!”

Qin Lie was still wondering why the main soul of the Soul Devouring Beast had suddenly disappeared when he heard her words. Naturally, he immediately understood.

At this time, the sky filled with lightning still constantly descended as before, submerging itself within his body, still raging throughout his body to temper his bones, muscles, veins, blood and flesh.

The pain had directly reached the depths of his soul, but he was able to endure it and had yet to lose his sense of reason...

He did as told and walked towards Xie Jingxuan.

“Hurry! I-I can’t hold it back much longer!” exclaimed Xie Jingxuan as the glow in her right eye began to dim and the imprint of the Soul Devouring Beast’s soul in her left eye became ever clearer.

Enduring the wild strikes of the heavenly lightning within his body, Qin Lie grinded his teeth as he sped up his pace and finally reached Xie Jingxuan.

“You really want me to use the heavenly lightning to attack

you?” asked Qin Lie, suddenly hesitating.

“If you want to let this Soul Devouring Beast charge out using my body, if you want to leave behind future trouble, then you don’t have to do it,” said Xie Jingxuan. Even her voice sounded exhausted. “Otherwise, you must use as much of your power as possible to try and exterminate its soul, to truly destroy it!”

“Let’s first try some other methods,” said Qin Lie, raising his head. Gathering his mind and consciousness, he prevented thunderbolts from descending onto Xie Jingxuan’s body, immediately saying, “Give me your hand. Let me hold your hand.”

“I can’t move,” replied Xie Jingxuan as she became increasingly weak.

Qin Lie furrowed a brow, no longer hesitant. He simultaneously stuck out two thunderbolt-covered hands, taking Xie Jingxuan off of the Profound Nether Beast. Afterwards, he immediately clenched her two delicate, white, jade hands.

“Bzzt bzzt bzzt!”

The violent electric current which enveloped his entire body, accompanied by the rumbling of heavenly thunder, followed his two hands and wildly surged towards Xie Jingxuan’s arms.

Instantly, lightning began to crackle on Xie Jingxuan’s two jade hands as the energy of heavenly lightning directly surged into her

body like a river which had overflowed her banks.

Xie Jingxuan's body instantly began to uncontrollably shake as traces of lightning leaked out from within the Blackscale Armor.

"Zzzt zzzt zzzt!"

The black soul lines which had covered her whole body like a vine suddenly began to break apart as it was attacked by the thunderbolts.

Xie Jingxuan's arms and the skin on her neck once again became snow white.

Her eye which had been about to lose its light suddenly glowed with a radiance once more as she endured the thunderbolts ravaging her body. She controlled a portion of the energy of heavenly lightning and directed it straight into her mind.

"Boom!"

The moment the thunderbolt entered her mind, she suddenly calmed down, as if heavy shackles had just been blown apart.

Upon being struck by the surging thunderbolt, the soul of the Soul Devouring Beast which had entered the depths of her mind was no longer able to hide and suddenly began to wildly release an evil mind consciousness, crazily bombarding her soul.

An expression of blank helplessness surfaced within Xie Jingxuan's eyes.

As if she had taken a heavy blow, she began to unconsciously mutter, "Daddy, don't, don't leave me, I'm afraid, I'm afraid..."

At this time, the Soul Suppressing Orb between Qin Lie's brows suddenly began to shine with a radiance, directly shining into Xie Jingxuan's eyes. From within the Soul Suppressing Orb emerged a mysterious suction force...

A pitch black soul strand was sucked out from Xie Jingxuan's left eye, and the strand connected with the Soul Suppressing Orb between Qin Lie's brows.

Wisp after wisp, strand after strand, the Soul Devouring Beast's soul was directly pulled out from within Xie Jingxuan's mind.

The Soul Suppressing Orb's radiance suddenly greatly increased even further.

At the same time, a soul connection had seemingly been formed between Qin Lie and Xie Jingxuan.

As if he had entered Xie Jingxuan's mind, Qin Lie was able to a witness a memory which had been deeply hidden within the depths of Xie Jingxuan's memories. It was a most profound scene...

It was a dark red sky devoid of the sun, moon, and stars. The depressing, silent atmosphere was enough to cause anyone to go crazy.

Not even a single piece of vegetation could be seen atop the crimson red ground. Looking in the distance, all that could be seen were bare mountains, and littered between the mountains were massive humanoid and beast-like bones. Many of the bones were covered with dust and were already in the process of decaying, as if the mountains had been left unattended for ten thousand years.

Many exotic, Ghost Bird-like spirit beasts circled in the desolate sky, their cries resounding like a doomsday bell.

Right in the middle of a group of pure white spirit beast bones was a beautiful young girl wearing battle armor and wielding a short knife. Her small body was faintly trembling as tears emerged within her crystal clear eyes. She couldn't contain her sobs as she begged, "Daddy, don't, don't leave me. I'm scared, I'm scared..."

"Jingxuan, no one can help you, you must live on by yourself." A robust, imposing male figure with his back facing the little girl,gradually walked away. The man never turned his head, only indifferently saying, "If you cannot even handle the first level of the Nether Battlefield, then just die here and never return."

Ignoring the bitter entreaties of the young girl, the man slowly walked away until he finally disappeared.

After the man disappeared, the girl wielding a short knife

powerlessly crouched there, sobbing.

The sobs eventually attracted a ghastly looking spirit beast with strange thorns covering its body. Once this spirit beast appeared, it immediately opened its bloody maw and prepared bite down, wanting to swallow the delicious looking immature body in front of it.

Her eyes still extremely red and crying, the little girl wielded her short knife and began to fight against the spirit beast with great difficulty.

In the end, she won.

Her body was covered in blood, some from the spirit beast, some from herself. She sat beside the corpse of the spirit beast for a very long time.

She was very hungry, hungry to the point of dizziness. However, her father hadn't left her anything to eat, nor had he left her any fire stones.

She looked at the spirit beast corpse beside her. Then, as she cried, she used her short knife to cut off a piece of meat from the spirit beast's body. Grinding her teeth, she forced herself to eat the piece of raw, bloody flesh...

The scene abruptly ended at this point.

Qin Lie returned to his senses and discovered that there were still black soul strands flying out from within Xie Jingxuan's eye, but the Soul Suppressing Orb had hidden itself again.

Xie Jingxuan's eyes were still closed, her hands still in Qin Lie's. She had seemingly gone into a coma.

The blazing flames encircling the valley were still as monstrous as before as the thunderbolts in the sky continued to descend on Qin Lie. The energy of thunder and lightning within his body was still in the process tempering his body's flesh and bones.

He temporarily didn't bother overthinking it as he slightly moved away from Xie Jingxuan and sat down.

Meditating, he began to circulate Heavenly Thunder Eradication, attracting over the energy of heavenly lightning and wildly circulating it within his muscles and veins to cleanse his body and use the energy of the lightning and thunder from the Ninth Heaven to form the Heavenly Thunder Sacred Body.

He became fully focused.

Time gradually passed.

After who knows how long, the thunder and lightning in the sky disappeared and the dark clouds dispersed, revealing the bright moon suspended in the sky.

The flames within the valley had already died down. Only the flames outside were still burning. Those originated from the crimson stone pillars which had fire inciting Spirit Gathering Boards within them.

Outside the valley, Liang Zhong and the generals from Dark Asura Hall were all solemn as they worried about the situation within the valley.

Tu Ze, Zhuo Qian, and the rest were also anxiously waiting as they hoped to learn about Qin Lie's condition. However, because the flames had yet to completely die out, they had no way to enter the valley.

They could only helplessly wait.

Another period of time passed. As the cold spring exuded frigid air, the temperature around Qin Lie and Xie Jingxuan decreased further.

Perhaps it was due to the coldness, but Xie Jingxuan was the first to wake. She opened her eyes, which were now as clear as a pristine lake, and looked at Qin Lie who was sitting in front of her.

Lightning had concentrated itself atop QIn Lie's body as the rumbling of thunder emanated out from his body non-stop. It seemed as if he were bitterly cultivating some secret art.

The Soul Devouring Beast had long since taken its last breath,

and the flames within the valley had already stopped burning. Only the outer ring of flames had yet to extinguish.

As she pondered and observed Qin Lie, her memories slowly returned and her expression gradually became complex.

After a while, she stroked her shrunken scythe, and upon discovering that everything was normal, inwardly let out a breath of relief.

Afterwards, she then analyzed the circumstances of her body. She discovered all her aches and sores. Every muscle and vein was inflamed, as if they had been mangled and stretched.

She slightly narrowed her brows as she, like Qin Lie, also sat down. Taking out a medicine pill, she swallowed it and began to recuperate her body so that she could recover her combat power as soon as possible.

The moon hid itself as the sun rose, and the flames outside the valley had now completely died out.

Liang Zhong, Tu Ze, Na Nuo, Xiong Ba, and the rest all entered the charred valley, arriving beside the central point of the cold spring. Immediately, they saw Xie Jingxuan and Qin Lie.

Both of them had their eyes closed, and they sat face to face about ten or so meters apart, both seemingly using their mind to attune themselves.

As for the body of the Soul Devouring Beast, it was still beside the cold spring, completely lifeless. It had clearly died long ago as its soul fragments were no longer active within the valley.

Chapter 102: The First Natal Palace

Not even a trace of fire could be seen within the valley.

Liang Zhong, Tu Ze, Na Nuo, Xiong Ba and the rest all circled around Xie Jingxuan and Qin Lie, looking at the two with puzzled expressions.

As they had no clue what had happened, they didn't dare ascertain whether or not the Soul Devouring Beast had been killed and extinguished. Thus, they all looked on with heavy expressions.

"Ban Hong, check the Soul Devouring Beast's body and see if there are any abnormalities," commanded Liang Zhong.

Ban Hong and three generals of the Dark Asura Hall, who had recovered some of their mind and spirit energy after taking out their spirit artifacts, moved to the Soul Devouring Beast's side and cut open its skull as they began to carefully analyze it.

"Mister Liang, the Soul Devouring Beast has already died," loudly reported Ban Hong a long while later. "There aren't any fluctuations of life within its thunderbolt ravaged head. However, its main soul is gone as well, I don't know whether or not it was able to escape."

Liang Zhong silently nodded and then said, "Yesterday, Miss already said that the Soul Devouring Beast had given up breaking through. Thus, even if it escaped, it will be unable to bring about any devastating calamities."

Everyone all clearly let out a deep breath.

"It's good if it's like this, it's good if it's like this..." Na Nuo's tensed nerves also calmed down as she looked towards the Soul Devouring Beast's corpse. Then, she looked at Xie Jingxuan and Qin Lie's bodies, asking, "Those two should be fine right?"

"I'm fine," suddenly said Xie Jingxuan as she opened her eyes.

Circle after circle of dark light released from her Blackscale Armor. The scale armor which covered her shoulders, waist, and legs detached piece by piece from her body and flew into her ring.

After the Blackscale Armor disappeared, she, who was wearing black, skin tight clothing, became movingly graceful and beautiful.

She put away her hideous mask, exposing her delicate and slightly pale face which added another level of moving beauty and delicateness.

"The Soul Devouring Beast's main soul should have been eradicated." She looked towards Qin Lie, then uncertainly said, "Qin Lie seems like he is about to enter the Natal Opening Realm. He's currently at the crucial period of developing his first Natal Palace. Once he has formed his Natal Palace in his dantian's spirit sea, he will wake up."

"Natal Opening Realm?"

Everyone's eyes revealed surprise as their gazes all turned towards Qin Lie, and all of them were inwardly astonished.

"Tu Ze, Zhuo Qian, you two watch after him. Don't let anyone disturb him at this time, and make sure you two also don't converse too loudly." After Xie Jingxuan said this, she suddenly stood up. "Ban Hong, retrieve the spirit materials from the Soul Devouring Beast's body. Be a bit more careful when dealing with its three eyes and beast core. You must not damage them."

"Don't worry, milady." Ban Hong's face was full of happiness as he hurriedly collected the other generals of the Dark Asura Hall. Using their weapons, they began to dissect the Soul Devouring Beast with their weapons.

"Miss, did the Soul Devouring Beast's main soul truly die? Its breakthrough didn't succeed did it?" asked Liang Zhong in a whisper.

At this time, Liang Zhong and Xie Jingxuan were already a fair ways away from the masses as they began to quietly converse. Tu Ze, Na Nuo, and the rest couldn't hear anything.

"I'm not certain," replied Xie Jingxuan as a glimmer of uncertainty flashed through her eyes. "Once he wakes up, I will thoroughly question him. Whether or not the Soul Devouring Beast was truly extinguished, only he knows," she continued as she looked towards Qin Lie.

“What happened?” asked Liang Zhong again.

“Nothing,” said Xie Jingxuan, narrowing her brows as her face showed a slight hint of annoyance.

Thus, Liang Zhong didn’t dare to continue asking about it.

Within Qin Lie’s world.

Spirit energy, like thick white clouds, wound around every outer corner of the boundless spirit sea within his dantian.

In the middle of the boundless spirit sea, bolt after bolt of blue lightning gathered and twined together. Accompanied by the rumbling of thunder, the lightning was currently forming an existence which depended on the spirit sea. But at the same time, it seemed like an independent small world — a Natal Palace!

The bolts of lightning, like intelligent snakes or twisting earthworms, surged into his dantian’s spirit sea from outside, constantly moving towards the center of the gradually forming Natal Palace where they turned into sturdy walls, resulting in the true creation of a small space.

—A small domain was formed with spirit energy as the base and thunder and lightning energy as the core.

Gradually, the initially unstable little domain became increasingly sturdy as it slowly took shape within the spirit sea.

Qin Lie's mind consciousness, from the start, had also entered into his dantian's spirit sea and had been observing the formation of his Natal Palace as it slowly condensed and took shape.

He knew of the intrinsic differences between the Refinement Realm and Natal Opening Realm.

In order to break into the Natal Opening Realm from the Refinement Realm, one had to establish a Natal Palace within their dantian's spirit sea—a small domain.

The formation of the first Natal Palace meant that one had successfully opened their natal palace and entered the Natal Opening Realm.

Advancing along the stages of the Natal Opening Realm was like constructing a small domain within a boundless sea which would gather to become a small island, then a small continent...

—Forming into a independent small world that existed atop the sea.

A Natal Palace was as such, a small domain within the dantian's spirit sea. These Natal Palaces could contain powers which were different from spirit energy.

Whereas spirit energy was created from the gathering and refinement of nature's spirit energy and thus was a fundamental power of the world, natal energy could be transformed into various

kinds of different powers through the usage of special spirit arts.

For example, it could be turned into powers such as blazing fire energy, frigid ice energy, sharp metal energy, and thick earth energy.

Although these kinds of powers were different from spirit energy, they were all able to be cultivated by martial practitioners through those special spirit arts. Only through turning spirit energy into these kinds of energies would martial practitioners truly become able to display the power of their spirit arts, thus greatly enhancing their combat power.

This special quality of spirit energy caused the spirit arts of martial practitioners to be extremely strange and their combative styles to be splendid yet mysterious, resulting in numerous unique sects...

Xiong Ba cultivated blazing fire energy, Yan Ziqian cultivated frigid ice energy, and Tu Ze cultivated nebula energy. These were all cultivated through special spirit arts which transformed spirit energy. Each art had different special qualities, and thus, the resulting powers and effects were all different.

In general, when Refinement Realm martial practitioners fought, they would use the special characteristics of their spirit art to transform spirit energy to create fire energy, ice energy, or nebula energy.

However, it was different for Natal Opening Realm martial

practitioners.

This was because within their dantian's spirit sea, they had created Natal Palaces. These Natal Palaces had the ability to store other types of energy in addition to spirit energy.

Martial practitioners of this realm, during their daily cultivation, would be able to turn spirit energy into these specific energies and then store them within their Natal Palaces.

When fighting opponents, as soon as they activated their spirit art, the specific energy within their Natal Palace would immediately surge out without the need to transform any spirit energy.

—This made it possible for martial practitioners to greatly enhance their fighting strength.

Natal Palaces completely relied on the dantian's spirit sea to be formed, but could be considered to be an independant small domain. It was the intrinsic, qualitative difference between a Refinement Realm and Natal Opening Realm martial practitioner.

"Zzzt zzzt zzzt!"

Blue bolts of lightning condensed together, and the Natal Palace within the spirit sea of Qin Lie's dantian began to glow resplendently as it became increasingly sturdy and compact. It was finally completed.

A clap of thunder suddenly emanated from within Qin Lie's body.

Just as Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian let out cries of shock, Qin Lie finally opened his eyes. Lightning snaked through his pupils, causing his eyes to greatly attract their attention.

"You actually entered the Natal Opening Realm!" Just from glancing at his pupils while they walked over, the two knew that he had succeeded. The two of them smiled, truly happy for Qin Lie.

"Boom boom boom!"

The sound of thunder constantly resounded within Qin Lie's ears, shaking his head till it was dizzy. Only after quite a while was he able to recover and finally see the others clearly.

"Big Brother Tu, Sister Zhuo, Kang Zhi..." said Qin Lie with a slight smile.

"How do you feel?" asked Zhuo Qian, her face full of concern. "Is there anywhere where you feel uncomfortable? Don't respond right away, carefully feel it out and check if everything is okay..."

Qin Lie immediately closed his eyes again.

As he felt his body's condition, he suddenly discovered that his muscles and veins had seemingly become radiant, as if they

contained wisps of thin lightning. Lightning also fluctuated amidst his flesh and bones; a lightning aura even emanated out from within his five visceras and six organs...

"This—This is the initial stage of Heavenly Thunder Sacred Body!" Qin Lie felt great joy within the depths of his mind.

He once again circulated Heavenly Thunder Eradication.

As soon as his mind moved, a pure, wild strand of thunder and lightning energy quickly surged out from the Natal Palace within his dantian's spirit sea.

This violent thunder and lightning energy didn't circulate out through his dantian's spirit sea and then connect to his muscles and veins, but instead directly entered his body's acupoints. It was from within his body's meridians that the energy then surged out into the radiant muscles and veins!

As soon as Qin Lie gathered his energy again, the thunder and lightning energy in his meridians returned back to the Natal Palace within his dantian's spirit sea.

This kind of circulation of thunder and lightning energy and the circulation of spirit energy indeed walked two completely different paths.

"The thunder and lightning energy within my Natal Palace directly flows through my acupoints and isn't connected to my

spirit sea when it circulates to my muscles and veins. Will this cause any problems?" asked Qin Lie as he reopened his eyes.

After his question, Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian looked at each other, both of them thinking as their brows locked up.

"I'm not too clear on this matter. The nebula energy within my Natal Palace flows along the same path as my spirit energy, going through my dantian's spirit sea as it circulates through my muscles and veins and penetrates through my entire body. My circumstances seem... to not be the same as yours," responded Tu Ze after thinking a while.

"I'm the same as Tu Ze," said Zhuo Qian with the same expression.

"My cultivation won't experience any setback will it?" asked Qin Lie as his expression changed.

"Different spirit arts have different characteristics. Not everyone's circulation of energy within their Natal Palace is the same." At this time, Xie Jingxuan's clear yet cold voice suddenly emanated over. She continued, "The early stage of the Natal Opening Realm requires the creation of three Natal Palaces. The middle stage requires six, and the late stage requires nine."

"A martial practitioner at the peak of the Natal Opening Realm will have a total of nine Natal Palaces within their dantian's spirit sea. With nine Natal Palaces present, the special energies cultivated by the martial practitioner through their spirit arts will become vigorous and can be used to casually launch fierce

attacks…”

“Each Natal Palace allows for the storage of one type of energy besides spirit energy. If a martial practitioner only cultivates one unique spirit art, once he reaches the peak of the Natal Opening Realm and gains nine Natal Palaces, the energies stored within them will all be the same.”

“If a martial practitioner cultivates two, or even three or four spirit arts, then the number of different energies amongst his Natal Palaces will be two, three, or four respectively. However, within each Natal Palace, only one kind of energy can be stored. Otherwise, they will conflict with each other and cause the martial practitioner to immediately suffer serious injury. Spontaneous explosion and death is also possible.”

While she rode over atop the Profound Nether Beast, Xie Jingxuan gave an explanation.

“Based on logic, a martial practitioner can cultivate up to nine different spirit arts and have nine different energies as each Natal Palace can store one type. In accordance with the characteristics of the spirit arts, there are many different and rare ways for energy to circulate in and out of Natal Palaces. For example, there are people whose eyes can directly connect to their Natal Palaces, people whose hearts can directly connect to their Natal Palaces, and even people whose souls can directly connect…”

She stopped in front of Qin Lie. Seated atop the Profound Nether Beast, she lowered her head to look at Qin Lie and said, “For you to circulate your Natal Palace’s energy through your meridians is

perfectly normal.”

As she spoke, Na Nuo, Xiong Ba, Tu Ze, Zhuo Qian, and the rest of the Natal Opening Realm martial practitioners all intently listened. Afterwards, they all showed expressions of enlightenment.

“Thanks,” said Qin Lie with a smile after he listened to her explanation. His heart felt much lighter.

“Come with me, I have things I want to speak to you in private.” Xie Jingxuan scooted up along the Profound Nether Beast towards its head, and afterwards, she motioned for Qin Lie to get on.

Under everyone’s astounded gazes, Qin Lie’s expression became surprised. With that, he lightly chuckled and obediently hopped onto the back of the Profound Nether Beast.

Chapter 103: Ten Thousand Contribution Points!

"What connection does that Qin Lie have with her? It's very strange, she seemed to think highly of him. Is there something... between them?"

Little fatty Kang Zhi narrowed his little eyes and had a rascally smile as he snickered. "Is she attracted to Qin Lie? Haha, Qin Lie might be a bit lacking compared to me but he looks pretty handsome. Maybe he is just right for that woman's tastes?"

"Just a bit lacking compared to you?" Zhuo Qian laughed. "You mean in terms of physique? Mn, you are a bit more in this area. Tu Ze, Chu Peng, and Han Feng cannot compare to you. In our hearts, you are the heavy-weight."

"Kang Zhi, you are the strongest in this area." Chu Peng pinched the flesh at his waist and said laughingly, "You grew another size recently."

Kang Zhi's smile became awkward.

"It's probably that Qin Lie helped her in killing the Soul Devouring Beast." Zhuo Qian looked in the distance and said in a low voice, "The people of Internal Affairs have sharpened themselves through a bloody experiences and their hands are dripping in blood. The more beautiful the woman that holds a high position in the Department of Internal Affairs is, the stronger they are."

Speaking more on this, Zhuo Qian paused and sighed. “I hope he doesn’t interact anymore with the woman from Internal Affairs. These kinds of people usually have complex histories and easily goes to extreme lengths. If one interacts with them for a long time… Qin Lie could be affected. This is not of any benefit to him.”

After she said this, everyone became silent and considered what she meant in her words.

The Profound Nether Beast slowly stopped.

Dressed in closely-fitting black tights, Xie Jingxuan came down from the Profound Nether Beast with a cold expression. She did not turn her head and said coldly, “You, come down.”

Qin Lie jumped off.

Xie Jingxuan’s brow creased as she looked down at him with cold eyes. “Is the Soul Devouring Beast alive or dead?”

Qin Lie did not instantly respond and used a wisp of his mind consciousness to examine the inside world of the Soul Suppressing Orb. Inside it, he could faintly discern the presence of the Soul Devouring Beast, but when he focused to search for it, it was nowhere to be found. He didn’t know where exactly it was hiding.

He was certain that the Soul Suppressing Orb had absorbed its soul and temporarily sealed it inside the orb, so it could not come

out and commit evil.

But why the Soul Suppressing Orb had done so, what its goal was, he did not know.

“It was destroyed by the thunder.” After a moment of silence, he started to explain, “At that time, my thunder and lightning permeated your body and chased it out of your mind. The moment it left your eyes, I gathered all the thunder power and killed it instantaneously. Not one bit of the soul escaped.”

Qin Lie’s grandfather had sternly warned him to never leak the secret of the Soul Suppressing Orb, so he had to conceal it.

Xie Jingxuan’s eyebrow jumped as she looked coldly at him. “Is that really the case?”

“Yes.” Qin Lie’s face was honest.

Xie Jingxuan was silent, and after a while, she suddenly said, “From my point of view, the Soul Devouring Beast was not forced out of my mind by the power of the lightning and thunder, but… sucked out by a strange force. My mind was not clear then, but at the very least, I know that the attractive force came from you, or maybe a certain object on your body…”

Her expression suddenly became cold. “Am I right?!”

A pressuring ripple of power was suddenly draped over Qin Lie’s

body like a cage or noose!

This power was hard to see with the naked eye, but it caused Qin Lie's body to suddenly become extremely heavy as though he were holding up a mountain. He wasn't even able to move.

Xie Jingxuan's eyes were icy, her beautiful face full of sternness. That terrifyingly sharp scythe appeared in her hand.

This very moment, her presence was intimidating and was a great shock to Qin Lie.

"You're mistaken." Sweat beaded on Qin Lie's forehead. His back trembled slightly, but his expression was firm as he shouted, "That's only your imagination!"

A faint purple flower that was composed of pure power suddenly formed on Qin Lie's body.

Looking from the outside, it was as though a strange purple flower had bloomed on his body, causing him to currently look extremely strange.

The purple demon flowers were like a terrifying lock that imprisoned Qin Lie's body and sealed his physical strength, so it was difficult for him to move.

"I do not believe that it was just my imagination." Xie Jingxuan had a cold expression. "Also, I felt you peeking at my memories!

You went into the deeper levels of my memory!”

“That was caused by the soul of the Soul Devouring Beast.” Qin Lie grit his teeth, his expression sorry. His knees gradually bent as though he was almost at the limit of what he could tolerate.

After the purple flowers bloomed, they gradually tightened and strangled him, suffocating him as well.

“So you really did enter the deep levels of my memory. What did you see?” Xie Jingxuan’s eyes became even icier.

“I saw a helpless little girl, saw her being forcibly left behind by her father on the Nether Battlefield, saw her fighting alone against the Nether Realm’s spirit beasts…” Qin Lie’s expression was twisted, but when he recalled what he had seen, his voice became strangely calm as he said lightly, “I felt the terror she felt then, felt the panic and helplessness when she was abandoned by her father, experienced the sorrow she experienced then…”

As he spoke, the picture of the little girl crying set into his mind. A soreness came into his heart, and he even temporarily forgot the heavy pressure on his body.

Xie Jingxuan suddenly became silent.

The ice in her eyes gradually disappeared and turned into a very complex expression.

With furrowed brows, she looked at Qin Lie's face. It was terrifyingly twisted due to being strangled by the purple demon flowers, but when she saw that, while Qin Lie's tone was calm, his eyes clearly showed soreness and sympathy...

A certain soft part of her heart seemed to have been plucked, so she closed her eyes.

The pressure put on Qin Lie's body instantly retreated. The purple demon flowers also disappeared. Qin Lie instantly collapsed as he was rid of the heavy burden, his body soaked in sweat and dishevelled as he panted heavily to adjust.

"You did not collapse under my power and managed to keep standing. It seems that you have many secrets on your body. The strength of your body is stronger than the great majority of martial practitioners in the Natal Opening Realm that I have seen. The spirit art you cultivate must be unique in refining your body."

Xie Jingxuan closed her eyes again, her expression still cold but not harsh.

"No matter what you are concealing from me, you better have truly killed that Soul Devouring Beast. If that Soul Devouring Beast comes out again and does evil," she glanced at Qin Lie, "then I will not ask anything of you and will simply kill you to prevent further trouble."

Finishing, she mounted her Profound Nether Beast and left while saying with her back to Qin Lie, "Your mission this time has

ended. I will communicate with Nebula Pavilion and they will award you ten thousand contribution points."

"Ten thousand contribution points!" Qin Lie's eyes lit up.

.....

"Mister Liang, why isn't there a soul crystal? That object is extremely rare, and it can only be from from soul-type beasts like the Soul Devouring Beast. Without the soul crystal, this Soul Devouring Beast's value is greatly diminished."

Ban Hong and the other generals of Dark Asura Hall were dismembering the enormous body of the Soul Devouring Beast. They cut out and organized its bones, muscles, veins, eyes, and teeth. However, he just felt regret at not finding the soul crystal.

"If the Soul Devouring Beast was completely smelted by the Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation, the memories and impurities in the soul would be burned away which would form a pure soul crystal. Everyone knows that soul crystals can increased soul power, so we all know the value of the soul crystals. Due to this, we use the Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation when we try to kill Soul Devouring Beasts."

Liang Zhong had a helpless expression as he stood beside the Soul Devouring Beast's body. "But events do not proceed as planned. This Soul Devouring Beast was killed by the thunderbolts. Thunderbolts are the bane of all evil souls and tormented spirits. The soul was killed instantaneously by thunder and lightning

which left no trace behind. Naturally, it would be difficult for a soul crystal to form. “

He looked in the direction that Gao Yu left. “When that boy retreated at the time, I was also curious, but now I understand. That guy... he knew what Qin Lie would do and was afraid that the thunderbolt would kill the Demon God’s shadow, so he disregarded our shouts and left prematurely.”

“Ah, it is such a pity not to have smelted out the soul crystal.” Ban Hong was extremely pained. There was only the soul crystal in his mind, and he could not accept Liang Zhong’s words.

“It is already very fortunate to kill the Soul Devouring Beast. Not getting the soul crystal is only because our luck is not extremely exceptional.” Xie Jingxuan came back on the Profound Nether Beast. She had resumed her usual coldness and said, “The Soul Devouring Beast is dead, we have completed our mission. There is no need to stay here.”

“You guys prepare and meet up with us to leave this mountain valley later.” Liang Zhong understood her meaning and nodded as he said to Tu Ze, Xiong Ba, and the others. “We will open up the path ahead and you can just follow. We will protect you so you can safely leave this mountain valley surrounded by spirit beasts.”

“Understood!” Na Nuo, Xiong Ba, and Tu Ze confirmed in unison.

“There is a Profound Cold Jade vein under the cold spring inside the valley. The vein goes down and should have a good amount of

Profound Cold Jade." Xie Jinxuan looked at Tu Ze and said, "We found the vein, and it now belongs to your Nebula Pavilion to harvest. The accomplishment will be put on Qin Lie's head. Tell your brother to award him with ten thousand Nebula Pavilion contribution points."

"Ten thousand contribution points!"

Tu Ze, Zhuo Qian, Kang Zhi, and the people from Crimson Flame Association and Water Moon Sect all exclaimed in union with shocked gazes.

Ten thousand contribution points was a considerable amount of wealth in Nebula Pavilion. This many contribution points would be enough for Qin Lie to use all the cultivation rooms of Nebula Pavilion, borrow all kinds of high quality books from Scripture Tower, and even buy some pretty good spirit artifacts...

The previous year in the Arctic Mountain Range, he had heavily wounded the elder of Shattered Ice Manor, Wu De, with the help of the Demon Wolf King and inflicted heavy losses on Shattered Ice Manor. He had also rescued Tu Ze and the others before that and assisted them in killing many Shattered Ice Manor martial practitioners...

The contributions of those years put together was just three thousand.

Liu Yan had been able to buy a Common Grade Five Hexagonal Shield with two thousand contribution points, and those two

thousand points were saved over several years...

Even the hall masters and elders of Nebula Pavilion could not obtain ten thousand contribution points easily. They needed at least one or two years.

The total duration of Qin Lie's trip was just a bit over a month, travel time included, yet he acquired ten thousand contribution points. How could the crowd possibly accept that?

Chapter 104: Battle Armor

With Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong clearing the road, the spirit beast horde outside the mountain valley were nothing to worry about.

As the scythe and the Azure Moon flew, pieces of flesh and blood splattered. One after another, spirit beasts were exterminated

Qin Lie, Tu Ze, and the members of Water Moon Sect and Crimson Flame Association followed closely. With ease, they arrived at the stone forest outside.

The spirit beast horde had only come over to cultivate because of the abundant spirit energy inside the Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation. When the Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation exploded and the Spirit Gathering Boards were destroyed, the spirit energy in the valley dropped to normal levels again, so the spirit beasts did not linger near the stone forest.

They scattered and roamed at the corners of the stone forest as they prepared to continue to do evil outside.

When they reached the edge of the stone forest, Qin Lie saw Ye Yangqiu, the elder of the Discipline Hall. He was leading a group of Discipline Hall martial practitioners as well as a pale Gao Yu.

There were also two elders from Crimson Flame Association and Water Moon Sect. They had come when they heard the news and were preparing to enter the stone forest to kill spirit beasts.

“Greetings Lady Xie.” Ye Yangqiu and the elders from the two powers saw Xie Jingxuan ride out on the Profound Nether Beast. They all bowed slightly in greeting.

Xie Jingxuan, dressed in white, held a cold expression. “You are late and unable to help me. Fortunately, the Soul Devouring Beast was killed. You only need to clean up the remaining spirit beasts. Also, if those from Shattered Ice Manor ask, Yan Ziqian and his group were torn apart by the Soul Devouring Beast.”

Finished speaking, she directed the Profound Nether Beast past the three elders and left the stone forest first.

Na Nuo, Xiong Ba, Tu Ze, and the others had strange expressions, but no one spoke and nodded to show their understanding.

Then, Ban Hong and the soldiers from Dark Asura Hall closely followed on their unicorns and left as well.

Liang Zhong was the only one that stayed. He said to everyone else, “We need to travel to the Arctic Mountain Range, so we will not linger here in the stone forest. The Soul Devouring Beast is dead, so the rest will not be difficult for you.”

Ye Yangqiu nodded. “We have come to kill the spirit beasts gathered in the stone forest.”

In this period of time, Ye Yangqiu had swept the surrounding

cities with the two elders, Ge Hong of Crimson Flame Association and Luo Wei of Water Moon Sect. They were responsible for killing up to Rank Two spirit beasts around Icestone City, Crimson Flame City, and Water Moon Sect.

In the recent fortnight, they found that there was an absence of activity from Rank Two spirit beasts.

They received news amidst their confusion. The brass had told them that there were many spirit beasts gathered in the stone forest at the center of the three cities. They were ordered to lead people into the stone forest to aid Dark Asura Hall to accomplish this matter.

However, they were a step too late.

“Qin Lie, Gao Yu, you two come over.” Liang Zhong rode the Profound Nether Beast and formed a distance from the group and moved behind a stone peak.

Qin Lie walked from Tu Ze’s side, and Gao Yu walked out of the group of Discipline Hall members, both of them moving behind the stone peak as well.

“Gao Yu, are you alright?” Liang Zhong asked with a furrowed brow.

Gao Yu had previously left the mountain valley by himself. He had broken through without regard for the spirit beast herds, and

everyone had been worried that he would be torn apart by the spirit beasts. It was unexpected that he was still alive and well.

"I'm fine." Gao Yu's face was ashen pale.

He did not say how he had managed to pass through the spirit beast herds. Instead, he looked at Qin Lie and thought for a moment before saying, "The thunder and lightning you attracted at that time was potentially fatal for me. I had to leave. Otherwise, my soul and the shadow in my ring... could have been scattered."

"Mn, I understand." Qin Lie nodded.

"I called you two over to give you two something. Mn, I had promised you two before." Liang Zhong smiled slightly. "The Demon God's shadow that Gao Yu summoned helped us slow the attacks of the Soul Devouring Beast. You left too early however. Otherwise, it would not have been so troublesome."

He looked at Qin Lie with a strange gaze. "I do not know what happened in the mountain valley, but I know you definitely helped Miss greatly. Otherwise, Miss would not have told Nebula Pavilion to give you ten thousand contribution points."

"Ten thousand contribution points?" Gao Yu's expression was shocked.

Qin Lie snickered. "Gao Yu, we won't have to worry about contribution points in the near future. Ten thousand contribution

points is enough for us to do what we want in the Combat Room."

Gao Yu's expression turned cold. "I'll get at least two thousand contribution points this time. In the future, I have to be the one to pay the contribution points to use the combat room!"

"Up to you." Qin Lie smiled without care.

"These two sets of Beastskin Armor are for you two." The spatial ring on Liang Zhong's finger flashed, and two Dark Asura Hall general armor sets were revealed. He handed them to the two people as he said, "The Beastskin Armor of Dark Asura Hall is made with the skins of Rank Three and Four spirit beasts. The skins for these two came from the Rank Three spirit beast, the Metal Wing Golden Horn Lizard. Its skin is thick. It doesn't just stop many sharp weapons, but can defend against some spirit energy..."

He thought and then said, "Oh, I forgot to tell you. Battle armor is usually very heavy. These two sets of armor are relatively light if they are worn by Manifestation martial practitioners. It might be a challenge for you two but no worries. If it is heavy to wear now, you can wait until you have higher cultivation and then..."

Liang Zhong's words suddenly stopped. He looked in shock at the duo with a strange gaze.

Gao Yu and Qin Lie had taken the Beastskin Armor and put them on while he was still explaining. At this moment, the two had started to move in the stone forest.

Gao Yu's movements were slightly hindered, but Qin Lie was not affected at all. It was as though he was wearing normal clothing.

"It's very light, not as serious as you said. Not bad, very comfortable." Qin Lie jumped around for a while and then stopped to review it with a relaxed expression.

"Slightly heavy but still acceptable. There shouldn't be a problem wearing this," Gao Yu expressed.

Liang Zhong was shocked and then he grimaced. "Forgot that the two of you are unusual. It seems I underestimated your strength. Mn, good, it's good as long as you can wear it."

Pausing, he said, "I had originally thought to give each of you a piece of the soul crystal after smelting the Soul Devouring Beast to death with the Trigram Fire. I had not expected the Soul Devouring Beast to be killed with thunderbolts. Because of that, the soul crystal did not form." He sighed regretfully. "The soul crystal is the good stuff, a treasure that can nurture the soul and increase soul power. It is rare, ah, what a pity..."

"Soul crystal?" Qin Lie was confused.

"Yes, soul crystals can store power like spirit stones. However, spirit stones contain spirit energy while soul crystals contain soul energy! Soul crystals are extremely valuable. Only some soul-type beasts and dangerous things can form clean soul crystals after being smelted and forged by strong fire. This stuff is expensive

everywhere and hard to find."

Liang Zhong's expression was serious. "Soul crystals becomes more attractive the stronger the martial practitioner is. Absorbing the soul energy inside the soul crystal allows high level martial practitioners to directly increase the power of their soul — their mind consciousness. The increase in mind power means that the soul grows. This can increase the power of the martial practitioner in all areas in future cultivation."

"Starting from the Netherpassage Realm, martial practitioners have to cultivate the power of the soul. An increase in the soul is crucial to progress in cultivation after that! Usually, the stronger the soul of the martial practitioner, the more room there is for improvement. After the Netherpassage Realm, the growth of the soul is the most important factor in determining the strength of the martial practitioner."

"Soul, mind consciousness..."

Qin Lie murmured quietly. After thinking for a while with his head down, he suddenly showed a strange smile.

"Qin Lie, get Li Mu of Li's Shop to get more Spirit Gathering Boards. Mn, remember to pay close attention on my behalf. After coming out of the Arctic Mountain Range, we will go to Li's Shop." Liang Zhong's smile became slightly fawning. "The Spirit Gathering Boards we purchased were all destroyed in the Eight Extreme Trigram Fire Formation. I want to use the Spirit Gathering Boards to create a cultivation room after returning to Dark Asura Hall so..."

“Don’t worry, I’ll definitely keep a close eye out.” Qin Lie patted his chest in assurance.

“Mn, that’s it. I’ll leave first.” Patting Qin Lie’s shoulder, Liang Zhong said with a smile, “Kid, learn more from Li Mu. That guy… isn’t simple.” Finished speaking, Liang Zhong got on the Profound Nether Beast and went out of the stone forest.

“I’m going to stay in the stone forest and kill the remaining soul beasts with the Discipline Hall. You?” Gao Yu asked.

“I am going back to Icestone City first.” Qin Lie grinned. “I’ve just broken through into the Natal Opening Realm and need to go back to the pavilion to stabilize my realm. I don’t need to increase my experience by killing spirit beasts right now.”

Gao Yu stilled and then nodded. “Congratulations, I’m going to get there soon. I can feel it… maybe when I return to the city, I will also be in the Natal Opening Realm.” His tone was confident.

The two separated.

“Big Brother Tu, are you going to remain here or go back to Nebula Pavilion?” Qin Lie asked Tu Ze and the others after he returned.

“We’re going to help Elder Ye kill spirit beasts, what? Are you leaving?” Tu Ze was shocked.

“I just had a breakthrough and need to stabilize my cultivation. I’ve also gotten a lot of contribution points so…” Qin Lie explained.

“Oh, you have a good life. That woman clearly likes you, she also pretty much gave you the Profound Cold Jade vein. It would not be possible for you to not prosper. Those ten thousand contribution points came really easily.” Kang Zhi touched his chubby face and started to complain, “Pity that I have such a handsome face, but no one understands how to admire it, how, how…”

“Shove off!” Zhuo Qian could not bear to keep looking. She kicked him and frightened him into dodging.

“Qin Lie, do you… really have something with that woman from Dark Asura Hall?” Han Feng waggled his eyebrows. “Hehe, that woman is beautiful. If you get her, you definitely have a sure shot to get into Dark Asura Hall.”

“You, shove off as well!” Zhuo Qian glared at him and then frowned. She said, “Qin Lie, let sis warn you. Do not provoke women like Xie Jingxuan. There is not a single simple woman that walks out of the Internal Affairs Department. That Ban Hong should be an enforcer. He calls Xie Jingxuan ‘Miss,’ so this woman is at least commander rank.”

Taking a deep breath, Zhuo Qian said, “Commanders of Internal Affairs have hands drenched in blood. I don’t know how many other beings and spirit beasts they have killed. These kinds of people… usually aren’t normal. You should be careful. Do not

interact too much with her to prevent yourself from getting into unnecessary trouble.”

“I will remember it.” Qin Lie nodded with a serious expression.

He decided to keep some distance from Xie Jingxuan.

Because when he underwent questioning, he knew that Xie Jingxuan had intentions of killing him and had almost done so.

Even though he did not know why that woman decided to let him go, he didn’t want to experience it twice. So he decided to avoid interacting with her as much as possible.

Chapter 105: Pains

Three months later, Icestone City.

Within a house filled with planted Heart Tranquility Grass, Qin Lie was seated on top of a round mat with closed eyes while adjusting his breath in cultivation.

This was Nebula Pavilion's unique cultivation room—the Meditation Room. Plants such as Heart Tranquility Grass, Mind Calming Balm Flower, and others were planted inside the room, causing a fresh and peaceful smell to circulate inside it.

There was even a formation meant to focus the mind and calm the heart drawn on top of the walls. Every arrangement inside the room was to help with cleansing the heart and clearing one's mind.

If a martial practitioner cultivated inside this room, as long as they paid a bit of caution and did not cultivate an evil or extreme spirit art, they normally would not incur a fiendish rebound and turn violent.

This place was very useful for cultivating various spirit arts, gaining an understanding of the realm, and deepening one's knowledge of the martial way.

One would need to spend five contribution points in order to cultivate for a day inside the Meditation Room, and it would only take four hundred and fifty points to cultivate for three months in there.

—As of now, that wasn't really much for Qin Lie anymore.

Since he returned from the stone forest, Qin Lie had rented a Meditation Room specifically to stabilize his new realm.

For the past three months he had been experiencing the greatness of the Natal Palace while focusing his mind and calming his heart to cultivate. Training hard, he focused on gathering more spirit energy to convert into thunder and lightning energy to, bit by bit, fill up his first palace.

The early stage of the Natal Opening Realm required him to form three Natal Palaces, and each one needed to be completely filled before he could qualify for the middle stage.

Currently, he had only just formed his first Natal Palace, and this palace hadn't even been filled yet.

Cultivation wasn't something that could be completed overnight. Every step of ascension required the accumulation of strength and insight; it required rigorous and repeated cultivation to increase one's strength bit by bit.

"Almost there." Qin Lie opened his eyes, muttered once, and walked out of the Meditation Room.

"Qin Lie, you came out pretty early today." Liu Yan walked over from the other side of the cultivation ground while greeting him

with a smile. “The situation as of late is pretty good. The elites from Seven Fiends Valley, Dark Shadow Tower, and Dark Asura Hall all worked together. They have fought their way into the Arctic Mountain Range, and we are slowly gaining the advantage. If this continues, then it shouldn’t take too long before we can make a new contract with the spirit beasts.”

“That would be great. Many lives have been lost; the sooner we finish this the better.” Qin Lie nodded his head and then asked, “Gao Yu hasn’t come back yet? Is it the same with Tu Ze and the others?”

“After the spirit beasts inside the stone forest had been cleared out, Gao Yu and Tu Ze’s group had gone to the edges of the Arctic Mountain Range to group up with Elder Chu Yan, Wei Xing, and Du Haitian.” Liu Yan smiled and walked over, saying, “It seems that Gao Yu kid is close to breaking through to the Natal Opening Realm, and he has accumulated two thousand and five hundred contribution points. That guy’s pretty good.”

The duo talked while heading outside. Just when they had left the wide cultivation area, a Nebula Pavilion martial practitioner who was standing guard called out, “Qin Lie, is it? Elder Han wants you to meet him once you’ve finished. It seems that someone is looking for you and they sent you some stuff.”

“I’ll be off then.” Qin Lie bid goodbye with Liu Yan.

A while later, he arrived at Han Qingrui’s place, and the moment he went in, he found a few young men dressed in golden clothes sitting down.

There was the picture of a golden valley sewn on the chest pocket on their clothes. It took only one glance for Qin Lie to know that they came from Seven Fiends Valley's Gold Fiend Valley.

"Qin Lie, do come and meet our friends from Seven Fiends Valley. They belong to Gold Fiend Valley and are about to participate in the battle at the Arctic Mountain Range. They dropped by Icestone City along the way to send you some stuff." Han Qingrui's face was slightly dark, as if he didn't like these people too much. Once Qin Lie came over, he pointed at a person and said, "This is Li Zhongzheng, the junior apprentice of Gold Fiend Valley's Valley Master. He is here on an errand for Ling Yushi."

"You are Qin Lie? The kid who was once engaged to Sister Ling?" Li Zhongzheng looked at Qin Lie from head to toe before shaking his head with a cold expression. "I don't understand why Sister Ling would fancy a small fry like you…"

Before Qin Lie could say anything, he placed a small bundle on top of the table. Then, he stood up with a full face of impatience.

"This is the item Sister Ling had requested me to pass on to you. She has just entered the middle stage of the Natal Opening Realm and thus cannot participate in the battle at the Arctic Mountain Range. That is why she asked me to give this to you."

After glancing at Qin Lie coldly, Li Zhongzheng then frowned again. "Give up after you've taken this. Sister Ling's talents are

very exceptional, and her cultivation speed is also pretty quick. She is definitely not obtainable by someone like you. Yeah, you just stay in Nebula Pavilion, live a good life, and stop dreaming about Sister Ling ever again. Otherwise, there will be deadly misfortune waiting for you in the future."

Once he finished, he and the rest of the young men from Gold Fiend Valley walked straight out without taking another glance at Han Qingrui.

"To this day, Sister Ling still constantly bears that brat in her mind, not giving Big Brother Li any chance at all. If we didn't happen to pass by Icestone City and she just happened to have a use for us, she wouldn't have even paid any attention to Big Brother Li at all." One of them whispered, "Dammit. So she really did all this just for this brat, some kind from a Limestone rank force. I can't believe she still can't forget about him to this day, what a stubborn woman..."

"Let's go. I'm already frustrated that I have to come here for such a small fry, so you guys better shut up about it already," Li Zhongzheng said with a snort.

The group of people gradually walked far away.

"Ignore them, they're just a bunch of juniors who do not know the immensity of heaven and earth. Their fathers live in Seven Fiends Valley, which was why they were part of it the moment they were born. They are nothing without their fathers' glory, and they would not have been able to reach their current cultivation level without relying on that either," Han Qingrui consoled him.

Qin Lie nodded with a dark expression and replied, “Don’t worry Uncle Han. Such men aren’t enough to disrupt my heart and influence me.”

“Good, that’s good.” Han Qingrui smiled gladly. “Despite being at Seven Fiends Valley, that girl still misses you, and every month she sends a letter to you which clearly proves her love for you. You’re pretty good at this, aren’t you?”

Qin Lie opened the package and saw a letter inside. There were also many bottles, jars and tens of Common Rank Five or Six spirit stones...

He did not ask for privacy and read the entire letter aloud in front of Han Qingrui.

Ling Yushi had found him three kinds of prescriptions to temper his body. These bottles and jars contained the main spirit herbs and could help him temper his body. Besides that, there were also a few pills and medicine that can assist him in breaking through to the Natal Opening Realm and spirit stones to be used during cultivation... this was all prepared for his ascension to the next realm.

Prescriptions, spirit herbs, spirit pills, and spirit stones. They were all found by Ling Yushi through great effort, and a portion of them were sneakily saved up by her. All this attentive preparation was made solely for Qin Lie’s breakthrough.

It could be said that Ling Yushi had only the best intentions for him.

Unfortunately, Qin Lie had already broken through to the Natal Opening Realm, and after three months of harsh cultivation in the Meditation Room, his realm had already stabilized.

Qin Lie had borrowed the power of lightning to cultivate his newly formed Heavenly Thunder Sacred Body, so he definitely couldn't use any of the body tempering prescriptions she gave him—it could be said that she had done all this in vain.

Putting down the letter, Qin Lie thought for a moment before asking, "Uncle Han, where is the Ling Family staying in the city right now?"

"In the south." Han Qingrui answered with a smile, then followed up with a detailed explanation, clearly pointing out the Ling Family's exact location. Then he said, "Because of the spirit beast threat, all of the large vassal forces have moved into Icestone City, so the city is currently overcrowded. The condition over there must be pretty bad, it is possible that there are tens of people squeezing under the same house..."

"Can my contribution points buy anything inside the pavilion?" Qin Lie asked again.

"You can buy them as long as it does not exceed your contribution points. There is absolutely no problem at all." Han Qingrui affirmed.

Qin Lie nodded.

Leaving, the first place he went next was Scripture Tower. He picked a few scriptures specifically aimed at Refinement Realm martial practitioners, then went to the Spirit Material Room and bought some pills. With that, he had expended almost two thousand contribution points.

Carrying the scriptures, pills and, the package Ling Yushi had asked people to bring over, he exited Nebula Pavilion and and went southward, where Ling Family was temporarily staying.

Two hours later.

He arrived at a shabby courtyard entrance, and under the gaze of an old Ling Family servant, he entered the courtyard.

The familiar faces of the Ling Family clansmen went in and out of the courtyard, and there were many houses where tens of people were squeezing under a single roof.

The old men, children, and wives were categorized as a single household unit, and they could only stay inside a single room. The courtyard inside was dirty and messy; the environment absolutely terrible...

“Qin Lie!” Ling Chengzhi exclaimed softly.

His face was thin and pallid, and he helplessly walked out of a house and said, “There’s no helping it. The Ling Family has been arranged at this location, and naturally, it’s not going to look too good for an entire town of people to live inside a single courtyard. Sigh, well it’s good enough we can make it into the city; at least the safety of our lives can be guaranteed this way. If we continued to stay inside Ling Town, then it may be a different matter…”

Qin Lie knew that because the people of every large vassal force had entered the city, every room in Icestone City become incredibly valuable. The Ling Family was lucky they could find a courtyard to stay in; many people did not even have a place to sleep in and could only find a place on the streets or under the trees to survive.

“Uncle Ling, are Ling Feng and the others around?” Qin Lie nodded.

“They are. You came at the right time since they’re all here. But in three days, they’ll be departing from the city. They’ve been assigned duties by the pavilion and will be heading outside the city for combat.” Ling Chengzhi gave a weak smile and said, “My big brother has gone out to ask people to work on some matters, so he’s not here right now. About… last time, it is the Ling Family who have disappointed you. We wish for your forgiveness.”

“I am here to look for Ling Feng and the others,” Qin Lie said with a cold face.

“I know, I know.” Ling Chengzhi’s expression was awkward. He understood that Qin Lie hadn’t gotten over the matter yet. Then,

he yelled out, “Ling Feng! Ling Xing! Come over and see who’s here!”

“Who is it?”

“Can it be that the First and Second Miss has come back?”

Ling Xing and Ling Xiao muttered before poking out their heads from a crowded room. Then, their expressions immediately brightened as they exclaimed, “It’s Qin Lie!”

Ling Feng and Ling Ying walked out of their respective rooms and laughed brightly.

“I’ve been cultivating in seclusion when I came back from outside the city three months ago, so I didn’t have time to visit you. Sorry.”

Qin Lie gave a brief explanation, then brought out Ling Yushi’s package and passed it to them. Next, he took out the scriptures and pills he bought with contribution points to Ling Feng, Ling Xing, and the crowd and said sincerely, “I hope that you guys can enter the Natal Opening Realm sooner with the help of these spirit materials.”

Ling Xing, Ling Xiao, Ling Ying, and the others looked at the spirit pills, spirit herbs, and spirit stones inside the bag, plus the body tempering prescriptions and scriptures appropriate of their cultivation. Their expressions were excited, and there was even

light shining out of their eyes.

—If they used this properly, it would definitely help them ascend to the next realm at a much earlier date!

These spirit pills, spirit herbs, spirit stones, prescriptions, and scriptures were definitely a dream come true for the currently distressed Ling Family clansmen.

“So many spirit pills, spirit stones, and cultivation scriptures; there’s even prescriptions for body tempering…”

“Those kids had a deep relationship with Qin Lie, so they can be counted as having found the savior in their life. How enviable.”

“Perhaps they can really enter the Natal Opening Realm before reaching twenty years old with these spirit materials and enter Nebula Pavilion to cultivate.”

“Sigh, the treatment of Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners is different alright. This is one case of it. If we were the core members of Nebula Pavilion, why would we need to squeeze inside this place? We would have been training hard inside the pavilion’s cultivation rooms a long time ago…”

“The Patriarch treated him like that, and yet Qin Lie did not forget us. Sigh, the Ling Family really has let him down.”

“Sigh, it really is the Ling Family’s fault. Him and his

grandfather have helped us in the past, and yet, for the future of the two misses, the Patriarch had even dissolved their engagement."

Every clansmen in Ling Town was gathered inside this courtyard, and they all came out when they heard that Qin Lie had come.

When they saw Qin Lie bringing out the spirit materials, spirit pills, spirit stones and scriptures, they all wore shocked expressions and began whispering amongst themselves. Their gazes were filled with envy when they looked at Ling Xing's group.

Ling Chengzhi's old face suddenly blushed as he stood there, and with a cough, he awkwardly went back inside the house.

—He was too ashamed to continue staying there.

"Th-this is way too valuable. We can't accept this." While Ling Xing, Ling Ying, and the others were engulfed in excitement, Ling Feng was the only one who frowned and seriously said, "Qin Lie, you should keep this to yourself. We can slowly cultivate on our own."

"Urk, in that case, Qin Lie, you should... you should keep these to yourself. T-this is way, way too valuable." Ling Xiao endured the pain in his heart and looked away from the spirit pills and scriptures before saying that in a choppy voice.

"There's really no need for pleasantries. Just take these with you;

I have no use for them.” Qin Lie smiled coolly and continued, “Because I’ve already broken through to the Natal Opening Realm.”

Chapter 106: Terminator Profound Bomb

“Natal Opening Realm!” the Ling Family clansmen exclaimed in shock.

Ling Feng and the others had shocked expressions. They felt happy for Qin Lie. Then, after they looked at all the spirit pills, spirit stones, and scriptures, their intentions of refusing decreased.

“As expected, cultivating progresses much faster at Nebula Pavilion.” Ling Ying’s eyes were bright as she said, “Qin Lie, when you left Ling Town to go to Nebula Pavilion, you should have just been in the eighth level of the Refinement Realm. It has just been a year and you have reached the Natal Opening Realm. Does Nebula Pavilion really help out that much? Can they really help you progress faster?”

None of the people of Ling Town had reached the Natal Opening Realm before they were twenty, so none of them were admitted to Nebula Pavilion to cultivate.

Due to this, all the wondrous qualities of cultivating at Nebula Pavilion were things they heard from others.

Qin Lie’s return gave them the chance to ask, so they naturally would inquire.

Qin Lie thought and then seriously explained, “It is a bit faster to cultivate in Nebula Pavilion. There are special meditation, combat, and cultivation areas in the pavilion. There are also places such as

the Scripture Tower and the Artifact Tower that aid in cultivation…”

Listening to his explanation, everyone’s eyes gradually lit up and felt a yearning towards cultivating at Nebula Pavilion.

“So you do not have to be courteous with me. Take these spirit materials and then focus on cultivating.” Qin Lie smiled. “Maybe after a year or two, you will enter Nebula Pavilion. Then we can reunite there. Mn, I borrowed these scriptures from Scripture Tower. Do not damage them. After a while, I will come and take away the old books and lend a few new ones for you.”

“Good!” Ling Feng shouted and said, “Then we won’t be courteous!”

“Thanks!” Ling Xin thanked gravely.

They were extremely grateful inside.

After chatting for a while, Qin Lie bade them farewell and walked out of the compound.

An hour after he left, the patriarch of the Ling Family, Ling Chengye, returned with a furrowed brow. He quickly learned from Ling Chengzhi that Qin Lie had come and knew that Qin Lie had given a large number of spirit pills and stones to Ling Feng and the others.

In the sparse room, the patriarch of the Ling Family sighed. “Ah, it is us who have failed him.”

“It has already passed.” Ling Chengzhi’s face was also helpless. He then asked, “Big Brother, what have you found out about the situation?”

“We need to go to the border of the Arctic Mountain Range and cooperate with the elders of the pavilion to stop the invasion of spirit beasts. That place... right now is lead by the Vice Pavilion Master, Li Yuntao and Du Haitian. I’m afraid that Du Haitian will take the opportunity to plot against our Ling Family.” The Ling Family Patriarch’s brow was tightly creased. “Right now, the battle between us and the spirit beasts of Arctic Mountain Range is in avery tense state. The Ling Family is a subordinate power of Nebula Pavilion who also has members that moved into Icestone City. At this time, people with battle capabilities have to take up responsibility. This cannot be refused.”

“Yushi and Xuanxuan are already Granny Jiu’s disciples. Does Du Haitian dare to act against us?” Ling Chengzhi said with a dark face.

“He knows how much we hate him. We have a disagreement that cannot be resolved unless one side dies. This cannot be solved, so he will do everything he can to destroy our Ling Family.” Killing intent roiled in the eyes of the Ling Family Patriarch. “Granny Jiu might be the Valley Master of Dark Fiend Valley, but Nebula Pavilion is not a subordinate force of Seven Fiends Valley. She does not have any power over Du Haitian. If she really acts against Du Haitain, Dark Asura Hall would question her. Temporarily... we

have no way of borrowing her authority."

"So we can only be careful," Ling Chengzhi responded helplessly.

"Mn, I will do my best to be careful. I hope we can return safely." The Ling Family Patriarch nodded. "You and Ling Feng stay behind to take care of the overall situation. Only Ling Feng is calm among the young generation and can help you solve the internal conflicts. This boy's personality and composure is pretty good. In the future, if Yushi and Xuanxuan have married, I have a good opinion of Ling Feng as the next patriarch."

"If Yushi and Qin Lie's engagement was not prematurely ended, Qin Lie... is actually also a good choice," Ling Chengzhi said.

Once the words came out, the patriarch of the Ling Family sighed helplessly again. He shook his head and did not say anymore on the topic.

.....

"Uncle Li, are you really free now?"

On Commerce Street in front of Li's Shop, Qin Lie laughed and stepped in.

In the evening, there was only Li Mu inside Li's Shop, coiled on the rocking chair with his eyes lidded as he looked lazily outside.

In the yard behind him, that large wolfdog was resting with eyes closed under the tree.

“Not bad, you entered the Natal Opening Realm.” Li Mu smiled slightly and then straightened as he examined Qin Lie with narrowed eyes. “How many Natal Palaces have you created?”

“Just one.”

“Mn, then work hard on your cultivation and try to open three Natal Palaces as soon as possible. If you store thunder and lightning energy in the three Natal Palaces, there will be three times as much as what you have now. That will mean your offensive power will increase greatly.” Li Mu nodded.

“Uncle Li, how do you know I am cultivating the power of thunder and lightning?” Qin Lie was shocked.

“Haha.” Li Mu laughed and then took out a piece of yellow paper from a shelf behind him. He handed it to Qin Lie. “I recently purchased this, it might be useful for you. You can try it and this can be your first forging.”

Qin Lie took the yellow paper. He looked down and found many spirit materials and amounts were written on the yellow paper: two Ground Crystals, four taels of Quicksand Gold, one Ink Cloud Stone, five taels of Profound Iron...

“What is this?” Qin Lie was confused.

“The inventory list for supplementary materials required for forging the ‘Terminator Profound Bomb.’” Li Mu became serious. “This is a one-use spirit artifact. It can produce a great explosion with a decent amount of power. The supplementary materials to make the ‘Terminator Profound Bomb’ are not hard to find, and Nebula Pavilion’s stores should have them. You only need to prepare a primary material that contains thunder and lightning power and you should have all of the materials needed.”

“What about the spirit diagrams?” Qin Lie asked.

“Keep reading,” Li Mu replied.

Qin Lie continued to read. Then, his expression changed to one of shock.

“With the basic Spirit Gathering, Spirit Storage, Strengthening, and Amplification spirit diagrams as the core, use the Amplification diagram to continuously increase thunder energy to activate the thunder and lightning power inside the main material. After amplifying the thunder energy, it will rush into the incomplete Spirit Storage diagram. The Spirit Storage diagram will not be able to contain it and will only be able to explode from the inside, resulting in the Terminator Profound Bomb forming great destructive power in an instant…”

His eyes flashed. “So there are times in spirit artifact forging that spirit diagrams do not have to be completed. The damaged and

incomplete Spirit Storage diagram will explode immediately on activation because it cannot contain the increased thunder and lightning power… is this still a spirit artifact?”

“A one-use spirit artifact is still an artifact.” Li Mu smiled and nodded. “The important parts have been noted down on the paper, you can study it yourself. Think of it as a test. If you can really make it… this Terminator Profound Bomb can increase your combat capabilities. Mn, the power of this thing should not be average.”

Pausing, Li Mu’s expression became serious. “But you must be careful. Do not let this thing explode during the forging process. Otherwise, it can harm you and to a grave degree!”

“I will,” Qin Lie responded seriously.

“Mn, I put the spirit tablets I bought for you in your little room, you can organize it yourself. Oh, Pan Jueming of Armament Pavilion is interested in the Spirit Gathering Boards. You can make some when you have the time,” Li Mu said.

“Terminator Profound Bomb, Terminator Profound Bomb…”

Qin Lie’s head was down as he intently read the contents of the yellow paper. He noted down all of the basic materials and continuously studied the connection between the four spirit diagrams.

“I have not grasped the Strengthening spirit diagram yet. It seems that I need to learn it before I can make the Terminator Profound Bomb…”

He settled back at Li’s Shop and used the spirit tablets to inscribe the Strengthening spirit diagram. With the experience of the Amplification, Spirit Gathering, and Spirit Storage diagrams, the rate at which he learned the Strengthening diagram was very quick.

A fortnight later, he successfully increased the Strengthening diagram and caused the simplest spirit tablet to become extremely hard.

After that, he still remained in Li’s Shop.

He tried to construct the spirit diagrams for the Terminator Profound Bomb on spirit tablets, then tried to put the four diagrams together. He embedded them on a spirit tablet and tried to use thunder energy as the trigger to get the spirit diagram to crack.

“Poof!”

Another spirit tablet turned to ash. Qin Lie’s brow was furrowed as he thought long and hard among the floor full of scrapped spirit tablets.

One more fortnight passed. He continuously failed in the process

of making a steady compound spirit diagram. Usually, he was unable to trigger the explosion of the spirit diagram before the spirit tablet became scrap due to the conflict between spirit diagrams.

The tolerance of true spirit artifacts was even worse than spirit tablets. If he could not succeed on spirit tablets, the rate of failure if he inscribed directly on spirit artifacts could only be higher.

“I told you before, if you repeatedly fail, then stop for a while.” Today, Li Mu shouted from outside, “Stop for a while and relax before trying again. If you continuously fail, then continue to stop and do not be stubborn. Do not charge single-mindedly on failures.”

“Thanks, Uncle Li, I know.” Qin Lie did not continue. He walked out to drink with Li Mu and reminisce about the past.

After resting for two days, he did not think any more about anything in the area of artifact forging. He calmed his mind and worked on his cultivation to fill his Natal Palace with thunder and lightning energy.

After his emotions were completely controlled, he once again constructed the compound spirit diagram and continued to experiment.

He continuously failed in the following three days.

Once again, he listened to Li Mu's words and took a break. Alternating once more, he resumed drinking with Li Mu and further cultivated his Natal Palace. After he calmed down, he attempted the diagram once more.

The cycle repeated.

The middle of the night fourteen days later.

"Boom!"

An explosion came from his little room that was thunderous and rattling, resulting in Li Mu being shocked awake.

"Boy, what are doing in the middle of the night?" Li Mu came over with drowsy eyes. He suddenly remembered and grinned. "What, you finally succeeded?"

"Uncle Li, I finally managed to construct the compound spirit diagram on the inside of the Terminator Profound Bomb!" Qin Lie's eyes were bloodshot, but his face was full of a shocking light as he said excitedly, "Just now, my thunder energy charged in, and after being amplified by the Amplification diagram inside the spirit tablet, it charged into the Spirit Storage diagram and caused the spirit tablet to explode!"

Li Mu entered the room and saw that Qin Lie's body was emanating smoke. Many of the spirit tablets in the room had turned to powder, and even the walls had cracked.

“Mn, if you can gather all the materials and find the main material that contains thunder and lightning power, after you master constructing the compound diagram on the inside of the Terminator Profound Bomb, you can make the true Terminator Profound Bomb.” Li Mu’s smile was carefree as he said, “If that explodes, my shop will probably be destroyed.”

As the words came out, Qin Lie’s eyes lit up. “It is that powerful?”

“You’ll know after you succeed,” Li Mu said with narrowed eyes and a smile.

“This is the beast core of a mutant Ice Soul Python and one of its eyes. It cultivated both ice and thunder, so the beast core and eye should also contain thunder and lightning power. Take a look... do you think I can use this as the primary material for the Terminator Profound Bomb?” Qin Lie had prepared before and took out the materials he had gotten from the stone forest. Now, he handed them to Li Mu for a look.

“Rank Two spirit beast...” Li Mu touched the Ice Soul Python’s beast core and eye. After thinking for a while, he then answered, “There shouldn’t be a problem. Hm, when you try to make the Terminator Profound Bomb, you might not succeed the first time. You should split this beast core into many parts and try multiple times. When you have gotten a good grasp on it, you can add the rest into the Terminator Profound Bomb.”

“The beast cores of spirit beasts are very hard. This is also one from a Rank Two spirit beast. Splitting it might not be so easy...” Qin Lie commented.

“Give it to me, I have something that can help you split it into ten small pieces,” Li Mu responded with a smile.

“Then thanks, Uncle Li.”

“Mn.

Chapter 107: Taking Over The Artifact Forging Hall

Deep in a mountain a few hundred miles away from Icestone City were seven valleys. The seven valleys were arranged somewhat in the shape of the Big Dipper, and it contained a kind of magic that called to the heaven and earth.

In a valley where Yin energy was slightly thicker, there was an icy cold pond. The pond water was crystal clear, and a dense fog floated above its surface.

At the moment, there was an attractive figure wearing thin clothes sitting in the middle of the pond.

As the spirit energy turned, the water around her gathered to form many droplets the size of an eyeball. Each and every one of the water droplets were crystal clear, and the spirit energy inside them was thick and pure.

Magically surrounding her, the droplets spun inside the crystal-like pond.

Amidst the milky-white fog, she concentrated on cultivating her spirit art and circulating her spirit energy. The more water droplets she gathered, the strong the waves that emanated from her body.

Lu Li’s figure arrived quietly.

Wearing a jade green dress, an indifferent expression, and a pair of cold eyes, she stared at the pond for a moment before saying, “As a matter of fact, your cultivating talents are better than your sister’s.”

The fog dissipated, and without the bindings of spirit energy, the water droplets turned back to ice-cold water and melted into the pond.

Ling Yushi opened her eyes; her appearance tranquil and otherworldly as she smiled and said, “Good day, Senior Sister.”

“This are the pills Master sent me to give you.” Just as Lu Li put down a bottle, she immediately frowned and said, “Do not stash pills in secret any longer. I may not cover for you next time. I will tell Master. She has a bad temper…”

Sitting in the middle of the pond, Ling Yushi sighed quietly, “I’m sorry, Senior Sister. The pills Master sent over are simply too much for me; I can never finish them all. I just don’t want to waste it.”

“You don’t want to waste them?” Lu Li kept a cold expression, “As Master’s direct disciple, we can afford to be wasteful with our cultivation materials. Even if we did consume more of those pills, it will definitely not cause any discomfort to our bodies.”

After a pause, she snorted and said, “Do you really think I don’t know where your stashed pills went to?”

Ling Yushi lowered her head and did not argue.

“That Qin Lie brat cannot keep up with your pace at all. Under normal circumstances, it will take at least tens of years before he can break through to the Manifestation Realm and enter forces such as Seven Fiends Valley and Dark Asura Hall.” Lu Li did not hold back at all as she coldly continued, “And this is assuming the best case scenario. If he gets into an accident or is injured during battle, he will take even longer to enter the Manifestation Realm. Moreover, the breakthrough from the Natal Opening Realm to the Manifestation Realm is not easy; some people will go their entire lives without crossing that line!”

“Are you going to wait for him forever?” Lu Li exclaimed softly.

What do you think I should do, Senor Sister?” Ling Yushi lifted her head looking completely natural; she was unaffected by her words.

“Forget him,” Lu Li answered.

Ling Yushi smiled gently and shook her head softly. “What if I can’t forget?”

“Then killing him is fine too!” Lu Li said with a cold expression, “With your talents and qualifications, your future will be limitless. Do not let a man disturb your mind! If I were you, I would kill him and spend all my energy on the ascension of my realm. I would set my goal to chase after Master’s footsteps!”

“Never mind. Let’s not dwell on this subject anymore.” Ling Yushi was dumbfounded. In her eyes, Lu Li was a crazy woman; a cultivation madman who would sacrifice anything for the ascension of her realm. “Senior Sister, very soon you’ll be representing this valley in the Arctic Mountain Range. Please do me a favor and help me check out how the Ling Family is doing. Also, if it’s possible, then help me take a look at Qin Lie as well. I want to know how he’s doing…”

“You’re utterly hopeless!” Lu Li exclaimed with a cold expression. That was the last of her words as she turned around and walked away.

Ling Yushi smiled lightly, and after Lu Li left, only then did she whisper in a soft voice, “That is because Senior Sister has never fallen in love with a man. That is why you cannot understand and why your heart can be as firm as steel…”

Nebula Pavilion.

Qin Lie was heading towards the Artifact Forging Hall, pondering how he could borrow Yao Tai’s furnace so he could refine the Terminator Profound Bomb.

He had stayed in Li’s Shop for over a month and successfully built the compound spirit diagrams needed for the Terminator Profound Bomb on top of a spirit tablet. Li Mu had split the Ice Soul Python’s core into ten little pieces as real materials for his attempt.

—The attempt to truly create the Terminator Profound Bomb!

Now everything was set, and the only thing that was remaining was the actual forging process. That was why he needed to borrow the furnace in the Artifact Forging Hall.

He decided to communicate with Yao Tai.

He hadn't been here for a while. Not even taking step into the hall, he already heard Liu Ting's scoldings, "You can't do this, you can't do that. Then what can you actually do? Nebula Pavilion has fed you and given you so many spirit materials to forge artifacts, and yet you can't even fix my Mirror of Thousand Illusions. What else are you here for?"

"My little grandaunt, I've told you many times. The components of your Mirror of Thousand Illusions are conflicting with each other, and no matter how many times it's fixed, it will still break easily. This is a problem of structure, and I cannot repair it completely. What do you really want me to do?" Inside the hall, Yao Tai's voice was weak and feeble. "Besides, I've been sick due to overwork, and for a short time I will not be able to fix spirit artifacts for anyone. Even if you want this fixed, it will have to wait until after I recover."

"How are you tired? Repairing a mere spirit artifact is enough to tire you to the point of sickness? Then what about us? We just came back from the outskirts of the Arctic Mountain Range. We've all fought with spirit beasts and we're all risking our lives! Does it

trouble you just to sit inside the pavilion and fix a spirit artifact?" Liu Ting yelled out in a cold voice.

Qin Lie shook his head and came in while covering his ears. He saw immediately Yao Tai sitting at his place with a dark complexion. Liu Ting, Wei Li, and a few other young people were gathered around him.

"Du Heng!" His glance swept over to the back, and suddenly Qin Lie gave a soft yell while his face darkened slightly.

"Qin Lie!" Du Heng's gaze had also turned chilly as he stared at him wildly, like a tied up beast, looking as if he would rush over and fight him with his life.

Back at Ling Town, Qin Lie had blasted Du Heng, inflicting him with many serious injuries in front of numerous Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners. Du Heng saw it as a terrible humiliation and the sorest spot of his entire life.

To kill Qin Lie, Du Heng had spent great effort while cultivating for over a year, and now that he had stepped into the ninth level of Refinement, he had been looking for an opportunity to take revenge.

"Don't be hasty, Du Heng." Wei Xing's son, Wei Li, quietly stopped him before looking sideways at Qin Lie. Coldly, he said, "He is a successful gigolo who managed to hook up with a woman from the Department of Internal Affairs in Dark Asura Hall. Not only did he manage to break through to the Natal Opening Realm,

the woman even gave him ten thousand contribution points as pocket money. Tsk tsk, that's his business though. We can't possibly compare to him."

"Yeah, he's great when it comes to this aspect. Back at Ling Town, he also hooked up with their miss and even got an engagement. Heh, after his intentions were found out and they dissolved the engagement, he once again kissed up to Tu Ze and came to Nebula Pavilion. Not long after arriving at Nebula Pavilion, he again magically hooked up with that woman from Dark Asura Hall. This kind of skill, man... I am truly put to shame by it."

"Qin Lie, don't think that you are the only one who can enter Nebula Pavilion this early." Du Heng's face was dark. "I've scored an achievement at the Arctic Mountain Range, and I also can become a core member of Nebula Pavilion in advance. Our grudge... will be resolved in Nebula Pavilion in the future!"

"You scored an achievement?" Qin Lie smiled coolly. "That fake uncle of yours... your real father. How many people did he send to help you? How many credits did he fake in your name so you could finally slip into Nebula Pavilion?

Ignoring Du Heng's livid expression—it was as if he wanted to eat him alive—he then turned to looked at Wei Li with lightning flashing in his eyes and said with a cold and stern expression, "A bunch of fools who rely on their dads to live like you all have the right to taunt me? Do you believe that you won't live over a year in Nebula Pavilion if your dads aren't around?"

While he was threatened, a consciousness formed by killing intent in Qin Lie's mind actually gushed out of his eyes.

When Wei Li met his eyes, Wei Li suddenly felt cold from the top to bottom, and his neck felt as if a sharp knife had cut through it. With a pale face Wei Li stepped continuously backpedaled, looking embarrassed to the extreme.

"You think trash like you has the right to ridicule anyone?" Qin Lie smiled coldly.

A small bit of surprise sprouted in his heart. He suddenly realized that his mind consciousness had quite the wondrous use, allowing him to suppress low level martial practitioners with his aura.

"Don't think you can do whatever you want in Nebula Pavilion just because you've broken through to the Natal Opening Realm!" Liu Ting scowled and let out a humph. "Once this matter at the Arctic Mountain Range is finished, my father will become the new Pavilion Master in Nebula Pavilion. Du Heng's... uncle, Elder Du Haitian, will become the new Vice Pavilion Master. When that happens, I look forward to see how long you and this useless artificer can stay in the pavilion."

"Let's go!" Liu Ting led the way and headed outside.

The embarrassed Wei Li and the few other young men also followed her out the door.

Du Heng was the only one who stayed behind. His expression was savage, and there was terrible enmity blinking in his eyes. He grit his teeth and said, “Qin Lie, you and all of the Ling Family will die!”

“Ling Family?” Qin Lie smiled coldly. “Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan have already entered Seven Fiends Valley and you still want to harass Ling Family. Are you really looking to die?”

“You’ll see!” Du Heng threw down those malicious words before exiting the Artifact Forging Hall.

Qin Lie frowned and could not help but worry on the inside for Ling Family’s Ling Feng, Ling Ying, and the others. From Du Heng’s tone, it seemed that Du Haitian had a plan to deal with the Ling Family.

Ling Feng, Ling Ying, Ling Xing and the others had fought together with him at Celestial Wolf Mountain, and before he left Ling Town, it was also Ling Feng and them who had come over to console him, to drink with him, helping him with his sorrows...

He might have an opinion against the Ling Family Patriarch and Ling Chengzhi, but he was very fond of Ling Feng and them. He didn’t want any misfortune to befall them, so he was slightly worried.

“It’s been a long time; they should have left the city a long time ago. I hope they’re okay.” Qin Lie thought to himself.

“You haven’t come in a while.” While he was pondering, Yao Tai said weakly, “I’ve been busy repairing spirit artifacts as of late, and this time, I guess I’m completely burned out. I most likely won’t be able to do anything in a short while.”

He looked at Qin Lie with slightly brightened eyes. “Congratulations on your breakthrough to the Natal Opening Realm. After today’s matter, I’ve finally understood that the ascension of artifact forging is also related to a martial practitioner’s realm. If my realm is high enough, then I wouldn’t expend so much energy when repairing spirit artifacts. I wouldn’t completely drain my spirit energy, nor would I be so completely exhausted…”

Lately, as the martial practitioners battled against the spirit beasts in the Arctic Mountain Range, many martial practitioners inside the pavilion had damaged their spirit artifacts, and they all came to Yao Tai to repair them.

The Pavilion Master, Tu Mo, had also instructed Yao Tai to do his best.

So every time his spirit energy recovered, he would immediately sink himself into the repairing of spirit artifacts. This continued for a few months, regardless of day and night, and finally, Yao Tai, whose cultivation realm was not high in the first place, could not handle it anymore and collapsed.

Qin Lie had been worrying about a way to ask Yao Tai about borrowing the Artifact Forging Hall’s furnace. The moment he heard his words, he hurriedly said with sincerity, “You have

worked too hard, Great Master. Why don't you go home and take a good few days of rest while I watch over the Artifact Forging Hall for you. I guarantee that there will be no problems at all. What do you think, master?"

"Alright. It's about time I take a temporary rest." Yao Tai nodded.

"Don't worry Great Master, I got this." Qin Lie beat his chest and promised him.

Chapter 108: Splurge

Yao Tai collapsed and had no choice but to rest. He was no longer able to fix any spirit artifacts.

Qin Lie wrote the news onto a notice and stuck it on the tripod in front of the Artifact Forging Hall's main entrance. Then he shut the hall's main door close.

Inside the hall, there were many spirit material cabinets, and inside them there were a wide assortment of materials. The supporting materials for the 'Terminator Profound Bomb' he was about to create could mostly be found in there.

But Qin Lie did not plan to use Yao Tai's spirit materials, nor did he plan to use his Fire Crystals. He was only going to borrow the furnace used to smelt artifacts.

He first went to the warehouse and used some of his contribution points to buy some of the spirit materials needed to create the Terminator Profound Bomb. Then, he took out the Fire Crystals he had gathered and moved them one at a time into the Artifact Forging Hall.

After a day's preparation, he had gathered all of the supporting materials needed to create the Terminator Profound Bomb and filled the bottom of the furnace with Fire Crystals.

Watching the furnace, his expression gradually turned serious. He felt a little uneasy, and he had no confidence at all.

After following Yao Tai for more than half a year, he was very clear on the process of forging an artifact. He also knew all the characteristics of the spirit materials by heart.

However, he had never actually forged an artifact with his own hands before; so he didn't really have any experience.

He stared at the furnace for a long time. After a while, because he did not plan to use the main ingredients immediately, he moved the split pieces of Ice Soul Python's beast core away.

Seeing that time was slowly passing by, he sucked in a deep breath and finally ceased his hesitation.

"Prepare the spirit materials. Melting. Fusing. Precipitating into artifact..."

Whispering silently, he lit up the Fire Crystals, and the tens of Fire Crystals burned up. Through their flames, the furnace burned until it was crimson red.

The ball shape vessel he had prepared a long time ago had been placed at the notch inside the furnace before the fire was lit. He then watched the flames and waited until the furnace was burned completely red. Only once that happened did he begin to slowly put in the spirit materials.

"Sssssssssss!"

The second the spirit materials entered the furnace, a thick smoke immediately rose from inside it. A burning smell came quickly after.

“It’s too early.”

Qin Lie exclaimed once before hurriedly adding the Profound Cold Jade to help the spirit materials cool down, to let the furnace’s temperature lower for just a little.

He immediately put his full concentration into observing the furnace. He imagined the steps Yao Tai had taken to forge artifacts and tested them one after another.

“Oh no! I was one step too slow and wasted a Ground Crystal!”

“It’s over, the temperature wasn’t high enough and the spirit materials did not melt together immediately. They’re conflicting with each other!”

“It’s a failure!”

Inside the burning hot Artifact Forging Hall, Qin Lie was sweating all over and locking his brows deeply in a frown, carefully going through each and every step to smelt an artifact.

He had underestimated the difficulty of artifact forging. Without

any experience, he repeatedly made mistakes and wasted many spirit materials for nothing. He didn't manage to fuse all of the spirit materials even once.

In just two short days, he had splurged all of the supporting materials he needed to create the Terminator Profound Bomb.

He had no choice but to got to the warehouse once more, and with the cost of one thousand and five hundred points, he bought five times the amount of spirit materials he had last time—he was prepared to continue failing.

He then restarted the great undertaking of artifact forging...

Ten days later, two thousand contribution points worth of spirit materials were completely exhausted, and his accumulation of experience in artifact forging had improved only just a little. The number of mistakes he made were also decreasing gradually.

But he still did not manage to create an end product.

Therefore he bought yet another two thousand contribution points worth of spirit materials.

He continued to work hard.

This time, the loss of spirit materials was clearly decreasing. The furnace burned crimson red, and the Fire Crystals kept the temperature hot. He was becoming more and more adept at adding

spirit materials and also adding in just the right amounts.

He continued to research painstakingly, adding to his artifact forging experience little by little while rapidly expending his spirit materials.

Seven days later.

All of his clothing was drenched, and his red eyes stared at the furnace flickering along with the Fire Crystal's flame. His eyes too were flashing with a strange light...

"Ground Crystal!"

While watching the furnace, he carelessly but accurately grabbed a brown-yellow crystal, and just when the flames inside the furnace rushed upwards he immediately flung the crystal into the furnace.

An enclosed explosive sound rattled from inside the furnace.

He sharply gazed at the furnace and waited for at least ten more seconds. After realizing that there were no longer any exploding sounds coming from inside, a smile finally appeared on his face.

"That is yet another step forward!" He quietly became excited.

Another three days passed.

It was early morning today, and Qin Lie's eyes were bloodshot as he stared wide-eyed at the furnace.

The Fire Crystals beneath the furnace had died long ago, and the high temperature inside the furnace was also dissipating slowly. There were a lot less spirit materials around him, and these weren't enough to attempt another round of artifact forging.

"I sure hope it works. Otherwise, I'll have to immediately go and buy more spirit materials for the next bout of artifact forging."

Qin Lie silently tensed up and waited until the last spark died inside the furnace. He then slowly moved forward and looked down at the notch inside the furnace, examining the ball-shaped vessel.

Within the ball-shaped vessel, his eyes were met with a dark green round ball about the size of a walnut. The surface of the round, dark green ball was very rough, and it had a many rice-sized protrusions. On the surface, it had no beauty and not a bit of luster either. It looked like the most normal-looking iron ball you can find, not rare at all in any way.

However, Qin Lie's expression shook greatly as he yelled out, "It finally has a ball shape to it!"

He cheerfully took out the green round ball. It was slightly hot to touch, so it seemed that the heat hadn't completely dissipated yet.

Narrowing his eyes, he slipped in a wisp of mind consciousness into the ball and carefully sensed the spirit materials' compatibility...

"Uh, the spirit materials haven't merged very well, but... this counts as my first finished product." After a while Qin Lie cracked open a grin and began to giggle. He was very motivated. "Let's give it a few more tries. If I can forge it into a ball again, then I will add the Ice Soul Python's core inside with the main materials as the core and continue forging!"

Therefore, he once again went to the spirit material room.

"You still have four thousand and three hundred contribution points." A middle-aged man surnamed Han frowned in front of the spirit material room's door, saying, "Oh, Qin Lie, you've been spending your contribution points way too quickly. You've used over five thousand contribution points out of ten thousand. The spirit materials you're asking for this time will require you to pay another two thousand and three hundred contribution points, so you'll only have two thousand left..."

This person was Han Qingrui's subordinate. Because he knew that Han Qingrui had taken a liking to Qin Lie, he took the initiative to give him a reminder, in case Qin Lie wasn't clear on how much he was spending and wasted all of his contribution points without knowing.

"Only two thousand left..." Qin Lie smiled bitterly and said, "I

got it. Please exchange them. Thank you for your warning."

He finally understood why they said an artificer was a profession that burned money.

Of the ten thousand contribution points he had earned, he had already expended more than half of them, but to this day, he still hadn't forged a finished product. If it wasn't for the fact that he had seen the light of hope recently, even he would have hesitated on whether or not he should continue investing contribution points into this project.

"Alright, the spirit materials you asked for are all here. Use them well." The man nodded his head helplessly.

After giving his thanks, Qin Lie left with five full bags of spirit materials, and he once again began busying himself inside the Artifact Forging Hall.

Seven days later.

A round ball laid at the center of his palm. The body of the ball was round and slightly bright. it was dark green in color. It was also only about the size of a walnut and was slightly cold to touch...

"The compatibility of spirit materials is okay now. There is also no conflict with the supporting materials when using the Ice Soul Python's beast core as the main material. From the looks of it, this counts as a true finished product. Now, it only needs a compound

spirit diagram to be inscribed inside, and it will be counted as a success."

Qin Lie's face beamed with a smile. After a moment of thought, he decided to not inscribe the spirit diagram immediately, but to use the remaining spirit materials and make a few more end products.

With the experience of his first success, the artifact forging afterwards suddenly turned into a very smooth ride. He finished up the last of his spirit materials and successfully forged yet another five "artifacts."

"The last step will be to inscribe a spirit diagram in them. If this step succeeds, then the forging of the Terminator Profound Bomb can be successfully concluded." Qin Lie's expression was one of excitement "... Terminator Profound Bomb. It's quite the good name; I hope the power of its explosion will truly surprise me."

He decided to take a little break first. After he had restored his state of mind and calmed down his heart, then he would continue to finish with the final inscription of a spirit diagram.

This last step was too critical that he didn't dare to not treat it seriously. That was why he was going to face it in peak condition.

"You've worked for such a long time, and all you made are these little balls?" Yao Tai suddenly showed his face. He was standing behind one of the hall's pillars, staring with an odd expression at the Terminator Profound Bombs. "What kind of spirit artifact is

this?”

Qin Lie was shocked on the inside as he laughed sheepishly. “I forged these just for fun.”

Yao Tai nodded, walked over, and curiously looked at a Terminator Profound Bomb that still wasn’t inscribed with a spirit diagram. He then said, “Let me have a closer look?”

Qin Lie gave him a smile and passed one over. “It’s no big deal, I’m just giving it a try. I did not use any of the spirit materials or Fire Crystals here; all of the forging materials were bought using my own contribution points. I hope you don’t mind, Great Master.”

“You don’t need to explain, I understand.” Yao Tai accepted the round dark green ball and carefully played with it in his hand. He earnestly sensed the components inside it.

After a while, he nodded again. “This is forged pretty well. The materials’ compatibility are still acceptable. The real time you’ve studied under me was at best more than half a year, and I have not instructed you in anyway either. Your talents can be counted as astounding for you to be able to reach where you are.” He looked towards Qin Lie before frowning suddenly. He continued, “Unfortunately, this is unusable. Without a spirit diagram to become its soul, this is just a round ball. It can never become a real spirit artifact.”

Naturally, Qin Lie understood, and after giving him a smile he

replied, “I know.”

As he stroked the round ball, Yao Tai suddenly turned quiet, and it was only until after a while later that he said, “Ten days ago I’ve already recovered, but I didn’t want to continue fixing spirit artifacts for the people inside the pavilion, so I did not show up. I also found out about the matter of you borrowing the furnace to forge an artifact. Since you did not use my spirit materials, I am fine with it, and I also want to see how far you can go…”

He raised his head and said, “I admit that, in terms of your talent in artifact forging, you exceed all of my previous followers, and you are also a hard worker.”

Qin Lie’s expression was calm. “You flatter me, Great Master.”

“Learning spirit diagrams is not as easy as it looks, and in truth, there isn’t much that I can teach you because the spirit diagrams that I’ve mastered are all very low level…” Yao Tai said with a frown. After a moment’s thought, he seemed to have come to a decision and said, “If you really want to learn, then work as my helper for another year. Once you have reached a full year, I will teach you the few basic spirit diagrams I’ve learned.”

Qin Lie was shocked.

“What kind of spirit diagram did you want to inscribe in this round ball? I can help you,” Yao Tai asked for his opinion.

“I-it’s fine. I just made it for fun, for practice. There’s really no need for master to worry about it.” Qin Lie felt a bit flattered, but he quickly stopped him. “Since Great Master is here, I do not need to continue stand guard any longer. I’m really tired as of late so I’ll be going back to rest.”

Once he finished, he took the round ball away from Yao Tai’s hands and left the hall with a smile.

“This bastard!” Once he hurriedly left, Yao Tai scolded with an angry face, “This is the first time I’ve truly wanted to take an apprentice, and I just have to run into an ungrateful one. I was even prepared to teach him how to inscribe spirit diagrams, and yet he still ran away without even saying anything. Dammit, why do I have to run into such an idiot!”

Chapter 109: Bad News

“Someone’s back!”

“An Elder has returned to the pavilion!”

“It’s Elder Chu’s men!”

During the afternoon, just when Qin Lie and Liu Yan had both exited the cultivation area, they immediately heard yells coming from the direction of Nebula Pavilion’s southern door.

For the past year, as the war between the martial practitioners and spirit beasts escalated, more and more martial practitioners inside Nebula Pavilion had been sent out to battle.

Every time a team returned, the guards at the front door would shout loudly and welcome the triumphant returnees to give them a warm reception.

“Let’s go and take a look.” Liu Yan gave a light smile. “I’ve recently heard news that we are slowly gaining the advantage at the Arctic Mountain Range. Elder Chu Yan should’ve acquired quite the number of spirit beast spoils during this trip.”

Qin Lie had rested for two days in preparation for the inscription of the compound spirit diagram for the “Terminator Profound Bomb” the day after tomorrow. Currently he was relaxing, so after hearing Liu Yan’s words, he nodded and headed towards the door

with him.

The warm welcomes and yells suddenly stopped.

When Qin Lie and Liu Yan's people were about halfway through, they could no longer hear any voices coming from the front door, and it was as if every man had suddenly turned into a mute.

"Something's wrong." Liu Yan frowned as his expression darkened.

"What's going on?" asked Qin Lie in surprise.

"Normally, only returnees who have suffered terrible losses would incur such a... heavy atmosphere." A bad feeling was already blooming in Liu Yan's heart. "It is likely that Elder Chu's situation isn't too good."

Qin Lie said nothing in response.

A few minutes later, both Qin Lie, Liu Yan, and a lot of other people who had heard the news arrived together at Nebula Pavilion's southern entrance.

It took only a single glance from faraway for Qin Lie to feel his expression change as he said in a low voice, "Brother Liu, you indeed guessed correctly."

At the front door, all of Chu Yan's subordinates wore dark complexions on their faces, and there was no light in their eyes as well. A lot of them were either missing an arm or a leg, and nearly every one of them had incurred severe injuries.

Chu Yan and Tu Ze, Zhuo Qian and the others were at the back of the line. They all wore gloomy expressions as if they had suffered some kind of terrible blow.

Especially Chu Peng. It seemed that he had cried his entire way back home, and even his eyes were swollen red.

His expression was terribly numb. He walked, puppet-like, with Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian, bowing his head while appearing to be completely lifeless.

At this moment, all of the gathered Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners and the guards at the front door had gone silent.

Everyone could see that the losses sustained during this expedition were absolutely terrible. It stopped their cheers, and they were unable to say even a single welcoming word.

The atmosphere at the door was absolutely oppressive.

"The number of people who came back did not even reach a tenth of their original number. Elder Chu's losses are absolutely terrifying." After watching for a while, a person sighed softly.

“Why haven’t we seen Elder Chu Yan?” Some people said doubtfully.

The moment the words fell out, everyone could not help but consider a possibility: He can’t have passed away, can he?

Soon, the crowd grew even more quiet. Their expressions were ugly, and a cold chill spawned from the bottom of their hearts.

“Pavilion Master! Pavilion Master!”

“Elder Han!”

Suddenly, the crowd cried out one after another.

The Pavilion Master of Nebula Pavilion, Tu Mo, and Han Qingrui emerged from the crowd. They all wore heavy expressions as they walked over and looked at Chu Yan’s remaining forces. Tu Mo asked, “Where is Elder Chu Yan?”

“He was killed in action.” Chu Yan’s subordinate, Hall Master Wu Chong suddenly lifted his head with eyes filled with the color of blood. “Please uphold justice for Elder Chu, Pavilion Master!”

“Please uphold justice for Elder Chu, Pavilion Master!” Chu Peng suddenly knelt on the floor and kowtowed towards Tu Mo. He was completely red, and he bit down on his teeth so hard that there were crunching sounds. “It is Liu Yuntao and Du Haitian who have murdered my father! Please avenge my father, Pavilion Master!”

“What kind of bullshit are you spouting! What does your father’s death have to do with my father?” Liu Ting, Wei Li, Du Heng, and a few others were also observing from the crowd, and it was this moment when she screamed out, pointed at Chu Peng, and scolded, “Our father and Elder Du have also contributed their efforts for the pavilion and fought desperately against the spirit beasts. On what basis are you slandering my father?”

“If it wasn’t for your bastard father and Du Haitian coming up with such an evil scheme, my father would definitely not have died!” Chu Peng rose from the ground, and with a face filled with madness, rushed towards Liu Ting.

“Chu Peng, stop!” Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian quickly rushed forward and stopped him by grabbing his shoulder on each side.

“Enough!” Tu Mo yelled angrily before asking, “Wu Chong! What exactly happened?”

“To deal with the spirit beast horde, without telling anyone beforehand, Liu Yuntao and Du Haitian had arranged for us to become bait and attract the spirit beast horde into a valley. We were surrounded by three hundred Rank One spirit beasts, sixty Rank Two spirit beasts, and five Rank Three spirit beasts within the valley…”

Wu Chong kept his head lowered; the expression on his face was fierce and terrible. “As a result Elder Chu Yan was killed straight away, and almost all of us were eliminated as well. As for them,

they had joined the people from Dark Asura Hall to prepare an ambush on the valley's cliffs and used rolling rocks, fire, and ice to blast the spirit beasts inside the valley. The spirit beast horde that we had baited was almost completely exterminated, but we and those people who were in the valley with us were had pretty much died off completely as well."

Abruptly, he lifted his head and looked towards Liu Ting, and after sucking in a deep breath, he harshly said, "Why didn't your father and Elder Du Haitian become the bait in the valley? If they had at least explained matters earlier, we would at least be mentally prepared beforehand and may not necessarily have suffered so many losses!"

Liu Ting was shaken by his aura as she took a step backwards and stammered, "There will always be sacrifices in battle. At least, at least my father and them had succeeded and eliminated so many spirit beasts. This is their victory; a huge victory!"

"Correct, it is a huge victory! Both your father and Du Haitian had said so, and even the people from Dark Asura Hall said the same." Wu Chong smiled tragically. "To use your own family as fodder and send all of us to our deaths in exchange for his huge victory. It truly is an impressive ploy! Not only did he impress a Great Hall Master of Dark Asura Hall, even the people from Seven Fiends Valley and Dark Shadow Tower praised him for acquiring a great victory for such a small cost; they praised that his methods were amazing! But what about us? All of our people are dead, and Elder Chu was tore to pieces by the Blue-eyed Toad right before our very eyes!"

Wu Chong's expression was fierce and mournful. "They all died. One after another, they died before my eyes. Many of their corpses are incomplete because they were all torn apart and eaten by the spirit beasts! Even Elder Chu did not leave behind a full corpse!"

"Let go of me! LET GO OF ME!" Chu Peng howled madly as his eyes were glued onto Liu Ting, looking like he was reading to stake his life at any moment.

Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian had to use all of their strength to keep him down.

All the Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners gathered in front of the entrance wore a heavy expression and kept quiet without lending an opinion when they listened up to this point.

Liu Ting, Wei Li, Du Heng, and the others realized that the crowd around them was looking at them with unfriendly eyes, so they did not choose to stay behind and instead quietly slipped away.

"Tu Ze, please closely watch over Chu Peng for me. The rest of the injured will get themselves treated immediately." With a frown, Tu Mo quietly yelled out, "Wu Chong, come with me. I need to know more about this in detail."

Tu Mo nodded once towards Han Qingrui, and the duo headed together into the great hall he used to discuss matters. Wu Chong followed behind them.

When they saw Han Qingrui and him leaving first, the rest of the crowd also gradually went away. However, everyone's expressions were dark, and the matter had left a mark in their hearts.

"Chu Peng, you have my deepest condolences," consoled Qin Lie after he walked forward and let out a sigh.

Chu Peng had his head lowered. Like a trapped beast, his expression was ugly and terrible, and his emotions were also still in an incredibly unstable state.

Tu Ze and Zho Qian looked at Qin Lie. Their gazes were a little off, and they look like they wanted to say something but were hesitant about it.

"Is there anything you can't tell me?" Qin Lie frowned.

After giving the thought a moment, Tu Ze gritted his teeth and said, "Brother, you shouldn't have any good feelings about Ling Family, do you?"

"What do you mean?" Qin Lie asked uncertainly.

"You're going to find out really soon anyway, so I won't hide this from you. Those Ling Family clansmen... also had entered the valley with Elder Chu Yan as bait." With a dark expression Tu Ze added, "Almost all of them are dead."

Qin Lie paled.

“I’m sorry we couldn’t help. We were with Elder Kang Hui and Ye Yangqiu, so we knew nothing about this matter,” Tu Ze apologized.

“Liu Yuntao, Du Haitian, and Wei Xing had hid their cards too well. No one would have guessed that they could be this ruthless. By the time we heard of the news, it had already happened.” Zhuo Qian sighed quietly and slapped Qin Lie’s shoulders. “You too... should watch out.”

“Has the Ling Family received the news?” Qin Lie’s expression was livid, and his eyes were filled with murderous intent. “Those people from the Ling Family who went, are they really all dead?”

“The Ling Family should already know” Zhuo Qian answered.

Qin Lie nodded his head. Imbued with horrific killing intent, he went straight out of Nebula Pavilion.

“Ling Ying, Ling Xin, Ling Xiao...”

One by one their young faces flashed through his mind. Scene after scene where they had fought shoulder to shoulder were drawn out of the depths of his memories.

He could still remember the day before he left Ling Town. During his saddest moments, they had carried with them a jug of liquor and drank with him for the entire night, had accompanied him to

scream and yell, and cried and laughed with him like a madman.

"Did you all leave just like that..."

He whispered to himself along the way; his expression chillingly dark to the extreme, and just like Chu Peng, he was on the verge of losing control.

When he arrived at the courtyard the Ling Family was occupying, before he even went in, he could already hear the entire house filled with mourning cries.

The families of Ling Xin, Ling Xiao, and the others were all weeping tearfully in the courtyard. Even Ling Chengzhi sat blankly under a wooden pole, looking like he had lost his soul as he muttered again and again, "Big brother. Oh, big brother. Big brother..."

Ling Feng, the only one who hadn't left the city, consoled repeatedly beside Ling Xin, Ling Xiao, and the others' parents with red eyes, "Auntie, Uncle, from today onwards I, Ling Feng shall become your son! I, Ling Feng, swear that as long as I have a breath left in this body, I will definitely avenge them in the future!"

An atmosphere of pain and sadness pervaded the courtyard. The Ling Family clansmen were either silent or crying and cursing aloud.

Qin Lie stood at the front entrance, watching the crying Ling

Family clansmen, watching Ling Feng swearing and gritting his teeth, watching the soulless Ling Chengzhi...

He suddenly thought of the two sisters, Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan.

If the two sisters learned that their father had died horribly, learned that their childhood friends that had grown up with them were all dead, could they accept it?

“Qin Lie!” Ling Chengzhi suddenly found him. With an ugly expression, he rushed over and grabbed his shoulders with both arms; then, with a slightly hysterical voice, he yelled out, “Can you send a message to Dark Fiend Valley through Nebula Pavilion and tell the truth behind my brother’s death to them?!”

Qin Lie could feel Ling Chengzhi’s strength on his shoulders, could taste the terrible grief inside his heart, but he could only shake his head indifferently.

“I have no way of sending a message to Dark Fiend Valley. You should understand that communication will only be convenient when the high level forces are sending a message to their vassals. The opposite will be filled with obstacles. Not to mention that Nebula Pavilion isn’t even a vassal to Dark Fiend Valley, so even I do not have a way to contact them.”

After a pause, he said again, “And what can they do even if they knew? Liu Yuntao and Du Haitian had plotted and killed many spirit beasts. Although they have sacrificed a lot of people, they

were instead praised unanimously by Seven Fiends Valley, Dark Asura Hall, and Dark Shadow Tower. Setting them aside, not even Granny Jiu can say anything about this situation. Even if we did tell them, what can they change?”

The moment the words landed, Ling Chengzhi, Ling Feng, and the Ling Family clansmen all paled. It was as if their hopes for revenge had been extinguished by him in an instant.

Chapter 110: Loss Of Power

Nebula Pavilion, Tu Mo's study.

"What have you called Zhuo Qian and I over for, Big Brother?" After Tu Ze entered, he saw Tu Mo reading a letter on his chair with a dark expression.

Elder Han Qingrui was also standing to the side with his eyebrows tightly knit. He did not look too good.

"Little Ze, you and Zhuo Qian can't stay at Nebula Pavilion much longer." Tu Mo put down the letter in his hands and raised his head. "Father has asked the both of us to enter Dark Asura Hall."

"Why?" Tu Ze couldn't quite accept it. "Big Brother, you have cultivated step by step in Nebula Pavilion and honed yourself slowly to the Manifestation Realm before you officially entered Dark Asura Hall. I'm only at the Natal Opening Realm. What's the point if I enter Dark Asura Hall with you now?"

"That's right." Zhuo Qian also agreed. "It is my father's intention that I stay at Nebula Pavilion until I reach the Manifestation Realm before returning to Dark Asura Hall."

Tu Mo sighed helplessly. "Uncle Han, please explain it to them."

Han Qingrui nodded his head. "The Pavilion Master had once promised that, between Vice Pavilion Master Kang Hui and Liu

Yuntao, whoever can score an outstanding performance in battle will become the next Pavilion Master. Since Liu Yuntao and Du Haitian had devised that plan and killed many spirit beasts at the Arctic Mountain Range, it can be said that they have achieved an impressive feat and won the first Hall Master's appreciation. Even Seven Fiends Valley and Dark Shadow Tower had praised him greatly..."

The moment the matter was brought up, Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian's eyes immediately turned red as they yelled out, "You call that an outstanding performance?"

"Elder Chu Yan and his subordinates were sacrificed, but in exchange, we attained a huge victory. In the eyes of the higher-ups of Dark Asura Hall, Seven Fiends Valley, and Dark Shadow Tower, these sacrifices are completely worth it. Moreover, they also agree that Liu Yuntao's actions are ruthless and decisive. Thus, he suitable for bigger responsibility. They believe he will become a competent new leader in Nebula Pavilion," Han Qingrui explained.

"How can this be?" Zhuo Qian's voice was weak.

"Big Brother, Father is a commander under the Second Hall Master, and we both know that the Second Hall Master and First Hall Master have never seen eye to eye, so can it be that Liu Yuntao had purposely got closer with the First Hall Master?" Tu Ze said.

"Correct." Tu Mo nodded. "For the longest time Nebula Pavilion has been under the control of our Tu Family. Since father is working under the Second Hall Master, the Tu Family can be counted as the Second Hall Master's power. Between Liu Yuntao

and Kang Hui, no matter who the victor is in this war for the position of Pavilion Master, they will still belong under the Second Hall Master and thus still count as part of the Tu Family…”

He was silent for a while before he continued, “Liu Yuntao obviously did not want to be controlled by the Tu Family. While we were fighting against the spirit beasts, he contacted the First Hall Master at the Arctic Mountain Range and joined forces with him. The First Hall Master has performed extraordinarily well at the Arctic Mountain Range this time and is currently under the limelight, so the Second Hall Master has no choice but to avoid him for the moment.”

“Since Shattered Ice Manor is also on the First Hall Master’s side, in order to ease the endless infighting between Nebula Pavilion and Shattered Ice Manor, it can be said that they’ve acquiesce the intimacy between Liu Yuntao and the First Hall Master. The higher ups feel that if Liu Yuntao had taken over Nebula Pavilion and both sides were the First Hall Master’s men, then Shattered Ice Manor and Nebula Pavilion will no longer fight each other to their deaths.”

He looked at Tu Ze. “To put it plainly, the one Shattered Ice Manor hates is us, the Tu Family. If Nebula Pavilion no longer belonged to the Tu Family, then Shattered Ice Manor will no longer hold such a huge grudge any longer.”

At this point, both Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian had understood what he meant, and they felt slightly chilled in their hearts.

“What about Second Hall Master? Can it be that he…” Zhuo Qian

exclaimed softly.

"We don't have a choice. The First Hall Master had an outstanding performance at the Arctic Mountain Range, and it is rumored that they are about to renew their contract with the spirit beast king as of late." Tu Mo shook his head. "There is nothing the Second Hall Master can do about this matter. Moreover, the higher ups do not wish to see Shattered Ice Manor and Nebula Pavilion to continue fighting each other and has thus acquiesce to the matter. Father also knew that Nebula Pavilion will soon no longer be under the Tu Family's control, so..."

He passed the letter to Tu Ze. "You can take a look yourself."

With a dark face, Tu Ze bowed his head and read the entire letter. Even after reading it, he continued to stay silent.

"So here's the plan. When Liu Yuntao comes back, I will relinquish my position and the two of us shall go together to Dark Asura Hall." Tu Mo waved his hands helplessly. "The two of you should make preparations for the time being."

Once Liu Yuntao takes over Nebula Pavilion, the Tu Family will no longer have any influence inside Nebula Pavilion. Even if Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian stayed behind, they would not give them any quarter. In fact, Liu Yuntao might even scheme against them from the shadows.

That being the case, they might as well leave early and avoid being heavily shackled in the future.

“If we leave, then what will Uncle Han and Uncle Kang do?” Zhuo Qian lowered her head. “What will be the statement about Elder Chu Yan’s revenge?”

Han Qingrui shook his head with a bitter smile. “Miss Qian, I thank you for your concern. The Pavilion Master shall have other arrangements for me, so you do not have to worry. As for Chu Yan… Sigh, you don’t have to worry too much. Just make sure to keep Chu Peng under control and do not in any circumstances allow him to add any more trouble into the mix.”

“The First Hall Master’s in the limelight at the moment, and the ones who got close to him, like Liu Yuntao and Du Haitian, are also in power. We do not have the power to face them directly at the moment, so we have no choice but to avoid them,” Tu Mo said darkly.

……

“Have you heard?” Vice Pavilion Master Liu has scored a great achievement at the Arctic Mountain Range, and he will be taking over the position of Pavilion Master at Nebula Pavilion.”

“To sacrifice Elder Chu Yan and almost everyone under him in exchange for such an achievement… How utterly despicable. I cannot believe that he can be this ruthless.”

“But he succeeded. It is said that Dark Asura Hall’s First Hall Master has given him great recognition, and it also seems that after

they've made a contract with the spirit beast king, he will accompany him on a trip to Nebula Pavilion."

"You have to admit that Vice Pavilion Master Liu is an able man. His methods are much greater than Pavilion Master Tu."

"Sigh, Pavilion Master Tu is still the best. He is fair and just. If Liu Yuntao rose to his position, I wonder what will happen?"

"You haven't seen Liu Ting's expression as of late. She's so pleased she's about to make her way to the heavens. She doesn't even look people in their eyes anymore."

"Wei Li too, and that newcomer Du Heng. These people have been acting quite imposing as of late."

"What can we do? Their fathers are in power right now."

As of late, such buzz could be found at the Scripture Tower, the Artifact Tower, and every large cultivation room. Almost every Nebula Pavilion martial practitioner had heard the news and learned that when Liu Yuntao and his group returns to Nebula Pavilion, he will become a Pavilion Master immediately, whereas Tu Mo will be leaving to work under Dark Asura Hall.

Liu Yuntao, Du Haitian, and Wei Xing's subordinates too were swaggering around as of late and wore quite the confident looks.

Liu Ting, Wei Li and, Du Heng were even worse. They would

laugh out loud while walking on the streets, as if afraid that no one would know how happy and proud they were right now.

……

Qin Lie had accompanied Ling Feng and Ling Chengzhi for two days at the Ling Family's courtyard until they calmed down before he finally returned to Nebula Pavilion.

The moment he returned to Nebula Pavilion, he heard countless discussions and learned that Liu Yuntao would soon become the new Pavilion Master while Du Haitian would become the Vice Pavilion Master.

His expression was cold, and he walked all the way to the Artifact Forging Hall. Just as he walked inside, he immediately saw Liu Ting walking out with Wei Li and Du Heng.

The moment Liu Ting saw his return, her face turned cold as she scoffed. "Nebula Pavilion does not raise trash. This place will be closed from now on. What Artifact Forging Hall? It has no reason to exist at all!"

"Qin Lie, your good days are numbered." Du Heng's gaze was malicious. "In the past, the Tu Family protected you so you could live comfortably inside Nebula Pavilion... You better watch your back later."

"Let us go." Liu Ting left proudly, and the group followed right

after.

Qin Lie walked into the Artifact Forging Hall.

Each one of the cupboards had been sealed off with tape, and artifact forging spirit materials of all kinds had been moved away. The only thing left was the center furnace—it wasn't moved away yet because it was too big.

Yao Tai looked forlorn beside his furnace.

"Great Master Yao..." Qin Lie cried softly.

"What Great Master..." Yao Tai shook his head with a bitter smile. "In a few days, I will be chased out of Nebula Pavilion. Sigh, I never thought that Liu Yuntao would come into power."

"The stuff here?" Qin Lie asked.

"They've been all moved away." Yao Tai explained, "They're afraid of me stashing the spirit materials. They said that these all belonged to the pavilion and need to be moved away first."

"Didn't the Pavilion Master say anything?" Qin Lie frowned.

"We've already come to this point, and the Pavilion Master doesn't want to conflict with Liu Yuntao, so he allowed Liu Ting and the others to do whatever they want." Yao Tai smiled bitterly.

“Sigh, if I had known about this earlier I would have made a new Mirror of Thousand Illusions for that little grandaunt back then. The pride of an artificer… is a pretty terrible thing sometimes.”

Qin Lie could not say anything.

“I’ll be leaving the day after tomorrow. I… won’t be able to teach you anything else in the future. Keep this booklet. It contains my views of all sorts of low level spirit materials. There’s nothing really valuable in there, just my tens of years of experience.” He passed over a rather thick scripture to Qin Lie and said, “The spirit diagrams I knew are too rough, so I won’t be teaching you about them. I hope you’ll be able to find a real famous teacher in the future. As for me, I’m not qualified to become your master…”

With a heavy heart, Qin Lie accepted his book of artifact forging experience and said sincerely, “Thank you Great Master Yao.”

Waving his hands, Yao Tai signaled for him to leave. He himself was staring at the furnace with a gaze full of emotions. “I’ll have a look at you for a few more days. I wonder how you’ll be treated in the future and whose hands will you fall into. In the past, I had come to Nebula Pavilion just for you. Sigh, tens of years have passed and I am still an unaccomplished artificer. In the end, I was even chased away…”

“Please keep an open mind, Great Master,” Qin Lie consoled.

“Sigh, I won’t know how this furnace will be arranged when I leave. I really don’t want to give away the things I have used for

tens of years.” Yao Tai sighed. “Even if I have to destroy it, I still do not want to see it misused by other people. Unfortunately... if Liu Ting learned about this, there’ll be a whole load of trouble. Never mind, I should forget about it.”

Yao Tai seemed to think to destroy the furnace, but he was afraid of being held accountable by Liu Ting. His face was filled with hesitation.

“If I have the opportunity, I will help you destroy it.” After a moment’s thought, Qin Lie exclaimed softly before bowing deeply towards Yao Tai. Then, he went quietly left.

He arrived beside Han Qingrui.

“Uncle Han?” Qin Lie said softly.

Han Qingrui was staring blankly as if spellbound, and when he finally came to, he gave a weak smile and said, “Oh Qin Lie, you better trade in all of your contribution points while you can in the next few days. Otherwise, when Du Haitian and Liu Yuntao comes back, they may cause some trouble for you.”

“Uncle Han, what do you plan to do?” Qin Lie asked.

“Me?” Han Qingrui smiled bitterly. “I’ll stay for a while and see how it goes. If I really can’t stay here any longer then I’ll leave. It’s not that hard for me to find a living.”

“Uncle Han, can the matter of Liu Yuntao and Du Haitian setting up and killing Elder Chu Yan and the Ling Family clansmen count as violating the criminal laws of the Discipline Hall?” After a moment’s silence, Qin Lie’s eyes shone with a terrible light.

“If they had failed and Chu Yan and the others were all dead in addition to failing to kill the spirit beasts, then the Discipline Hall would definitely interfere and denounce them.” Han Qingrui sighed. “But no, they have won a huge victory. With Chu Yan and their deaths killing many spirit beasts and almost turning the situation on its head, they forced the spirit beast king to sign a contract with us. In this case, not only are they not guilty, they are even considered to have scored a great achievement and won praises from all sides. What can the Discipline Hall possibly do?”

“Then, do you mean that Elder Chu Yan and the Ling Family clansmen have died for nothing?” Qin Lie gritt his teeth as the hostility in his eyes grew deeper and deeper.

“There’s nothing we can do. There’s nothing we can do at all, Qin Lie. You should just accept reality like the rest of us.” Han Qingrui sighed.

“I cannot accept this!” Qin Lie gave a low roar.

Chapter 111: First Hall Master

Late at night, Li's Shop.

Qin Lie's expression was haggard. He had locked himself inside the small house and was concentrating on inscribing the Terminator Profound Bomb's spirit diagram.

"Poof!"

An odd sound resounded, and a wisp of thin smoke escaped from the dark green ball. The smell of something burning filled the room.

As if disheartened, Qin Lie laid flat on the ground and stared blankly at the ceiling. His face was filled with dejection.

"What's wrong? Did you fail again?" Li Mu's voice broke out at the right time from the outside, "How many times does that make it?"

"The third time." Qin Lie sat up again. "I've made six end products, and now I've broken three. Inscribing a spirit diagram inside a real artifact as opposed to just a spirit tablet really is different." He walked out of the small house and saw Li Mu drinking himself drunk under the night sky.

"It's pretty normal." Li Mu gave him a smile before motioning him over to sit. Then he said, "This counts as your first real spirit

diagram inscription. It's always easy to fail the first time. The last time you mended the other party's diagram, you were inscribing while using their foundation, so it was easier in comparison."

"I understand." Qin Lie forced a smile. "It's just that things have been busy lately, and I'm in a hurry to succeed. It frustrates me to keep failing like this."

Li Mu frowned and first poured him a cup of wine. Then he suddenly noted, "You want to kill someone, don't you?"

Qin Lie's expression changed slightly, and he bowed his head and took a sip of wine. He did not rush to answer but instead quietly felt the burning sensation inside his throat.

Glancing at him deeply, Li Mu indifferently said, "I can see the murderous intent in your eyes. I've also heard a bit about the... situation outside as of late."

"Uncle Li, if you have to pay a terrible price to kill a person, should you do it?" asked Qin Lie as he lifted his head and looked into Li Mu's eyes.

"That depends on how much you want to kill him." Li Mu put down his wine cup and pondered for a few seconds. "If the murder in your heart cannot be quelled, if you have a reason to kill them no matter what, if not killing them is something you will regret for the rest of your life, and if you cannot face yourself if you don't kill them, then no matter how terrible a price you must pay, as long as you can guarantee your own life, you should try."

Qin Lie's expression shuddered. As if he had finally made up his mind, he said, "Thank you, Uncle Li."

Li Mu nodded his head and casually mentioned, "If Nebula Pavilion will not receive you, there is always Li's Shop."

Qin Lie felt warm on the inside, and he drank yet another cup of wine. He then looked at the change in the sky and said, "I'll be going back to Nebula Pavilion. Two of my friends... may be leaving in a short while." Once he finished, he got up and walked towards outside.

When he was about to walk out of the backyard, Li Mu suddenly said with narrowed eyes, "Commerce Street strictly forbids fighting, so as long as you hide in here, Nebula Pavilion or Shattered Ice Manor will not be able to do anything to you. Remember, if you really cannot find a way out, then you must come to my shop."

"Thanks Uncle Li," Qin Lie answered softly before finally leaving.

Li Mu's expression was the same as ever as he continued to leisurely drink his wine.

.....

Nebula Pavilion.

When Qin Lie arrived on the second day, he realized that Yao Tai had already left. The Artifact Forging Hall was also closed, and the only thing left was the furnace.

“When are you leaving?”

Inside the pavilion, Zhuo Qian, Qin Lie, Kang Zhi, and Han Feng had gathered together. Both Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian had dispirited looks in their eyes, their faces filled with helplessness.

“When Liu Yuntao returns and my big brother finishes passing over the position, then I will leave together with Zhuo Qian,” Tu Ze replied with a dark expression.

“How is Chu Peng?” Qin Lie asked.

“He has shut himself inside his room and hasn’t left for several days. He won’t see us even when we visit him.” Tu Ze sighed. “I know he feels resentment towards me, but even I can’t do anything. The higher ups have already acquiesced Liu Yuntao’s promotion, and in the future, Tu Family will not be able to interfere with Nebula Pavilion matters anymore. What can I do?”

“I hope he can recover soon,” Zhuo Qian said faintly.

“How about you, Kang Zhi?” Qin Lie asked again.

“God knows.” Even little fatty Kang Zhi no longer had a smile on his face. “Depends on what my dad says I guess. At any rate, it’ll be impossible to stay in Nebula Pavilion, so I can only follow wherever he goes.”

“Same here. I’ll see what my dad says,” Han Feng expressed his answer.

“How about you Qin Lie?” Zhuo Qian asked.

“Me?” Qin Lie shook his head. “I’m not sure myself.”

“Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong of Dark Asura Hall’s Department of Internal Affairs were also around the Arctic Mountain Range’s outskirts back then. They should be arriving in the next two days.” Tu Ze thought for a while before suggesting, “That Liang Zhong admired you quite a bit, so you can check with him if there are any open avenues. If you can enter Dark Asura Hall as well, even if you’re not an official general… it can be considered a new outlet.”

“Mn, although I don’t think you should have any ties with that woman, I still feel that this path will be better than staying inside Nebula Pavilion.” Zhuo Qian also thought that it was a good idea. “Du Haitian has a huge grudge against you, so it’ll be incredibly difficult for you if you stay inside Nebula Pavilion. He might even threaten your life. You should leave soon.”

“We’ll talk about it later.” Qin Lie frowned.

The entire group's mood was heavy as they gathered around to drink, and the more they drank, the more depressing it became.

……

"Vice Pavilion Master Liu is back!"

"We'll have to call him Pavilion Master Liu now!"

"Eh? There are also the people from Crimson Flame Association and Water Moon Sect."

"Welcome back to the pavilion, Pavilion Master Liu!"

During the evening, there was a loud clamor at the front gate to Nebula Pavilion. As the martial practitioners inside the pavilion exclaimed softly, Liu Yuntao, Du Haitian, and Wei Xing accompanied the First Hall Master of Dark Asura Hall, Yuan Tianya, into Nebula Pavilion. The Elders of Crimson Flame Association and Water Moon Sect followed closely behind. They all wore respectful demeanor.

Yuan Tianya looked about forty years old. His stature was tall and his face oddly ancient. He had a pair of deep and evil-looking eyes that appeared as if he could see through one's heart.

The moment he entered, he smiled towards the people in Nebula Pavilion. Everyone who was seen by him felt rather uncomfortable, as if their inner secrets had been spied upon.

“We are honored to welcome the First Hall Master!”

Every martial practitioners in Nebula Pavilion saluted in reverence when they saw that Yuan Tianya had arrived in person.

Even Tu Mo had hurriedly rushed over to bow and welcome him with Han Qingrui when he heard of it. He had personally led Yuan Tianya to Nebula Pavilion’s Procedural Hall.

“Much obliged, Pavilion Master Tu.” Yuan Tianya’s expression was cool as he smiled and nodded. “As I thought, like father, like son. Your father, Tu Shixiong’s, military exploits in Dark Asura Hall are impressive, and he was always able to get out alive despite entering the Nether Battlefield many times.”

He looked towards Tu Mo and said, “You will be leaving for Dark Asura Hall soon. As a new general, you will also be sent to to the Nether Battlefield. I hope that you can make a name for yourself and become a commander soon just like your father.”

At this point, Yuan Tianya gave a carefree smile. “I happen to have an empty commander spot. I wonder if you have the ability or were interested?”

“You flatter me, First Hall Master.” Tu Mo bowed slightly and did not answer Yuan Tianya’s question but simply led the way.

Yuan Tianya smiled slightly and looked meaningfully at him. He

as well said nothing more.

Qin Lie and Tu Ze's group had gathered over and were watching Liu Yuntao, Du Haitian, Wei Xing, and the First Hall Master of Dark Asura Hall, Yuan Tianya.

When Yuan Tianya, Liu Yuntao, and Tu Mo's group had disappeared, the martial practitioners that had gathered over were all discussing Yuan Tianya's motives for coming here while they dispersed.

"Yuan Tianya is the First Hall Master of Dark Asura Hall. It is said that he's at the late stage of the Netherpassage Realm and his strength is unfathomable. He is an expert who has the qualifications to be promoted to Grand Hall Master," Zhuo Qian said in a low tone while looking in the direction in which Yuan Tianya vanished. "It's quite surprising that he would grant Liu Yuntao such an honor and come to Icestone City himself. If he is here, then Liu Yuntao will smoothly take over the position of Pavilion Master without any obstacles."

"With him here, Shattered Ice Manor's Manor Lord, Yan Wenyan, will turn obedient and placid." Tu Ze nodded his head. "Yan Wenyan's backbone in Dark Asura Hall is also Yuan Tianya. I heard that he has long reserved a position for Yan Wenyan as commander, and when Yan Wenyan breaks through to the Manifestation Realm, he will immediately become his subordinate commander the moment he enters Dark Asura Hall."

"The infighting between Shattered Ice Manor and Nebula Pavilion inside Icestone City will be truly stopped because of him."

Zhuo Qian let out a sigh. “It looks like the higher ups sent Liu Yuntao over to force the Tu Family to let go of Nebula Pavilion completely for the greater good.”

Tu Ze did not say anything.

“AHHH!”

Suddenly, a terrible scream pierced through the sky from the southeast corner of Nebula Pavilion.

“It’s Chu Peng’s voice!” Zhuo Qian’s expression turned cold.

Without another word, Qin Lie and Tu Ze’s group rushed in unison in the direction of the sound to check out the situation.

Many Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners had also made their way after hearing the terrible cry as they rushed towards the spot.

Inside the Procedural Hall.

The expression of Dark Asura Hall’s Yuan Tianya was indifferent as he spoke with Tu Mo and Liu Yuntao. It was if he hadn’t heard the terrible scream.

At the southeast corner of Nebula Pavilion’s Artifact Tower.

With a dark face, Du Heng and Wei Li gathered their spirit energy, pressed Chu Peng on the ground and beat down on him.

Liu Ting watched from the sides, eyes filled with a murderous look. “You reckless piece of shit, are you actually trying to kill us while we are this many? You are just courting death!”

“You want to kill me, eh?” Du Heng swore as he blasted Chu Peng’s body again and again while the Golden Spirit Bird in his hands shone.

Chu Peng’s entire body was bleeding, and he looked both hideous and savage. His eyes were filled with madness as he wildly unleashed spirit energy and swung sword beams everywhere without any fear of death, hoping to land a fatal wound on Du Heng and Wei Li’s group.

Unfortunately, under their combined blasts, Chu Peng had long since crumbled and quickly fell into a pool of blood.

“Chu Peng didn’t want to live anymore.” There was a witness who saw everything. “It seems that the reason he had purposely chosen the day Pavilion Master Liu and Elder Du returned to act was because he wants them to experience the loss of a loved one. He knew that even if he succeeded, he would still end up dead, but he did it anyway. Sigh.”

“His father was sacrificed as a pawn, and not only were Pavilion Master Liu and Elder Du not punished, they become the new Pavilion Master and Vice Pavilion Master. They were even praised

by Dark Asura Hall's First Hall Master..." Another person interrupted, "It's only natural he cannot handle it any longer, but I didn't expect him to feel suicidal and choose this moment to take the risk."

When Qin Lie and Tu Ze arrived they immediately heard the crowd's discussions. Without a second thought Qin Lie and Tu Ze had rushed out to the open.

"Stop it right now!" Tu Ze roared angrily, pulled out his Nebula longblade and rushed into battle.

Qin Lie's eyes, on the other hand, were brutal as he stepped with murderous intent towards Du Heng without a word.

Chapter 112: I Will Kill You!

“Boom!”

A thunderous boom suddenly exploded out.

Qin Lie abruptly rushed out to the center and forcefully rammed into Du Heng and Wei Li’s group with lightning and thunder wildly discharging from his entire body.

Du Heng and Wei Li were knocked away in an instant. Electricity flowed throughout their bodies, and their hairs were burnt black. Even their clean, white faces were now completely black.

Chu Peng laid feebly on the ground in a pool of blood, but his eyes were filled with unforgettable hatred.

“Out of the way!”

Tu Ze, Zhuo Qian, and Kang Zhi roared as they attacked Liu Ting and her people with brutal expressions.

Qin Lie lowered his head and glanced once at Chu Peng. Then, he stared at Du Heng and Wei Li before rushing out into the open. From his lap he took out the wooden sculpture with his right hand and channeled his energy at Du Heng and his group.

“Zzt Zzzt Zzzt!”

Blazing, chaotic thunder and lightning gathered to form many thumb-sized electrical snakes, all rushing in unison at Du Heng and Wei Li's chests.

They writhed and couldn't help but screech in pain the moment they were struck by the electrical snakes.

"You dare?!" Liu Ting screeched, "Qin Lie, you still dare to defy us even at this moment, do you really want to die?!"

"Qin Lie!"

"Qin Lie!"

Both Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian's expression changed, and they cried out in a hurry the moment they saw his crazed expression.

Kang Zhi and Han Feng glanced at each other once before they rushed to Qin Lie's sides and stopped him with everything they had. They were afraid that Qin Lie really would kill both Du Heng and Wei Li at this point in time.

Du Heng and Wei Li had not broken through to the Natal Opening Realm. If Qin Lie were to unleash everything he had, there was no way they could endure it. They would be beaten to death alive.

Right now, Dark Asura Hall's First Hall Master, Yuan Tianya, was just inside the pavilion, and Liu Yuntao, Du Haitian, and Wei Xing were now in power.

If Qin Lie had killed Du Heng and Wei Li, there was no way he could survive. He would be condemned with felony and killed by the pavilion; there was no way he would be spared.

Tu Ze and the rest knew that the Ling Family's death had caused a terrible hatred to be barely repressed inside Qin Lie heart. They were afraid that Qin Lie would also lose control and become as hysterical as Chu Peng was. That was why they were all anxious.

Zhuo Qian could no longer be bothered with Liu Ting as she quickly went to stop Qin Lie and held him back in a death grip. She said in a low tone, "You must not be rash. Right now, the heads of each side is right inside the pavilion. It will not benefit us to cause trouble."

"Kang Zhi, Hang Feng. Quickly, take Chu Peng away and give him medical treatment!" Tu Ze yelled.

Kang Zhi and Han Feng hurriedly carried the bloodied Chu Peng with them and left the area first.

"Zzzt Zzzt Zzzt."

Lightning jumped erratically on both Du Heng and Wei Li's body, and as if under a chill, their bodies shivered from time to time.

Their eyes were filled with shock and horror.

"What's going on?" Du Haitian walked out of the Procedural Hall as he stared at the people coldly. "What the hell are you people doing? We have an important guest today. Why are you arguing at such a time?"

Inside the Procedural Hall, both Tu Mo and Han Qingrui had also received the news, but because Yuan Tianya was around, they could not move away. They had no choice but to accompany him.

It was still a day or two before Discipline Hall Elder, Ye Yangqiu, could return. Therefore, the Discipline Hall members remaining inside the Pavilion did not dare to interfere with Tu Ze and Liu Ting's conflict. They could only pretend not to see them despite hearing about the fight. They had even all temporarily hid themselves.

That was why Du Haitian had become the one to step forth.

"Chu Peng had suddenly tried to kill us from inside the crowd while there were many people." Liu Ting's bright eyes were ice cold as she explained, "Du Heng had been stabbed from behind. If it weren't for the heart protection armor Du Heng was wearing, his heart might have been pierced."

"Thank you uncle for the heart protection armor you gifted me. Otherwise, I would already be dead."

Du Heng faced the crowd with his back. His shirt was torn where his heart was, and there was silver armor about the size of a bronze mirror on his back. It had defended him against Chu Peng's attacks.

Du Haitian's expression darkened. "Where is Chu Peng?"

"Elder Du, it's like this..." Someone explained from beside him, "Tu Ze rushed over and ended the fight between the two sides. The severely injured Chu Peng had been carried away."

"Qin Lie had rushed over and fought against Du Heng and Wei Li, but Tu Ze and the others had stopped him."

"Du Heng and Wei Li had only taken some small losses. It was nothing serious. This is just an argument among juniors, surely there is no need to make a big fuss about it?"

"....."

There were also people discussing at the sides and explaining the matter from beginning to the end. They all hoped that the matter would be settled peacefully.

Du Haitian's expression was unpleasant as he looked towards Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian before reprimanding them with a frown, "Hall Master Yuan from Dark Asura Hall had personally arrived today. I can't believe the few of you are so insensible as to act as recklessly as Chu Peng."

Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian simply frowned without a word.

He looked towards Qin Lie and humphed coldly. “Wherever you are there will always be trouble. Qin Lie, you better know your place in Nebula Pavilion, or else…”

“Or else what?” Qin Lie lifted his head with just as cold an expression.

“You know on the inside what will happen.” A killing intent flashed before Du Haitian’s eyes as he said in a dark tone, “This is it for the day. Disperse. You all had better not cause anymore trouble.”

The few martial practitioners under his command began yelling and broke up the crowd. Soon, there were no third party remained in this area.

At this moment Du Haitian had walked up right in front of Qin Lie. Standing face to face with Qin Lie he said in a low tone, “I will always have a way to kill whoever I want. Even if Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan have joined Jiu Liuyu’s sect, I will still kill the entire Ling Family. What can the sisters possibly do to me?”

Although he had lowered his voice, both Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian at the side could still hear what he said. Both of them turned frigid the moment they heard his words.

On the other hand, Liu Ting, Du Heng, and Wei Li turned spirited as chilly smiles broke out on their faces.

“I will kill you,” uttered Qin Lie as he grit his teeth.

“You?” Du Haitian laughed devilishly. “I can guarantee you that you won’t live over a month if you continue to stay inside Icestone City! One after another, you will die just like the remaining Ling Family clansmen.”

Once finished, he walked passed Qin Lie and said, “Disperse. We shall wait for Discipline Hall’s Ye Yangqiu to settle Chu Peng’s error today.”

Liu Ting, Du Heng, and Wei Li followed behind him with cold laughter as they left.

Qin Lie continued to stand in the same spot with a dark face. The killing intent in his eyes looked like it was about to gush out at any moment.

“Qin Lie, once Liu Yuntao has taken over Nebula Pavilion, you must leave immediately.” Zhuo Qian exclaimed and walked over while saying, “You absolutely must not stay here any longer!”

“You have to go! If Du Haitian dares to threaten you so brazenly, then he will definitely attempt to kill you. You cannot stay still and do nothing!” seriously exclaimed Tu Ze. “You should go to Li’s Shop as soon as possible and do your best not to leave Commerce

Street. You musn't give Du Haitian the opportunity to act against you!"

Even the two of them had not expected Du Haitian to be so brazen as to claim that he would kill Qin Lie and the entire Ling Family right in front of their faces.

It was also at this moment that they suddenly realized that the power balance in Nebula Pavilion had already shifted towards Liu Yuntao's side, following the fact that Du Haitian and Liu Yuntao had grown closer to the First Hall Master, Yuan Tianya.

"I'm going to turn in the rest of my contribution points for spirit stones," said Qin Lie after a moment of silence.

"Good, that's what you should do. It's good that you can figure it out." Tu Ze consoled him, "While there's life, there's hope. When your cultivation realm is powerful and you've entered a high level force, it will not be difficult to deal with a character such as Du Haitian. The power balance is on his side now, so there is no reason to fight him to the death. This will not benefit you in anyway."

"You should leave soon. You can't stay in Nevula Pavilion any longer," added on Zhuo Qian.

Qin Lie did not answer. He merely went to the stockroom and traded in the rest of his contribution points for spirit stones.

Then, he went back to his own house and took out the remaining three Terminator Profound Bombs. Forcing himself to calm down, he began inscribing the first spirit diagram for the Terminator Profound Bomb.

Amazingly, his inscription this time had gone extremely smoothly, and he was not hindered in the least.

Inside the Terminator Profound Bomb, the jumping light spots glittered and agilely wriggled forward, drawing a complex and wonderful diagram network.

“Whoosh!”

Circles of blue light were abruptly discharged from the round, walnut-sized balls. A crackle of thunder resounded faintly from inside the ball-shaped Terminator Profound Bomb.

Qin Lie abruptly withdrew himself as an odd light flashed across his eyes, and in a low tone, he exclaimed, “I actually I did it!”

With the core spirit diagram on the inside, the Terminator Profound Bomb emitted blue light. It was cool to touch and felt just a tad heavier than before...

“Let’s continue!” After playing with it for a while, he took out a new Terminator Profound Bomb and continued inscribing.

Two days later.

“Whoosh Whoosh!”

Three Terminator Profound Bombs let out an faint blue flash from atop the wooden table. When he touched them, he could feel the thunderous waves suppressed inside the ball-shaped objects.

It was already late at night, and the surroundings were quiet, so Qin Lie leaned against the window while pondering for a moment.

He quietly got up, stealthily made his way to the sealed Artifact Forging Hall and snuck inside the empty hall.

All of the cupboards inside the hall had been sealed, and there were no longer any usable spirit materials to be seen. The only thing left was the central furnace that was too big to get rid of.

With excited light shining out of Qin Lie’s eyes, he injected the power of thunder and lightning into a Terminator Profound Bomb in his hand. The power slipped into the thunder ball and was conducted inside the Amplification spirit diagram through the Spirit Gathering spirit diagram. It was then cycled inside the Amplification spirit diagram again and again...

Gradually, the thunder energy within the Terminator Profound Bomb become more and more frantic!

Holding the Terminator Profound Bomb, he could feel the thunder energy inside growing more and more violent as it was

amplified!

A stroke of thunder and lightning energy had activated the spirit diagram inside the Terminator Profound Bomb. It activated the Ice Soul Python's beast core and gathered the thunder energy into one, then cycled it continuously inside the Amplification spirit diagram.

With every cycle, the thunder energy inside would double in power and become just a tad more violent.

After a few cycles, the transformed thunder energy inside the Terminator Profound Bomb gushed like the flood towards the Spirit Storage diagram's entrance.

Just as the raging thunder energy was about to enter the Spirit Storage diagram, Qin Lie quickly threw the Terminator Profound Bomb into the large furnace before hastily closing the furnace with its cover.

Then, he immediately retreated backwards.

He moved all the way until he was outside the Artifact Forging Hall, and only after he put a few meters of distance between them, did he begin to count.

"One, two, three..."

"BOOM!"

When he counted to five, a deafening explosion roared into existence, and that furnace which Yao Tai had thought of like a treasure but could not take away suddenly exploded into a million pieces.

The shrapnel from the furnace that had shot out after the explosion blasted dozens of fist-sized holes around the Artifact Forging Hall, and it had jolted every martial practitioner awake.

Qin Lie stood outside the Artifact Forging Hall and watched the shattered furnace inside through these holes. Finally, after a few seconds, he left with a slightly pale expression.

Chapter 113: Some Laughed And Some Cried

Two days later.

Ye Yangqiu and Gao Yu had returned to Nebula Pavilion. There were also Xiong Ba from Crimson Flame Association and Na Nuo from Water Moon Sect who had returned from the Arctic Mountain Range.

Tu Mo and Liu Yuntao's handover ceremony could only proceed after Ye Yangqiu had returned, and then be completed all of the Elders present.

Once the ceremony had completed, Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian would leave the next morning with Tu Mo and begin cultivating at Dark Asura Hall.

Morning.

Tu Ze came to Qin Lie's home and told him, "Qin Lie, today my brother will handover the position to Liu Yuntao and we'll be departing tomorrow. Tonight, we'll gather once more as brothers and go to the hottest place in Icestone City, Drunken Fragrance Garden. We may not be able to see each other often in the future, so let's drink until we're all drunk."

"You should be careful. It will be best if you can depart to Commerce Street tomorrow, and you should try avoid returning to Nebula Pavilion as much as possible in the future," Zhuo Qian said.

Qin Lie nodded and said, “I’ll see you at night.”

……

Inside the Ling Family courtyard.

A cool figure walked inside and frowned slightly at the lifeless Ling Family clansmen inside the courtyard. “Who is the one managing the affairs of the Ling Family.”

“I am.” Ling Chengzhi walked in with a dispirited look. The moment he saw the newcomer, his expression abruptly changed into shock as he exclaimed, “Miss Lu Li?”

The one who came was exactly Liu Jiuyu’s top student in Dark Fiend Valley, Lu Li. She once visited Ling Town which was why Ling Chengzhi remembered her clearly.

“Miss Lu!” The Ling Family clansmen closed in from all sides as they cried out in terrible sadness, “May Miss Lu take charge of the Ling Family!”

“Miss Lu, my big brother and many Ling Family clansmen have been killed by the scheme of Nebula Pavilion’s Liu Yuntao and Du Haitian. Please seek justice for the Ling Family, Miss Lu!” Ling Chengzhi knelt one knee on the ground straight away while full of tears as he yelled, “May Miss Lu take charge of the Ling Family!”

Ling Feng had also knelt down on one knee and looked earnestly at Lu Li. He hoped that she could help take revenge for Ling Ying, Ling Xing, and Ling Xiao.

“I can’t help you.” Lu Li’s expression was indifferent and she was completely untouched by their pleas. “Dark Fiend Valley has no bearing over the matters of Nebula Pavilion. Also, I am not my master and thus cannot put pressure onto Liu Yuntao or Du Haitian. Moreover, even if my master was here, I am afraid she cannot take revenge for you.”

“Why?!” Ling Chengzhi’s eyes was completely red.

“Dark Asura Hall’s First Hall Master, Yuan Tianya, is in Nebula Pavilion right now. Even my master can’t do anything with him protecting Liu Yuntao and the others.” Lu Li stared at the crowd of kneeling Ling Family clansmen and pondered for a moment before coolly saying, “For the sake of my junior sisters, I am here to inform you to leave Icestone City with me tomorrow morning. In addition, it is best if we leave quietly without causing too much of a commotion.”

“Ling Family is Nebula Pavilion’s vassal force. If we leave silently, wouldn’t there be trouble?” someone asked.

“If the Ling Family continues to stay in Icestone City, they will be exterminated very quickly.” Lu Li frowned. “As for negotiating with Nebula Pavilion. We of Dark Fiend Valley will come forward and reconcile with them. You do not need to worry.”

She could not be bothered any longer and said, “I will wait for you at the gates tomorrow. If you come, then we’ll go. If you don’t, then whatever. I will not wait for long.”

Once finished, she turned around, ignored Ling Chengzhi’s questions, and coolly left.

After that, she headed to Nebula Pavilion.

Two hours later, she had arrived at Qin Lie’s small house. This was the second time she had seen Qin Lie.

“Before I came, Junior Sister Ling had told me to look for you and see how you’re doing.” Within Qin Lie’s simple little house, Lu Li saw him holding a spirit tablet as if inscribing something. Her face was cold and there was not a trace of emotion in her eyes. “It has only been a bit over a year, and you’ve actually ascended straight into the Natal Opening Realm from the eighth level of the Refinement Realm.”

After a pause, she said with look of disdain, “Looks like you’ve benefited quite a bit from Junior Sister Ling.”

—Naturally, she had thought that Qin Lie’s current accomplishment was thanks to the pills and prescriptions Ling Yushi had snuck him.

Qin Lie scowled and withdrew the spirit tablet in his hands. He then said impatiently, “If you have no business, then please leave. I

am busy and have no time to spare you."

"Back at Ling Town you had even rejected my Natal Ordering Pill. At the time I had thought you were quite the tough man." Lu Li laughed coldly while shaking her head. "As it turns out it was all fake after all. In the end, haven't you ascended by relying on Junior Sister Ling's stashed pills, and the prescriptions and spirit materials of Dark Fiend Valley?"

Qin Lie was too lazy to explain. He coldly asked, "You came here to spout nonsense?"

"Liu Yuntao and Du Haitian are about to kill the Ling Family's Patriarch and clansmen. But it looks like you feel nothing at all?" Lu Li looked at him deeply. "Should I praise you for your rationale, or should I say that you're a coward? I heard that you've fought together with Ling Xing and the others before. Are you telling me that their deaths did not affect you at all?"

"Enough!" Qin Lie abrupt stood up with a terribly dark expression. He looked like he was about to murder someone.

With the same cold face Lu Li scoffed. "I was invited by Nebula Pavilion to witness Liu Yuntao's take over the position of Pavilion Master of Nebula Pavilion. It's just that I happened along the way to take a look at you for Junior Sister Ling."

Once she finished, she shook her head and left behind some final words, "You disappoint me greatly." With that, she left.

Qin Lie sucked in a deep breath and forced himself to calm down. He would not be affected by Lu Li's words, and he did not want to think about Liu Yuntao and Du Haitian's complacence today.

He took out the Spirit Storage Board, focused his mind, and injected spirit energy inside it.

For the past two days, he had stopped cultivating temporarily after testing the might of the Terminator Profound Bomb. Instead, the moment his spirit energy was fully recharged, he would pour it into his Spirit Storage Board.

Today, he had stored quite a large amount of spirit energy inside the amplified Spirit Storage Board.

—One that he could absorb and use anytime he wanted to.

"Qin Lie." The black robed, dark and cold Gao Yu suddenly appeared outside the door.

"When did you come back?" Qin Lie had no choice but to stop once again. He lifted his head to look at Gao Yu and said, "You look pretty well. You must have accumulated quite a lot of contribution points at the Arctic Mountain Range, right?"

"I now have four thousand contribution points." Gao Yu nodded and said, "In fact, I've broken through to the Natal Opening Realm."

"Congratulations." Qin Lie congratulated sincerely.

“Compared to you I’m still a step behind.” Gao Yu sat down on his accord after he came in. After some pondering, he said darkly, “During that year at Celestial Wolf Mountain, both you and the Ling Family clansmen had stared at me with disgust. Was it because you’ve heard some bad rumors about me?”

Qin Lie was surprised. He didn’t understand why Gao Yu had suddenly brought up this matter. “Yeah, I heard people said that your behavior is twisted and perverted, and that you’ve tortured and killed several girls?”

“Just one.” Incredibly, Gao Yu actually nodded and admitted his crime. Just as Qin Lie grew more and more confused, Gao Yu said with a dark expression, “That bitch deserved it!”

Qin Lie frowned and waited for Gao Yu’s explanation.

“That bitch was originally my elder sister’s servant. After my elder sister had entered Nebula Pavilion, she was left inside Gao Family. She was the love of my life. I’ve given all my elder sister’s and second elder sister’s spirit pills to her, and I dedicated myself wholeheartedly to her, hoping that one day we can enter Nebula Pavilion together.”

“But the truth was she had actually hooked up with my father to ask for cultivation spirit materials when I went out to hone myself. What an amazing method! For two whole years she had me and my father dancing in the palm of her hand, making us willingly contribute our spirit stones and spirit pills to her.”

“Just before she was about to break through to the Natal Opening Realm, I accidentally found out about the thing between her and my father.”

“She is the woman I loved the most, and she is the only woman I’ll ever have. But still, I murdered her with my own hands. Again and again, I stabbed her until I watched her slowly gasp her last breath.”

Gao Yu narrated calmly. A trace of tenderness actually appeared in his eyes as if he was reliving the past.

“Why did you suddenly talk to me about this?” Qin Lie frowned. “I’ve interacted with you for a long time; naturally I would know what kind of person you are. You do not have to go out of your way to explain anything.”

“You are the only… friend I have. I do not wish for you to die while still bearing a misunderstanding about me.” Gao Yu stood up and said with a heavy voice, “You better not do anything stupid. Otherwise, as the newly appointed Discipline Hall’s hall master, I will not sit by idly.”

“Congratulations on becoming the new hall master under Elder Ye’s command.” Qin Lie nodded his head and asked, “What kind of stupid thing would I possibly do?”

“You know it inside your heart.” Gao Yu said coldly, “You and I have fought no less than thirty times in the combat room. In battle, no matter how miniscule, I observe your every move, and I

know what every one of your abnormal moves mean. I know you better than those Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian people, and I know what kind of person you truly are…”

When Qin Lie’s expression changed slightly, Gao Yu exclaimed in a soft tone, “I don’t know what your plan is, but I do know that you want to kill someone. And I probably know who that someone is too. But you had better give up on the idea, or you will die and no one will be able to help you. As your… friend, I am here simply to remind you of this.”

Once finished, Gao Yu turned around and left.

Qin Lie frowned and did not say anything. A few seconds later, he resumed his efforts to inject spirit energy into the Spirit Storage Board.

……

On that day, witnessed by Dark Asura Hall’s First Hall Master, Yuan Tianya, Crimson Flame Association, Water Moon Sect, and many other organizations, Tu Mo officially handed over his position as Nebula Pavilion’s Pavilion Master in front of every elder and hall master.

Liu Yuntao, Du Haitian, and Wei Xing were filled with complete satisfaction. They smiled from ear to ear and all appeared to be incredibly spirited.

The hall masters and members under their command were also in high spirits, and everywhere in the pavilion, people were cheerfully chatting with much laughter.

On the other hand, Kang Hui and Han Qingrui's subordinates all appeared desolate and gloomy.

Those under Chu Yan had even his themselves inside their houses, cried for Elder Chu Yan, and licked their own wounds.

On the same night, Liu Yuntao accompanied Yuan Tianya at Nebula Pavilion to wait for Shattered Ice Manor's Yan Wenyan. They were going to meet and speak a few private words.

For many years, Shattered Ice Manor's Manor Lord, Yan Wenya, had not come to Nebula Pavilion. Now, thanks to Liu Yuntao replacing the Tu Family as Pavilion Master and Yuan Tianya's arrival, he had personally rushed down from North City to accompany Yuan Tianya with Liu Yuntao.

Liu Yuntao could not walk away, so he let Du Haitian and Wei Xing book the entire Drunken Fragrance Garden to set up a feast to welcome the people from Crimson Flame Association and Water Moon Sect.

Today was the day Liu Yuntao's forces had officially risen. It was the great day they had taken over Nebula Pavilion. Everyone was celebrating.

Drunken Fragrance Garden was already overcrowded around evening. Crimson Flame Association's Elder, Ge Hong, and Xiong Ba; Water Moon Sect's Elder, Luo Wei, and Na Nuo; and Seven Fiends Valley's Lu Li and Li Zhongzheng had all arrived at this lively affair in Icestone City. They toasted each other and enjoyed a great time inside.

Tonight, Du Haitian was without a doubt the true lead of the show.

"Come come come! Let's have another cup!" In front of the drinking table, his face was red as he laughed while lifting a cup.

"Congratulations Vice Pavilion Master Du."

"Congratulations Vice Pavilion Master Du!"

Chapter 114: Street Challenge!

Inside Bright Moon Tower, opposite Drunken Fragrance Garden, sat Qin Lie, Tu Ze, Zhuo Qian, and Kang Zhi beside the window.

Bright Moon Tower was also a famous brothel in Icestone City, and it was situated just at the opposite end of Drunken Fragrance Garden. But its fame and level of luxury was a tad inferior to Drunken Fragrance Garden.

Originally, Tu Ze had also booked a spot in Drunken Fragrance Garden, but because Liu Yuntao had risen in power and booked the entire place, Drunken Fragrance Garden's boss had one-sidedly cancelled Tu Ze's reservation.

"Dammit, that old dog is another one of those snobby bastards!" Kang Zhi cursed, "When we went to Drunken Fragrance Garden in the past, that old dog would always fawn up to us and was terrified of slighting us in any way. Now that you and the Pavilion Master are leaving and my father did not succeed the Pavilion Master's position, that old dog immediately changed his attitude and actually cancelled our reservation!"

"A businessman has to be realistic. Actually, never mind, let's all take it easy." Tu Ze drank quietly as he stared at the brightly lit Drunken Fragrance Garden.

Across the street, they could see faint outline of Du Haitian in high spirits through the window. They were boisterously talking with each other and clinking cups over and over again with the

Elders of Crimson Flame Association and Water Moon Sect.

“Qin Lie, you must be more careful tomorrow,” Zhuo Qian told him again and again.

Qin Lie kept his head bowed and sipped at his wine with a terribly preoccupied look. He only nodded slightly in response when he heard her words.

“Kang Zhi, are you sure the information you acquired is correct?” he suddenly asked as he remembered something and lifted his head.

“Qin Lie, why do you want to know where the Du family members live?” Kang Zhi appeared doubtful. “Naturally my information is correct. Du Jiaolan and Du Fei cannot enter Nebula Pavilion, and they are at the locations I’ve told you. But what does it have to do with you? Can it be you want to take revenge against these two? Do you really think Du Haitian can’t kill you?”

“Qin Lie, you must not be rash! If you dare to act against Du Jiaolan and Du Fei, Du Haitian will definitely leads his hall masters and subordinates to exterminate you!” Tu Ze’s expression was heavy. “Right now Du Haitian is at his most powerful. You must not provoke him or all that will remain for you is death.”

“Yeah, you must not be impulsive at this time. You must hold it down!” Zhuo Qian exclaimed.

“Even I’m holding back when my father’s about to be unseated. You have to hold yourself back too!” Kang Zhi said.

Han Feng and the others also threw their own arguments into the mix so he wouldn’t act impulsive to avoid giving Du Haitian the opportunity to kill him straight away.

“Senior Sister Lu, why haven’t you eaten anything? Do you not like the dishes? Should I switch out a table for you?” At Drunken Fragrance Garden in another VIP room beside the window, Li Zhongzheng and a few youths from Seven Fiends Valley were also drinking around a table. Li Zhongzheng looked towards Lu Li sitting by the window and had asked that flatteringly.

Lu Li’s expression was cool. She did not open her eyes to look at Li Zhongzheng. Instead, she just coolly said, “Remember to wait by the city gates the first thing tomorrow. The Ling Family clansmen should have rushed there quite early. This is also the only thing you can do for Junior Sister Ling.”

“Don’t worry, Senior Sister Lu. I will make sure to properly carry everything out and safely deliver the Ling Family clansmen to Seven Fiends Valley’s domain,” Li Zhongzheng promised with a smile. “By the way, thank you for your reminder, Senior Sister Lu. I could not have figured out a way to please Junior Sister Ling otherwise. Hehe, after this matter is done, Junior Sister Ling should treat me seriously from now on.”

With a cold face Lu Li nodded, “At least you’re slightly more useful than that Qin Lie.”

“Qin Lie?” Li Zhongzheng snorted once. “What is he? How can he possibly compare to me? Such a pitiful character would never be able enter a Black Iron rank power in his lifetime. What can he give to Junior Sister Ling?”

“He certainly is nothing,” Lu Li muttered.

……

“Haha, I guess this is it for the day. I have something else to do later, so I’ll have to take my leave.” At the front entrance of Drunken Fragrance Garden, Du Haitian said apologetically to Ge Hong and Luo Wei, “Tomorrow, if you all are still here tomorrow, then I will definitely lay down everything and drink with you all until we pass out.”

Liu Ting, Du Heng, and Wei Li were accompanying the other juniors, Xiong Ba and Na Nuo, inside another Drunken Fragrance Garden VIP room.

Seeing that Du Haitian was about to leave, Liu Ting and the other had also gathered around the window and looked down at the streets.

“Vice Pavilion Master Du is planning to receive new instructions from the First Hall Master while Shattered Ice Manor’s Yan Wenyan is at Nebula Pavilion, am I right?” Crimson Flame Association’s Ge Hong said with a look of envy and understanding, “We will surely not delay Vice Pavilion Master Du’s matters any

longer. Today has been a very enjoyable day. Crimson Flame Association would like to communicate with Nebula Pavilion more frequently in the future."

"That is true." Water Moon Sect's Luo Wei also smiled and nodded. "Pavilion Master Liu and Vice Pavilion Master Du's future will be bright under the First Hall Master's guidance."

"You flatter me." Du Haitian joined his hands in a thanks. Then, he stepped onto the street with his tens of subordinates and was about to leave for Nebula Pavilion.

"Will you look at his complacent look?" Kang Zhi scowled, "Despicable scumbag! To think he used Elder Chu Yan's sacrifice and the Ling Family's tragic deaths to acquire his achievements. One day he will be met with retribution."

"That will be in the future. At the very least, no one can touch him at the moment," Zhuo Qian said helplessly.

"I would like to try!"

It was at this moment, Qin Lie, who had been drinking quietly and only seldomly interrupted, had abruptly stood up.

A sharp aura abruptly burst forth from Qin Lie's body, causing surprised expressions to appear on Tu Ze, Zhuo Qian, and Kang Zhi's faces.

While they were stunned, Qin Lie flew over the table, went through the window, and abruptly landed on the street.

“Bang!”

His figure stabbed the center of the street like a straight spear, directly blocking Du Haitian and the others’ path. He vehemently yelled out, “Du Haitian, I, Qin Lie, challenge you to a fight!”

The windows of both Drunken Fragrance Garden and Bright Moon Tower abruptly opened all at once. Heads popped into the open from the second and third floors’ windowsills.

Lu Li, Li Zhongzheng, Liu Ting, Xiong Ba, Na Nuo, Ge Hong, Luo Wei, Tu Ze, Zhuo Qian...

Everyone had gathered at the windows on both sides, looking absolutely shocked under the bright red lanterns and moonlight as they saw Qin Lie standing at the center of the street.

“Qin Lie!”

“What are you doing Qin Lie?”

“What the hell are you doing?”

“This kid has gone insane, hasn’t he? Why is he challenging Vice Pavilion Master Du?”

“It seems that the clansmen from Ling Town and his friends are among the people Vice Pavilion Master Du had sacrificed... Who knows? I also heard it from someone else.”

“What realm is he to dare challenge the middle stage Natal Opening Realm’s Du Haitian? Does he know how the word death is written?”

“……”

Loud noises abruptly exploded from the restaurants on each side of the street.

Those who knew the inner details looked even more shocked by Qin Lie’s challenge on the street. They all leaned over to look.

Qin Lie’s street challenge had ignited the fiery passion from every martial practitioner who had drunk themselves into a high, causing them to scream out like a blasted cooker.

Holding the windowsill, Lu Li looked coldly at Qin Lie on the streets. An odd light appeared in her cold eyes.

Xiong Ba, Na Nuo and the looked looked amazed. They were all focused upon Qin Lie, eyes shining with an odd light.

Elders such as Crimson Flames Association’s Ge Hong and Water

Moon Sect's Luo Wei were frowning, suddenly caught by surprise by his actions.

"Qin Lie! Get back here!" Tu Ze shouted from the windows.

"Don't be stupid!" Zhuo Qian was also shouting.

"By Nebula Pavilion's rules, I, Qin Lie, challenge Vice Pavilion Master Du Haitian to a fight. May Vice Pavilion Du grant me this opportunity," said Qin Lie with a cold expression and dark voice. "Unless you're scared of me that is?"

Everyone's gazes shot to Du Haitian in unison. They could all see the murderous light beaming from his eyes.

"Sure. I will grant you this opportunity right now." Under the crowd's gazes, Du Haitian nodded before suddenly instructing his hall masters in a low tone, "Go block the front of Bright Moon Tower. Do not allow Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian to interfere with this fight."

The hall masters under his command broke into nasty grins as they immediately led their men away and arrived at the entrance to Bright Moon Tower. They lifted their heads and looked at Tu Ze and the others' position. They waited and guarded below so the others could not rush out to stop this fight.

"Qin Lie's going to kill himself!" Tu Ze suddenly jumped down from the window.

Zhuo Qian, Kang Zhi, and Han Feng's expressions had also turned to shock as they fell straight down from the windows in succession to drag Qin Lie away.

"My apologies, but you will not be getting over!" A few of Du Haitian's hall masters and even high ranking martial practitioners blocked Tu Ze's path, not allowing them to interfere.

"Qin Lie is soon a goner." Na Nuo sighed softly.

"What is he doing? Sending a message with his death?" Li Zhongzheng sneered, "I know a little about Nebula Pavilion's rules. As long as no one dies, every martial practitioner inside the pavilion can challenge each other. But since Du Haitian is the newly appointed Vice Pavilion Master, even if he 'accidentally' kills Qin Lie, there should not be a huge problem. Even if Qin Lie by some miraculous luck killed Du Haitian, he would absolutely not escape death due to his low status!"

His gaze was one with ridicule. "He's going to die either way, but he just had to jump out and make some noise. What a complete idiot."

"Maybe he's looking to die in the first place?" someone interrupted.

"Hehe, you're right. He's here to commit suicide." Li Zhongzheng smiled cheerfully.

While the people in the restaurants were deep in discussion, Du Haitian bent over and spat out the alcohol inside his stomach a few times. Then, he pulled out a deep blue shortsword about the length of a forearm from his sleeves. “If you think you can surpass my realm and beat me just because I drank more than usual, then you are sorely mistaken.”

The deep blue shortsword was about two fingers wide and half a meter long, and it faintly glittered with a deep blue light.

As Du Haitian poured spirit energy into it, the two sides of the incredibly narrow blade suddenly formed into many blue leaves.

As if they were born from the very blade itself, the blue leaves appeared wondrously exquisite and immeasurably sharp. It was as if they could soar into the air at any moment, and they also appeared to be sharp beyond ordinary.

“The Blue Leaf Sword, a Profound Grade One spirit artifact. Du Haitian had spent a large amount of capital to buy it from Armament Pavilion.” Someone exclaimed softly from the windows, “Rumors say that the Blue Leaf Sword was crafted by Armament Pavilion’s Artificer Mo Hai when he was still young, and everyone knows that Mo Hai... is now a Profound Sixth Rank Artificer and one of the most well-known artificers in Armament Pavilion.”

“Isn’t he overreacting a little to bring out the Blue Leaf Sword already?”

“He has always been careful and alert regardless of who he faces. Even if his opponent is a Refinement Realm martial practitioner, he would not be overconfident at all and would still use everything he had.”

“What a scary person!”

The crowd talked.

Qin Lie took out the wooden sculpture and sucked in a deep breath as his gaze abruptly cooled.

“Zzzt Zzzt Zzzt!”

Strands of thumb-sized blue lightning abruptly shot out of the wooden sculpture’s head. He looked at Du Haitian, his figure suddenly darting forward as if dragging a long rainbow of electricity. Qin Lie had actually been the one to make the first move.

“Reckless.” Du Haitian’s expression was indifferent as he waved his Blue Leaf Sword.

Many deep blue leaves suddenly danced out into the air from the Blue Leaf Sword like spirit cicadas. Carrying a deadly and sharp aura, they fell down from the sky like scattered and fallen leaves.

Scattered like rain, murderous intent filled the streets.

All the noise was abruptly silenced.

Chapter 115: Center Of Attention

Blue leaves drifted down under the cool and bright moonlight. Each leaf was glittering blue like many murderous edges.

“Zzzt Zzzt Zzzt!”

Strands of light blue electricity wove inside the wooden sculpture to form a blue barrier above Qin Lie’s head.

“Clap clap clap!”

An explosive sound like that of firecrackers came from the deep blue electricity. Every time a blue leaf landed on it, its light would dim a little.

Like gushing waves, they seeped through the electricity and caused Qin Lie’s body to lower as his steps suddenly faltered.

Gripping the Blue Leaf Sword, Du Haitian’s expression was as calm as a millpond as he stared indifferently at Qin Lie and softly exclaimed, “Overconfidence.”

The Blue Leaf Sword shuddered thrice rhythmically, and three layers of blue ripples spread out. Each layer of spirit energy was stronger than the last, and they stacked, layer by layer, like sea water gushing towards Qin Lie.

“Bang!”

When the first wave had struck Qin Lie, he abruptly shuddered and his complexion instantly paled.

He had used all of his energy to defend against the blue leaf that had fallen on his head, but he did not expect Du Haitian to attack yet again with another wave of spirit energy.

“Bang!”

Yet another ripple charged over, and Qin Lie’s figure suddenly burst backwards in retreat. His entire face was bright red, and he very nearly spat out a mouth of fresh blood clogged in his throat.

This rippling wave was twice as strong as the first!

“Wave Force! Third Layer!” Du Haitian suddenly let out a cold smile.

“Bang!”

The nearly invisible third layer of the wave exploded like an avalanche towards Qin Lie before he could stand still.

Finally, Qin Lie could not take it anymore as he was thrown backwards like an arrow while blood spraying out of his mouth.

“Boom!”

After he landed on his feet, his face turned from healthy red to pale white. It was as if his spirit had turned sluggish in one go.

At the brightly lit windows on both sides of the street, the observers were all silent.

Everyone could see that Qin Lie was far weaker than Du Haitian, both in terms of combat experience and the refinement and wealth of spirit energy.

Du Haitian’s “Wave Force” struck the dead center of Qin Lie’s chest; his wild rush was stopped dead in its tracks as he flew back while spitting blood.

It was as if he had lost the ability to fight in an instant.

“You’ve only just entered the Natal Opening Realm and opened your first Natal Palace, yet you dare challenge me? You really are overestimating yourself.” Du Haitian’s tone was unusually calm as he held the Blue Leaf Sword. “Have you not heard that I’ve already opened six Natal Palaces? I have six times your power. There no doubt what the outcome of this battle will be because you cannot threaten me in anyway whatsoever.”

When he was almost in front of Qin Lie, he suddenly lowered his voice. “Do you really think I’m afraid to kill you? You must remember that I am the Vice Pavilion Master of Nebula Pavilion.

Even if I did kill you, Ye Yangqiu would not dare to take any action against me, especially when he can hardly protect himself right now!”

The killing intent in his eyes were thick, and the Blue Leaf Sword in his hands shone with bright light, and many more blue leaves flew out yet again.

“Run Qin Lie!” Tu Ze screamed from the other side, “He’s going to kill you! He’s really going to kill you!”

“Run!” Zhuo Qian also cried out.

Unfortunately, the hall masters and several high rank martial practitioners under Du Haitian’s command had completely surrounded them, preventing them from lending Qin Lie a helping hand.

They could only cry out loudly in warning.

The two sides’ of Martial practitioners on the streets from all kinds of forces were all leaning against the window and looking down, staring as Du Haitian closed in on Qin Lie, step by step.

They could see that he intended to murder Qin Lie from his eyes, and almost all of them, with absolute confidence, believed that Du Haitian would kill him.

—This was because he was the Vice Pavilion Master of Nebula

Pavilion.

"I know you would dare to kill me." Qin Lie wiped the blood from the corner of his mouth and suddenly stood up. With a pale face, he watched Du Haitian close in, one step at a time, and his eyes shone with the color of madness. "I'll be waiting right here for you to kill me! Come on! Du Haitian, I'll be standing right here, so are you going to show me how you're going to kill me!?"

He waved the wooden sculpture in his right hand and reconstructed blazing electricity; blocking the falling blue leaves one after another.

His left hand was hidden inside his sleeves as he quietly grabbed a Terminator Profound Bomb and prepared himself.

As if noticing something, Du Haitian suddenly stopped his footsteps and coldly said, "Oh? Trying to bring me down with you?"

He no longer walked forward. Du Haitian shook his head and waved his sword about in the air.

A thick wave of spirit energy suddenly formed into yet another "Wave Force." He intended to kill Qin Lie from a distance.

Qin Lie cursed at Du Haitian for being careful, and as he saw that the "Wave Force" was about to be formed yet again, he had no choice but to turn to the side and quickly dodge, afraid that the

three waves of “Wave Force” would strike him yet again.

He did not dare to activate the Terminator Profound Bomb he held in his left hand with thunder energy right now, so he had to put it aside for the moment.

Qin Lie had thought that after withstanding a “Wave Force” with Heavenly Thunder Sacred Body and displaying the signs of weakness, he would be able to attract Du Haitian over and attack.

Then, he would activate the Terminator Profound Bomb and, with its terrific explosion, instantly murder Du Haitian...

He had this perfect plan in his heart long ago, yet he didn’t expect Du Haitian to be this careful despite obviously holding the upper hand in this situation.

After suffering a direct blow from the “Wave Force,” he was also fearful on the inside when he saw that it was about to come at him again. Without any other choice, he could only avoid it for the moment.

“Bang! Bang! Bang!”

Three dull blasts came from the stone wall Qin Lie moved away from, and after the waves of the “Wave Force” made contact with it, the thick stone wall abruptly collapsed.

On both sides, the expressions of all the watching martial

practitioners from Drunken Fragrance Garden and Bright Moon Tower changed slightly.

"Looks like this person is about to break through to the late stage of the Natal Opening Realm," Seven Fiends Valley's Li Zhongzheng exclaimed in surprise.

Lu Li too nodded a little. "From the looks of it, all six of his Natal Palaces should be completely filled. As expected, this person did not become the Vice Pavilion Master of Nebula Pavilion through plotting and scheming alone. He does have corresponding power to function as his base."

"I'm a bit impressed by Qin Lie's courage now." Li Zhongzheng sneered, "A brat who just entered the Natal Opening Realm and had only formed a single Natal Palace actually challenged an enemy with all six Natal Palaces filled..."

He paused for a second before shaking his head. "It is as Du Haitian had said; what an overconfident and reckless fool!"

"Na Nuo, do you think that fellow Qin Lie... can summon heavenly lightning to fall from the skies just like when we were at the stone forest?" Over at Water Moon Sect, Little Sparrow lowered her voice and quietly asked as she watched Qin Lie escaping from Du Haitian's "Wave Force", "If he could summon a lightning strike like last time, then he may have a real chance at victory."

"The last time he only managed to cause a natural anomaly

because he happened to break through to the Natal Opening Realm and because he was cultivating the power of thunder." Na Nuo too suppressed her voice while standing at the window. "Now that he has broken through already, it shouldn't be possible for a miracle to happen again. Otherwise, he would have summon the thunder and lightning long ago. Why would he need to make himself look this bad?"

"That true." Little Sparrow sighed softly. "Qin Lie destroyed the Soul Devouring Beast back at the stone forest. You can say that he saved all of us. I kinda don't want to see him in trouble..."

Na Nuo nodded. "It's a bit unrealistic, but I also wish for him to live."

"Qin Lie, you think to challenge me with just this?" Du Haitian swung the Blue Leaf Sword as deep blue leaves scattered across the air and fell on top of Qin Lie's head.

Continuously channeling Heavenly Thunder Eradication, Qin Lie unleashed the electricity inside the wooden sculpture to destroy the deep blue leaves while dodging in an incredibly awkward manner.

—While he was dodging Du Haitian's "Wave Force" sneak attack.

He was also looking for an opportunity to close in on Du Haitian.

However, as if reading his thoughts, Du Haitian kept distance

between them and stopped him from closing in throughout the fight. “You’re trying to severely injure me before you die, aren’t you? I’ve fought for so many years, and I have seen all kinds of opponents. How can I be hurt by the likes of you?”

Sucking in a deep breath, Du Haitian’s face displayed impatience. “Let me see how much longer you can dodge!”

A terrific wave of spirit energy emanated from Du Haitian’s body. Suddenly, the Blue Leaf Sword’s light abruptly brightened, and tens of deep blue leaves suddenly flew out and drifted over to Qin Lie from every direction.

“Each leaf will deplete a portion of your energy. Show me how your single Natal Palace of energy can compete with my six Natal Palaces!” Du Haitian yelled coldly.

“Clap clap clap!”

Blue leaves that covered the sky fell down and exploded upon contact with the electricity formed by the wooden sculpture. Every time a leaf fluttered against it, Qin Lie’s energy would decrease by a small amount.

As Du Haitian had said, since he had used thunder and lightning energy to form the electricity, every time he destroyed a leaf, he would deplete a portion of his own energy.

As of now, he had already expended three fifths of the thunder

and lightning energy inside in the Natal Palace within his dantian's spirit sea.

Seeing that the sky filled with blue leaves came at him yet again, Qin Lie's heart darkened as he finally understood that Du Haitian, with his own wealth of energy, was using his weakness against him and was depleting his energy. After that, Du Haitian would be able to easily finish him off.

"Miss, it appears that someone is fighting on the streets." At the southwest corner of the street, a group of two was heading towards Commerce Street under the moonlight. One of them heard the vibrations of spirit energy and had suddenly pointed it out.

He was Liang Zhong.

Naturally, the person he called Miss was Xie Jingxuan of Dark Asura Hall's Department of Foreign Affairs.

Both of them had just entered Icestone City before night had fallen. They were just about to depart for Li's Shop to see if there were any new Spirit Gathering Boards to purchase.

The matter in the Arctic Mountain Range was done; the martial practitioners and spirit beast king had formed a new contract, and the Soul Devouring Beast was also dead. Their quest this time had ended smoothly.

They were also planning to return to Dark Asura Hall the next

morning.

“Today, Yuan Tianya, is at Nebula Pavilion, and Liu Yuntao has taken over the position of Pavilion Master of Nebula Pavilion. Who is stupid enough to fight inside the city at this time?” Xie Jingxuan whispered as her slick eyebrows locked up with curiosity blooming inside her heart. She said, “Let’s go and have a look.”

Under the night sky, the two people were like two bolts of cold lightning. After a few flashes, they suddenly arrived and stood at the corner of the street.

“It’s Qin Lie!” Liang Zhong exclaimed softly as his expression turned complicated all of a sudden. He nodded and said, “Du Haitian and Liu Yuntao had sacrificed the Ling Family clansmen as fodder, so it is natural that Qin Lie would become enraged. But to think that he dares to challenge Du Haitian on the streets. Has he truly gone insane?”

After a pause, Liang Zhong frowned deeply and continued, “He lost. He’s going to be killed by Du Haitian, and even if he won, he would not be able to kill Du Haitian without being labeled as a traitor. The whole city will hunt him down. No matter how you look at it, he doesn’t benefit from this whatsoever. Why is he acting so irrational?”

Garbed in white, Xie Jingxuan stood like a ghost at the corner of the streets while staring indifferently at the Qin Lie as he unceremoniously dodged.

After a while, she shook her head and commented, “The difference between the two of them is too large. Unless he can summon the heavenly lightning to fall once more, he will surely die.”

Chapter 116: Behead!

Nebula Pavilion, inside Liu Yuntao's study.

Yuan Tianya sat at the tallest seat with a smile while talking with Liu Yuntao, Yan Wenyan, and Wei Xing.

"Wenyan, I am sending my men to investigate your son's death. We'll know soon enough if he was really bitten to death by the Soul Devouring Beast." Yuan Tianya said coolly, "As long as he wasn't killed by Xie Jingxuan, I will be able to call the shots and obtain justice for you."

"Hall Master, that Xie Jingxuan... just what is her background?" Liu Yuntao asked solemnly.

Yuan Tianya gave him a smile. "It's best if you don't ask about this. All you need to know is that you should not provoke her. Hmm, let's put it this way. Even if I am seated at the position of Grand Hall Master, I will still have to show her an adequate amount of comity."

The moment the words were said, everyone's faces changed. They became wary of Xie Jingxuan inside their hearts.

"Zhuo Qian was placed in Nebula Pavilion as part of her training. So is she the same and was placed at Dark Asura Hall from... up there?" Liu Yuntao exclaimed.

Yuan Tianya looked surprised and then nodded. “Very smart. Indeed, I have not misjudged you.”

“If your son really died by her hands, then… you may as well just think of it as bad luck,” said Liu Yuntao as he stared at Shattered Ice Manor’s Manor Lord, Yan Wenyan, with a frown.

Yan Wenyan scowled and did not say anything.

At this moment, someone called out softly from outside, “Pavilion Master, I have something to report.”

Liu Yuntao’s expression fell as he asked, “What is it?”

“Qin Lie has challenged Vice Pavilion Master Du right on the streets. They are now fighting at the street between Drunken Fragrance Garden and Bright Moon Tower.” The person on the outside did not dare to enter as he asked with the utmost politeness, “Vice Pavilion Master seems to be planning to kill him. Do I need to inform him to hold back a little?”

“What an impertinent bastard; how dare he cause trouble on the day I become Pavilion Master. Make sure to tell Haitian to eliminate this person!”

“I understand.” The person quietly withdrew.

And so, Liu Yuntao continued to accompany Yuan Tianya and talk with him. The little episode had no weight inside their hearts.

To them, Qin Lie was already a dead man.

……

On the street, under the night sky.

With the falling blue leaves above Qin Lie's head, he madly channeled Heavenly Thunder Eradication and defended against them with great difficulty while using woven electricity.

From time to time, he even had to dodge in abject fear to avoid the soundless "Wave Force" attacks.

His spirit energy was rapidly consumed, and the thunder and lightning energy inside his Natal Palace was also depleting at an incredible rate. His expression grew more and more tired.

The windows of every building on both sides of the street were opened. Countless pairs of eyes were pointed at the street and Qin Lie and Du Haitian's figures.

At the corner, Xie Jingxuan, garbed in white, and Liang Zhong stood by themselves as they also watched the street fight.

Tu Ze, Zhuo Qian, and Kang Zhi were surrounded by Du Haitian's subordinates at the center. There was nothing they could do; they could only stare red-eyed with great worry.

“Bang bang!”

Electricity flashed above his head. Two more deep blue leaves exploded, and the bits of shattered blue light fell through the web and suddenly made contact with Qin Lie’s shoulders.

“RIIIP!”

As if cut by a blade, two wounds immediately appeared on Qin Lie’s shoulders with scarlet blood flowing out.

“Bang bang bang!”

As more deep blue leaves exploded, more motes of icy-blue light seeped through the lightning and descended onto Qin Lie’s body.

Wound after wound appeared on Qin Lie’s body. Fresh blood gushed out and drenched him completely in red.

Everyone who saw this understood that Qin Lie had expended too much energy and was no longer able to maintain a tight electrical web. That was why the blue lights were able to fall through and inflict terrible wounds on his body.

Du Haitian’s expression was calm as he wordlessly waved the Blue Leaf Sword and formed even more icy-blue leaves.

Seeing that Qin Lie was drenched in blood and how the light in

his eyes slowly fading, Du Haitian frowned and said, “I’m surprised that you were able to hold out for so long, but in the end, you are still going to die. Besides, I really like this way of torturing you… to death.”

Finally, he dared to approach Qin Lie once more.

While walking closer, he said, “I heard that you have quite the great relationship with the juniors, Ling Ying, Ling Xin, and Ling Xiao at Ling Town. I wonder if you know that your fate will be the same as theirs: to die without even leaving behind a corpse…”

Du Haitian’s voice gradually grew quieter, and with a tone that only Qin Lie could hear, he slowly said, “Do you know that when they died I was watching right above the valley? I watched them being torn apart and eaten alive one after another by the spirit beasts just like Ling Chengye. Do you know happy I was at the time?”

His expression was dark and horrifying. “That little bitch Ling Xuanxuan made my Fei’er impotent! I will use the corpses of every Ling clansmen to take revenge for Fei’er! Ling Chengye is already dead, and the next one will be his younger brother Ling Chengzhi, and after him, Ling Feng and every other clansmen in the Ling Family! They will all die with their bodies torn to shreds just like you!”

Once he had walked closer Du Haitian once again used “Wave Force.” With these three-layered ripples, he would corner Qin Lie and murder him in a most horrifying manner!

Listening to his depictions, the terrible scene of Ling Ying and Ling Xin before they faced their deaths appeared in Qin Lie's mind...

When he watched "Wave Force" rushing towards him once more, Qin Lie grit his teeth and suddenly chose not to dodge any longer. Savagely, he said, "If I live today, then I swear that I will tear Du Jianlan, Du Fei and Du Heng to pieces!"

His face filled with madness and anger, he suddenly rushed at Du Haitian in full force as all the energy surrounding his entire body instantly turned solid.

"Boom boom boom!"

Bolts of lightning accompanied by the rumbling sounds of thunder poured out every one of his meridians. Even his two eyes had thunder and lightning shooting out of them.

"You will die!" Du Haitian's eyes turned chilly, as the layers of "Wave Force" rushed at Qin Lie in order to exterminate Qin Lie on the spot.

He did not believe that the burned out Qin Lie would still be able to hurt him at close range any longer, even with suicidal methods.

He also did not believe that Qin Lie could break through the layered "Wave Force"!

“Whoosh!”

The wooden sculpture that Qin had been holding onto this entire time was suddenly put away, and a spirit tablet suddenly appeared at his right hand—the Spirit Storage Board!

With a single thought, the spirit energy that had been stored for many days inside the Spirit Storage Board gushed into his dantian’s spirit sea in an instant, causing his eyes to shine with a powerful light and his mind to eerily be filled with power again!

Lightning flashed from his left arm as streaks of thunder energy slipped into the Terminator Profound Bomb. The dark blue thunder ball abruptly shook with thunder.

“Clap clap clap!”

Both thunder and lightning energy gushed out of his Natal Palace, meridians, veins, and blood in boiling fashion, causing his entire body to roar with thunder and be surrounded by lightning!

At this very moment, Qin Lie’s early stage Heavenly Thunder Sacred Body showed its true power!

“Eh?”

Many surprised cries came from the windows on both sides of the

street. Everyone's expressions were slightly moved as they stared at Qin Lie with a strange look.

Xie Jingxuan's eyes brightened a little as she said, "His aura has suddenly increased massively..."

"This is?" Liang Zhong was stunned.

As of now, the person rushing towards Du Haitian, Qin Lie, did not look burned out in the slightest! His sudden aura was incredible, and it caused shockwaves among the bystanders!

Du Haitian's expression changed for the first time in the fight!

He was currently way too close with Qin Lie, and because "Wave Force" had just been unleashed, he was in a state of exhaustion. There was no way he could dodge out of the way at all.

Du Haitian decided that he would take the blow head on!

"Bang!"

When the Wave Force's first layer blasted at him, Qin Lie was as steady as a rock and was not moved in the slightest. The lightning surrounding his body was not weakened at all.

"Bang!"

Wave Force's second layer followed closely behind. Its power was more than twice the first's, but even that only caused Qin Lie's figure to pause abruptly and become bloodied all over.

Qin Lie's aura was still as imposing as ever, and the thunder and lightning surrounding him did not stop crackling. In fact, his eyes shone brighter and brighter with a morbid light!

"Bang!"

Wave Force's third wave rushed over like a rolling mountain. A terrific sound suddenly exploded from every bone in Qin Lie's body. Fresh blood sprayed madly from his mouth.

His charging figure was stopped dead in its tracks. He could no longer take even a single step forward.

He was just five steps away from Du Haitian!

Gritting his teeth, he attempted to withstand the Wave Force and take just a step further. But he found that his legs were shaking and that they did not have the strength to make it. He could not move even an inch closer towards Du Haitian!

Wave Force's third layer was the true essence of the entire attack. It contained continuous and repeating aftershocks!

Qin Lie was assaulted by Wave Force's aftershocks, and as if pushed backwards by sea waves, he couldn't get a single step closer

to Du Haitian.

“What a shame.” Xie Jingxuan shook her head. “I do not know why he had to get closer to Du Haitian, but in the end, he failed to do it and thus cannot execute his final move.”

Liang Zhong’s eyebrows were deeply locked when he suddenly said, “Miss, I like this kid!”

“This is the challenge he brought upon himself.” Xie Jingxuan’s expression was cool. “Therefore we are not to interfere no matter what the outcome may be, whether it be life or death. This is a challenge, and as a challenger, he must have the courage and awareness to face death.”

The moment she said those words, dejection appeared in Liang Zhong’s eyes. He understood that Xie Jingxuan would not interfere with this battle.

Since Xie Jingxuan was not ready to interfere, then as a servant, he must not act out on his own.

The only thing he could do was to quietly watch.

“QIN LIE!” Tu Ze roared with red eyes. It was as if he could see the ending already.

Zhuo Qian and Kang Zhi’s eyes too become misty with tears.

“He is a real man!” Xiong Ba nodded his eyes while completely ignoring Liu Ting and Du Heng’s hateful gazes. “If I knew he was such a tough guy back at the stone forest, I would’ve made every effort to connect with im. Sigh, how unfortunate…”

“Not too bad,” Lu Li frowned and muttered from another window, “I suppose Junior Sister Ling was not mistaken after all…”

“This is it.” Du Haitian recovered and lifted his hand once more.

It was yet another round of Wave Force!

—No one thought that Qin Lie could hold on any longer.

Amidst the countless pair of eyes, Qin Lie suddenly withdrew and jumped backwards!

It was hard to go forward, but quite easy to retreat. With a single leap, he had put out ten meters of distance in an instant. Then, he jumped again and moved yet another ten meters…

“A round ball fell out of his sleeves…” subconsciously whispered someone with a sharp eye.

After that, many people also saw that there was a walnut-sized, dark blue ball where Qin Lie was standing earlier. The ball was

flashing with electricity, and on the inside, there was the faint rumblings of thunder.

“One, two, three…” Qin Lie counted in his heart.

“Boom!”

A thunderous and violent explosion that shook the entire Icestone City abruptly detonated right before Du Haitian. The most terrifying shockwave, mixed with bits of iron shot outwards, and in an instant, the entire street was covered in a sky full of thick dust and stone powder.

Once the dust had settled, a thirty meter wide deep hole, out of nowhere, had appeared on the street, and it reached as far as two meters down into the stone ground!

The inhuman form of Du Haitian laid at the center of the hole. Every inch of his body was twitching and blood flowed out everywhere. His chest had tens of bloody, bone-deep holes, and even his intestines had fallen out of his stomach.

—It was obvious that he wasn’t going to survive.

While everyone was still in shock, Qin Lie suddenly rushed forward once more and swiftly picked up Du Haitian’s Blue Leaf Sword that had fallen to the ground.

Then, amidst Du Heng’s earth shattering roar of anger, Qin Lie

beheaded Du Haitian in a single stroke and made a mad dash to exit Icestone City without ever looking back.

With the crying and howling Du Heng as the only exception, every other bystander was completely stunned at the moment as they stood there stupidly at a complete loss.

Chapter 117: Entire City Shaken!

Du Haitian's decapitated corpse lay within the deep hole in the street. The bloody holes at his chest were still bubbling.

Qin Lie had seized the opportunity to retreat long ago, and now, there was no longer even a trace of his shadow to be seen. The crowd could only hear Du Heng running down from the room upstairs all the way to Du Haitian's corpse at the center of the street while crying like a madman.

"Milord!"

Du Haitian's subordinates finally reacted and cried out involuntarily in pain.

The faces of the martial practitioners watching the show from the restaurants on both sides of the street were absolutely awkward. Many people looked stunned, as if they still could not believe what just happened right before their eyes.

Du Haitian, the middle stage Natal Opening Realm martial practitioner with six completely filled Natal Palaces was actually killed and beheaded by Qin Lie...

The reality of it made a huge impact on their minds!

Li Zhongzheng, who had made sarcastic remarks the entire time was now quietly scowling as a trace of surprise appeared in his

eyes.

Lu Li's expression was as cold as ever. Leaning against the window and looking in the direction Qin Lie had run to, her eyes glowed with an odd trace of color.

"This Qin Lie is even crazier than I thought." Crimson Flame Association's Xiong Ba exclaimed in a low tone as great passion surged inside him. "I can't believe he actually dared to behead Du Haitian! He will be hunted as the traitor of the entire city. Icestone City will no longer have a place for him!"

"A madman with his mad methods!" Na Nuo eyes were bright with amazement as she nodded and said, "Today is the day Liu Yuntao was officially taking over Nebula Pavilion and Du Haitian was becoming the Vice Pavilion Master. It is the greatest moment of his life. But who could have predicted that he would be beheaded on the spot by Qin Lie during the proudest day of his life!"

"Th-this is almost too hard to believe." Little Sparrow's voice was shaking slightly, and it appeared that her feelings hadn't completely calmed down yet.

On the other side.

Tu Ze, Zhuo Qian, and Kan Zhi were shaking as if they could not control the excitement inside their hearts.

“How can this be? How can this be?” Zhuo Qian whispered with happiness written all over her face as her smile grew wider and wider. “He actually killed Du Haitian! Heavens!”

“He won’t be able to get out of the city!” Tu Ze was the steadier person among the two, and after the excitement passed, he immediately grew worried. “Liu Yuntao would never allow Qin Lie to live past tonight!”

The moment he said those words, the group who was still deep in excitement and wild happiness immediately felt their faces fell.

“Miss.” At the corner of the street, Liang Zhong said with a face full of smiles, “That kid is pretty okay, right?”

Xie Jingxuan frowned but nodded her head slightly. “Not bad.”

“But I’m afraid he may not be able to escape Icestone City alive…” Liang Zhong said quietly with begging eyes, “Should we lend him a hand?”

“We can’t.” Xie Jingxuan sighed. “If he didn’t behead Du Haitian and I went out to negotiate on his behalf, then perhaps Yuan Tianya may choose to pay me respect and leave him alive. But now…” She shook her head as if feeling a bit of regret herself.

“That damned brat!” Liang Zhong cursed loudly. “He just had to be impulsive! If he hadn’t dealt that last blow, it would have counted as a proper challenge victory. He would have been able to

get out safely.”

“If he hadn’t dealt that last blow, Du Haitian may have survived.” Xie Jingxuan’s tone was calm. “I have guessed that he would commit murder. I knew from the very beginning that there was some kind of madness hidden inside his very bones. On a normal day, it may not show up, but the moment he is driven into life-or-death combat, his violence and madness will fully surface.”

“Just what is this kid’s background?” Liang Zhong looked stunned.

“He shouldn’t live beyond tonight.” Xie Jingxuan turned around and walked towards Commerce Street. “If he survives today and manages to escapes from Icestone City, I might consider accepting him into the Department of Foreign Affairs. Judging from today’s performance, he does meet the qualifications. Mn, he isn’t too bad.”

“I hope he can escape.” Liang Zhong sighed.

……

Nebula Pavilion.

Inside Liu Yuntao’s study, Yuan Tianya’s group was still discussing about the future arrangements of Shattered Ice Manor and Nebula Pavilion.

“Pa-Pavilion Master!” came a yell from the outside again. This time, it was obviously tinged with a hint of panic and urgency. “There is trouble.”

Liu Yuntao’s face turned cold. “What is it again?”

“Pa-Pavilion Master Du was severely hurt by Qin Lie’s blast, then got beheaded on the spot…” stuttered the person outside,.

Liu Yuntao, Wei Xing, and Yan Wenyan immediately stood up from their seats and exclaimed in unison, “How is that possible?”

Dark Asura Hall’s First Hall Master, Yuan Tianya, remained seated. He simply frowned slightly with a trace of curiosity appearing in his eyes, just as surprised that Du Haitian would be killed by a small fry a level below him.

“It’s true! There are many people from Crimson Flame Association and Water Moon Sect who witnessed it first hand!” The person on the outside quickly explained how Du Haitian had died horribly.

With a dark face, Liu Yuntao yelled out the moment he finished speaking, “Shut every gate in the city immediately, and send out every martial practitioner inside the pavilion. I will see Qin Lie’s head before dawn breaks!”

“Send a notice to Yan Dewu to lockdown the north gate as well. No one is to go in or out tonight,” also instructed Shattered Ice

Manor’s Yan Wenyan.

“Notify Discipline Hall’s Ye Yangqiu to send out everyone in the Discipline Hall as well!” Liu Yuntao yelled again.

“Understood!” solemnly answered the person outside .

As the instructions were passed on, every martial practitioner in Nebula Pavilion had received the notice to scour every corner of the city for Qin Lie and to execute him on the spot.

For a time, the south part of Icestone City was bustling with martial practitioners, and every path leading towards the city gates were completely blocked.

For many people, tonight would be a sleepless night.

“Come quickly Gao Yu! Qin Lie has executed Du Haitian at the street in front of Drunken Fragrance Garden. As of now, the entire city is shaken, and Pavilion Master Liu has given the absolute order to see Qin Lie’s head before daybreak!” Liu Yan rushed into Gao Yu’s house with eyes filled with shock. “Elder Ye has ordered us on an operation to scour entire city and take down Qin Lie.”

Inside the windowless cottage, Gao Yu’s eyes glowed with eerie, evil light amidst complete darkness. Seeing them, Liu Yan felt a little chilled on the inside, but still quickly said, “Y-you’re not asleep yet?”

“I am cultivating,” Gao Yu answered simply with a cold voice. It appeared that he hadn’t completely awakened from his cultivation.

It took a while before his tone finally returned to normal. With a clouded expression, he walked outside with Liu Yan while muttering, “He actually succeeded…”

“Gao Yu, I know that you’re quite close with Qin Lie, but we are a part of the Discipline Hall. That is why we should get out a little.” Liu Yan paused for a moment before saying, “Even if it is just for show ,we should still walk around the city a little so the others would know that we are busy as well.”

“Oh.” Gao Yu nodded. Once he was out he quickened his footsteps and said, “Let’s split up.”

Before Liu Yan could react, Gao Yu flashed several times under the night sky and soon disappeared.

Very soon, Gao Yu appeared outside of Nebula Pavilion. He could see with a glance that many martial practitioners inside the pavilion were gathering at the direction of each city gates, thinking to take him down there.

“You all underestimated his madness,” Gao Yu whispered in his heart before leaving alone.

—He seemed to know where Qin Lie would be headed to.

“All Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners are to track and hunt down Qin Lie within the city immediately! This is an order from the Pavilion Master himself! This is his first order after he has taken the office!”

Wei Xing’s Elder, Pei An, and Fang Tong, appeared together at Drunken Fragrance Garden and Bright Moon Tower before calling that out loudly.

Du Haitian, Wei Xing, and Liu Yuntao’s subordinates immediately departed with a murderous atmosphere in the direction Qin Lie escaped to unanimously.

“I’m feeling a bit unwell because I drank too much, and tomorrow, I have to depart for Dark Asura Hall too. I don’t think I will be of use,” Tu Ze said solemnly.

“Me too. I’m drunk and I can’t move,” Zhuo Qian also cried out.

Kang Zhi and Han Feng were either pretending to be sick or drunk. It was as if their feet had grown roots as they stood where they were and completely ignored Pei An and Fang Tong’s orders.

The people from Seven Fiends Valley, Crimson Flame Association, and Water Moon Sect appeared unruffled as they continued to stand at the windows.

They did not plan to sleep tonight, instead drinking while paying

attention to the commotion inside the city. They were waiting to see when Qin Lie would be discovered, surrounded, and killed.

They knew very well that this was a special day for Liu Yuntao, who had recently taken over the position of Pavilion Master.

If Qin Lie could survive tonight after beheading Du Haitian and after he sent out an absolute order... then, he as the new Pavilion Master could be said to be in complete disgrace.

“All the routes are covered, why haven’t we seen him yet?”

“The gates are also locked. If he cannot get out tonight, then he will have an even lower chance later!”

“Search! Keep searching! Cover every house, we will find him even if we have to dig three feet under South City!”

“The pavilion master has given the absolute order to see his head before daylight!”

“……”

Cold-faced martial practitioners could be seen mobilizing at every main street of South City. They had begun barging into every manor to search from house to house.

For a moment, all hell broke loose in the entire city, and every

Nebula Pavilion martial practitioner were shouting with cold faces.

They were all looking for Qin Lie to capture and kill him, but unfortunately, they could not find any trace of him.

At the northernmost region of South City, there was a rather elegant manor located quite far away from the city center. The groundbreaking commotion taking place inside the city hadn't reached there yet.

The people there also did not know that the South City had been utterly riled up by Qin Lie's atrocities.

This place was the Du Family's house inside Icestone City.

Both mother and son, Du Jiaolan and Du Fei, the Elders of Du Family, and other forces had just celebrated here tonight.

They were celebrating Du Haitian's promotion and that a capable man was finally born in the Du Family, a leader that could lead the Du Family towards the pinnacle of glory.

At this moment, every member of the Du Family had drunk quite a bit and had happily retreated back to their respective rooms to rest.

Inside a luxurious room, there was an expensive carpet that covered the ground, and above a huge bed carved with white jade, there were three young and naked girls bowing, prostrating, and

doing all kinds of sexy moves and poses.

At the edge of the bed, Du Fei stared dead-eyed at the three girls with a hideous expression while looking from time to time at his crotch.

There was no reaction at all...

“Mother, I can’t, I just can’t anymore!” Du Fei bellowed in a low tone like an animal, his expression painful. “I was ruined by the little bitch, Ling Xuanxuan, and I can’t get a hard on anymore! I’m a ruined man!”

At the table in front of the bed, Du Jiaolan glared at him and exclaimed, “Take a better look at them and use your imagination. You can do it, Mother knows that you can do it!”

“Young Master Du, why don’t you let this servant service you.” A girl smiled seductively before slithering over like a water snake. She stuck out a fragrant tongue and licked Du Fei’s neck.

Following her signal, the other two girls also voluntarily slithered over and continuously rubbed Du Fei’s body with their soft, erect breasts.

“It’s hard! I think it’s becoming harder!” Du Fei suddenly screamed in mad joy as his face blushed with a healthy red and his expression absolutely excited. “Mother, I’m responding! I’m actually responding!”

“I knew you can do it, I just knew you can do it!” Du Jiaolan herself had grown excited. “Worry not Fei’er, as long as you can do it, mother promises to capture those two little bitches, Ling Xuanxuan and Ling Yushi, so you can vent on them all you want and have them bleed and cry everyday under your crotch!”

“Sooner or later I will those two bitches!” Du Fei laughed madly.

“Boom!”

A sword beam burst through the window as a blood covered man suddenly rushed out. While both mother and son, Du Jiaolan and Du Fei, were laughing happily, streaks of electrical snakes were formed inside the house before they fled toward Du Jiaolan’s body.

“Who are you?!” Du Jiaolan did not expect that someone would dare to assault them in the middle of the night and suddenly screeched out. She grabbed a teacup and flung it at the person.

“Zzzt Zzzt Zzzt!” Strands of electrical snakes entangled her and climbed up her arms like vines, causing her body to suddenly become paralyzed.

“Blue Leaf Sword! It’s Haitian’s Blue Leaf Sword!” Du Jiaolan cried out uncontrollably as she hurriedly dodged sideways.

“Spurt!”

The short sword failed to pierce through her heart when she fled upwards. It only managed to pierce through her lower abdomen.

“Qin Lie! It’s Qin Lie!” Du Fei screamed in abject terror, “Someone! Anyone, come quickly!”

Chapter 118: I Will Kill Your Entire Family!

“Qin Lie! How dare you barge into the Du Family to commit murder. You will not come out of this alive!”

Du Fei exclaimed harshly, but he did not dare to actually go close to Qin Lie. Instead, he escaped outside to call other Du Family members over to kill Qin Lie together.

“That’s Haitian’s Blue Leaf Sword!”

Inside the house, Du Jiaolan barely escaped the deadly blow in a most embarrassing manner while bleeding profusely from her stomach. Upon suddenly finding out the sword Qin Lie was wielding was actually the Blue Leaf Sword, she immediately screeched.

Covered in Beastskin Armor and bloodied all over, Qin Lie wore a crazed look on his face. He reflexively frowned a little when he saw Du Jiaolan dodging to the side and Du Fei rushing out of the yard.

“Swoosh!”

The Blue Leaf Sword in his hands abruptly flew out, and like a bolt of cold light piercing through the night, it shot towards like lightning at the back of Du Fei’s heart.

“You dare!” Du Jiaolan rushed over with a disheveled look.

Unfortunately, the Blue Leaf Sword's momentum wasn't something she could stop anymore. With a "pfft" sound, the Blue Leaf Sword pierced Du Fei's back, into his heart, and nailed him to a tree.

"Fei'er!"

Du Jiaolan hysterically screamed out, and ignoring her profusely bleeding stomach, she rushed towards Qin Lie with everything she had.

The reason Qin Lie had killed Du Fei first was to incite Du Jiaolan to turn insane and lose control!

The moment she charged him, Qin Lie took out the wooden sculpture and matched Du Jiaolan's movements with a swing.

"Zzt Zzzt Zzt!"

The tightly woven electricity came out; raging thunder energy mixed within the thin body of electricity. It surrounded Du Jiaolan's body instantly.

While she was screaming in pain Qin Lie closed in with a chilly face as his thunder-like fists fell down like a raging storm.

"Boom boom boom!"

Du Jiaolan's body was struck repeatedly as the thunder energy around her exploded. Her bones were shattered, and blood flowed from every hole on her head.

"Qin Lie! Haitian will kill you! He definitely will!" Even when her mouth was filled with blood and the light in her eyes was gradually fading out, Du Jiaolan did not forget to threaten him.

"He is already dead," coldly answered Qin Lie.

Du Jiaolan's suddenly shuddered. "Impossible!"

"I first killed him and took his Blue Leaf Sword. Then, I came to kill the both of you." Clenching his fist while Du Jiaolan was wrapped up by the electricity, Qin Lie directly struck her heart while continuing. "Your entire family deserves to die. The next one will be Du Heng. I will kill your entire family."

"Bang!"

An ugly sound emerged from Du Jiaolan's chest, and her life was ended by Qin Lie's final strike.

"Don't kill us! Don't kill me!"

Inside the house, the naked young girls were wrapped in thin clothing as they shrunk at the corner of the bed while shivering in fear.

In their eyes, Qin Lie who had barged in while covered in blood was like a cruel and bloodthirsty demon arriving at their doorsteps. They were afraid that Qin Lie, who had already killed both mother and son, Du Jiaolan and Du Fei, would also kill them offhandedly.

Qin Lie turned around and glanced around. He frowned slightly amidst the cries of the Du Family clansmen. Then, his figure vanished into the shadows around the corner.

“Little Lan! Little Lan! What are you shouting about?”

A dozen-odd seconds later, the Du Family’s house master and a few elders loudly cried out while rushing over.

The moment they arrived, they discovered Du Jiaolan and Du Fei’s bodies right then and there. These Du Family members cried out in shock and screamed to look for the murderer that very instant.

“Someone has killed Jiaolan and Du Fei! The murderer should not be too far away, chase him down already!” The Du family house master snapped loudly, “Send someone to Nebula Pavilion without delay. Inform Haitian about this news as soon as possible and have him lead Nebula Pavilion’s elites throughout the entire city to hunt down the murderer!”

“Patriarch Du!” At this moment, Fang Tong’s voice came from outside Du Family’s doorsteps as he led several Nebula Pavilion

martial practitioners in while yelling loudly, “What happened, Patriarch Du!”

“Hall Master Fang, you have come at just the right time!” Du family’s house master exclaimed urgently, “Someone has barged into the Du Family and murdered Haitian’s cousin and nephew. We were just about to send someone to notify Haitian!”

“Qin Lie! He actually committed murder again in the Du Family!” Fang Tong’s face subsequently fell. “How long has it been since it happened?”

“Du Fei was just screaming just now,” replied the Du Family Patriarch.

“He must still be close then!” Fang Tong’s expression lit up as he loudly yelled, “Brothers, we will search the area with this spot as the center! He is severely injured, and there should be blood dripping from his body! Make sure you pay attention to blood spots!”

“Yes sir!”

“What happened, Hall Master Fang?” exclaimed Du Family’s Patriarch.

“Vice Pavilion Master Du was challenged and beheaded on the streets in front of Drunken Fragrance Garden by Qin Lie.” Fang Tong’s expression was rife with urgency as he hastily explained

before yelling, “All of you, get moving! The Pavilion Master has given the absolute order to see Qin Lie’s head before daybreak!”

Once he finished, Fang Tong led the brothers under his command and spread out in all directions, searching for traces of blood at every path to lead them to Qin Lie’s location.

On the other hand, the Du Family Patriarch was so shocked he had fallen on his butt with a terrified expression. “Haitian is dead? Haitian was actually killed? He was just seated as Vice Pavilion Master today, how could he have possibly been killed?”

Each and every member of the Du Family also looked frightened, finding it hard to believe what they just heard.

Two hours ago, they were still celebrating the fact that Du Haitian had gloriously ascended to become Nebula Pavilion’s Vice Pavilion Master. They all thought that the Du Family had finally raised a capable person, and the entire family was brimming with happiness and excitement.

But two hours later, they suddenly received news that Du Haitian had died, in addition to finding out Du Jiaolan and Du Fei were killed...

“How can this be? How can this be?” Du Family’s house master whispered, unable to accept this terrible news. It wasn’t until he heard Fang Tong’s cries that he suddenly woke up and yelled, “Join Nebula Pavilion in the hunt. We must kill this person. Wake up every clansmen above the seventh level of Refinement!”

For a moment, the entire Du Family was also riled up as they joined Fang Tong's people to chase after Qin Lie.

"Hall Master Fang! There are traces of blood here!" Under the night sky, a Nebula Pavilion martial practitioner cried out, "Heavens, he isn't heading for the city gates... this blood trail is headed into the city!"

"Chase after him quickly!" Fang Tong yelled out in anger.

Dozens of figures speedily swept over and chased after the trail of blood. They were in a hurry to kill Qin Lie before daybreak so they could carry his head to Liu Yuntao.

It was already midnight.

Following a small path along the river, Qin Lie's face was pale as he reigned in the pain, grit his teeth, and swiftly proceeded onward.

Blood leaked from the numerous tiny wounds on his body. They dripped through his Beastskin Armor and scattered in every direction as he ran.

After his battle against Du Haitian, many sections of the skin all over his body was stripped away by the Blue Leaf Sword. There were even a few wounds that were nearly bone deep.

It was only after putting on the Beastskin Armor Liang Zhong had gifted him and absorbing all of the spirit energy inside the Spirit Storage Board that he recovered somewhat.

After sneaking all the way to the Du Family complex and killing both mother and son, Du Jiaolan and Du Fei, he had nearly expended all of his energy. His combat capabilities were getting weaker and weaker...

“Du Heng, there is still Du Heng left!” he muttered in his heart. He was ready to return to Drunken Fragrance Garden and seek an opportunity to kill his final target.

“Give chase! He should be right in front of us!” Out of nowhere, there was a shout behind him.

Qin Lie’s expression changed. He did not expect the people from Nebula Pavilion to search the inner city instead of blocking the front of the city gates.

—He didn’t know that Fang Tong had just brought his men over to inform the Du Family of Du Haitian’s death and just happened to discovered his tracks. Neither did he know that they had immediately followed his trail of blood and were hot on his trail.

Channeling his spirit energy, he quietly probed and discovered that his dantian’s spirit sea had less than thirty percent of his spirit energy remaining, and the thunder energy inside his Natal Palace would only be sufficient for three or four more attacks.

Glancing about in every direction, he suddenly walked up to the little river beside him and slowly dipped himself into the river.

Two minutes later, Fang Tong led five Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners chasing after the trail of blood all the way to where he was currently standing.

“The trail of blood has disappeared!” cried out Nebula Pavilion martial practitioner from the front.

“He must be around here then!” Fang Tong coldly said with a dark face, “Today is the day our Pavilion Master rose to his position, and yet it was ruined by an insignificant worm using extremely despicable methods. If we do not promptly kill him, then the Pavilion Master will definitely lose his honor! Brothers, if we carry his head to the Pavilion Master, we will definitely be handsomely rewarded by the Pavilion Master!”

While encouraging his brothers, Fang Tong glanced at his surroundings before immediately saying, “Above and behind the trees, along the two sides of the stone path, and both the riverside and river bed. Search them all!”

The few Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners moved right away.

Two of the men gradually closed in on Qin Lie’s position beside the river. One of the men glanced at the river under the night sky before crying out, “There is blood inside the river!”

“Plop!”

In a flash, Qin Lie leaped out of the river. As soon as the man cried out in shock, Qin Lie swam to his side like a river monster before dragging him right into the water.

While they were inside the river, Qin Lie repeatedly smashed the back side of the person’s head with his fist and murdered him with brute force.

“Inside the river! Kill that bastard!” angrily yelled Fang Tong from the shore.

Several people instantaneously began channeling their power and activated the powers inside the spirit artifacts they were wielding. For a moment, a multi-colored assortment of lights, blades of ice and strings of fire all shot towards Qin Lie’s position.

“Bang bang bang!”

Sparks flew off Qin Lie’s Beastskin Armor to block all of the long-ranged attacks, protecting his body from actual harm.

“That’s Beastskin Armor. It’s the standard uniform worn by Dark Asura Hall generals, and they can block many Refinement level attacks!” Fang Tong’s expression changed as he yelled, “Aim at his head!”

Due to water resistance, Qin Lie’s movements were significantly

restricted inside the river.

The moment he heard Fang Tong's new order, his heart chilled, and he had no choice but to jump out of the water. While blocking the enemy's attacks with the Beastskin armor, he continued to climb to the street on the other side of the river.

"Bang!"

The longblade in Fang Tong's hand glowed with rainbow-colored light, and it slammed into Qin Lie's back, causing him to unceremoniously fall forward.

He used the force to aid him on his way to climb up to the street on the other side. However, the moment he lifted his head, he abruptly froze as his expression became clouded with incredibly mixed feelings, "Gao Yu..."

Gao Yu stood cold and tall on the side of the street he was climbing onto while looking down on him. He said, "I knew you would go to the Du Family and kill them."

"Gao Yu! Stop him! We'll be coming right over!" Fang Tong was overjoyed as he quickly led a few brothers down the river and rushed towards Qin Lie.

"Alright!" Gao Yu nodded coolly. Vengeful spirits floated from the Ogre-faced Ring on his finger, and the numerous ghosts quickly formed into a green-faced, large-fanged vile ghost.

The moment the vile ghost was formed, it immediately rushed towards Qin Lie with fangs bared and claws ready to tear Qin Lie's neck apart.

"Good job!" Fang Tong shouted.

But Qin Lie did not move.

He just stood there staring at Gao Yu's eyes, doing nothing at all to defend against the incoming ghost.

With a cold and gloomy expression, Gao Yu curled his lips before unexpectedly muttering in a chilly tone, "You shouldn't trust me so much..."

Once finished, the vile ghost rushing towards Qin Lie all of a sudden floated by and passed the top of his head. Then, with a vicious howl, it ruthlessly charged into Fang Tong's men and began its rampage.

Chapter 119: Weeds… Must Be Cut At The Roots!

Carrying an aura of chilly darkness, the vile ghost unleashed a rationale-destroying mind wave and charged right into the center of Fang Tong and the others. In an instant, their consciousness became blurred, and illusions bloomed one after another in their heads. They could not make heads or tails of anything.

“Go!” Gao Yu exclaimed in a low tone.

Three vengeful spirits formed from the Rank Two Ice Soul Python’s soul also flew out from his Ogre-faced Ring in the shape of three white ghosts and surrounded Fang Tong from three different directions.

“Gao Yu, how dare you help Qin Lie and attack us, are you planning to commit suicide?!” Fang Tong’s expression was severe. “Your elder sister is still in Nebula Pavilion! Your Gao Family is also part of Nebula Pavilion’s vassal forces. Are you going to let the entire Gao Family be exterminated because of your impulsive actions?!”

Qin Lie’s expression also changed.

He had guessed that Gao Yu would not actually kill him, so he didn’t really move out of the way when he saw that vile soul rushing at him.

This was because he did not feel murderous, bone-chilling, killing intent from the vile soul, so he thought that Gao Yu was just putting on a show.

—He had not expected Gao Yu to actually attack Fang Tong!

Just as Fang Tong had said, Nebula Pavilion had Gao Yu's weakness in their grips. His sister and all of the Gao Family members' lives were held by Nebula Pavilion's Liu Yuntao, so Qin Lie himself did not expect that Gao Yu would act so boldly.

"If all of you are dead, then who will know that I helped Qin Lie?"

Gao Yu's expression was cold, and the Ogre-faced Ring on his hand glittered with a green light. A few more vengeful spirits and evil ghosts formed from spirit beasts souls actually materialized and locked down Fang Tong and his men like persistent evil spirits, preventing them from escaping the vengeful spirits' encirclement.

"Did you think that I've only this many men?" Fang Tong's gaze hardened. "My subordinates are just around the corner. The moment they hear the sounds of fighting, they will immediately rush over!"

"No one is coming." Like a phantom, Gao Yu rushed Fang Tong without warning even as he spoke indifferently along the way, "I scouted the area for a while before I attacked you. Those brothers of yours have long since gone to hell."

While he was speaking, the mark of the Demon God's shadow vaguely appeared within Gao Yu's eyes.

An evil and destructive aura swiftly flowed out of Gao Yu's body. Qin Lie could clearly see that every pore of Gao Yu's body was seeping with countless wisps of cold, dark demonic energy that were as black as ink.

While Fang Tong and the others looked ashen, Gao Yu dropped inside their group like a transformed demon.

The moment he went inside, the aura of those vile ghosts and vengeful spirits abruptly strengthened multiple times and turned extremely brutal. They continuously charged, tore, and bit Fang Tong's men even as they attacked their souls with mind waves.

Qin Lie watched from the sides and realized that Fang Tong and his men's lives were swiftly depleted in just a short amount of time.

—It was as if their lives were being sucked out of their bodies and souls.

Soon enough, Fang Tong and his men were no longer breathing, and just like that, they were mysteriously killed by Gao Yu.

"Put a bolt of lightning on them so that Nebula Pavilion will not trace their deaths back to me."

While Qin Lie was still caught by surprise, Gao Yu had withdrawn the vengeful spirits and evil souls back into the Ogre-faced Ring. The mark of the Demon God's shadow also slowly faded from his eyes and disappeared.

"Oh," Qin Lie answered once before adding a bolt of electricity onto Fang Tong's body. Then, he said, "You've become stronger."

Gao Yu gave a cold and proud smile. "I may not be confident fighting against you, my natural enemy, but I have absolute confidence that I can beat every other martial practitioner of the same level! Fang Tong was just at the early stage of the Natal Opening Realm. When I was at the ninth level of Refinement I could already beat him down to the ground, so naturally, killing him now is not a problem at all!"

After a pause he continued, "Ever since I was at the Arctic Mountain Range, I've gradually absorbed some of the soul fragments of Demon God's shadow and learned a few things..."

Qin Lie nodded and said, "Thank you."

"Shhk!"

Gao Yu did not answer right away but instead picked up a random sword and slashed a wound across his chest. Then he said, "You stabbed me with this sword."

Qin Lie glanced at the wound once and nodded again.

“This pill is for you. It can help you quickly recover some strength. I found it on a Dark Shadow Tower martial practitioner’s body back at the Arctic Mountain Range.” Gao Yu threw a green pill about the size of a longan at him, paused for a moment, and then started, “All of Icestone City has been locked down, and every main city gate have elites standing by. It would be best if you hide inside the city and not show yourself as much as possible.”

“I still need to kill Du Heng.” Qin Lie grit his teeth and said, “When you’re cutting a weed, you must take out its roots!”

“You must kill him?” Gao Yu frowned.

Qin Lie nodded. “I must! I swore before Du Haitian that if I didn’t die, then I will kill his entire family!”

“I knew you were a madman!” Gao Yu snorted coldly before putting down the bow on his back. “I’ve prepared everything for you. That useless dog is still at Drunken Fragrance Garden. After his father died, it’s as if he had lost his soul and only knows how to cry hysterically. He didn’t even hunt for you at the city gates.”

Receiving the bow, Qin Lie asked with a face filled with surprise, “How did you know I would come to the Du Family? How did you also know I still want to kill Du Heng?”

“A feeling.” Gao Yu thought for a while before shaking his head.

“...an indescribable feeling. I’ve fought you many times in the combat room, and we’ve fought together in the stone forest as well. I’ve always thought that there was something crazy hidden deep within your bones and that once you got impulsive you would go crazy until the very end.”

“Keep searching! Look everywhere!” It was at this moment the shouts of the Du Family’s Patriach came from not too far away.

Gao Yu’s expression changed as he yelled, “Go. This is as far as I can help you. I hope you can leave Icestone City in one piece.”

Qin Lie also understood that the current situation was urgent and that it wasn’t the best idea to stay in one spot for too long. After Gao Yu finished speaking, Qin Lie simply gave him a deep look before turning around and running towards inside of the city.

A few minutes after he left, Gao Yu held his chest and cried out on the same spot, “Someone, come quickly!”

“Over there! There’s someone screaming over there!”

Not too long after, Du Family’s Patriarch and three Elders came together, and their expressions grotesquely twisted when they saw Fang Tong and his men’s bodies.

“I am the hall master of Nebula Pavilion’s Discipline Hall, Gao Yu. Qin Lie has just killed Fang Tong’s men and injured me. He’s currently heading outside the city!” Gao Yu threw down coldly

with a ghastly expression before unkindly ordering the Du Family's clansmen with a yell, "Follow me! We'll hunt down this man at the city gates!"

"Yes!" Du Family's clansmen answered his call and swiftly followed Gao Yu's footsteps in the opposite direction Qin Lie was heading to.

……

Midnight, at the street in front of Drunken Fragrance Garden.

The deep pit on the streets was still there, and so was Du Haitian's beheaded corpse. His subordinates had all left to hunt down Qin Lie with the Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners near the city gates.

Du Heng was the only one kneeling beside the corpse and weeping, traumatized. He letout many annoying low roars.

"Du Haitian can be considered formidable already, so how did he have such a useless son?" Beside the street in the VIP room of the second floor, Crimson Flame Association's Ge Hong looked at Du Heng below the window and frowned while drinking.

To his side was Xiong Ba's group, Water Moon Sect's Luo Wei, Na Nuo, and so on.

At this moment Liu Ting, Wei Li, and the other juniors had all

returned to the pavilion, and the rest of the experts of Nebula Pavilion had spread out to hunt for Qin Lie. Therefore, the only ones left inside Drunken Fragrance Garden and Bright Moon Tower were those from outside forces such as Crimson Flame Association, Water Moon Sect, and Seven Fiends Valleys, drinking. The only Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners left would be Kang Zhi and Zhuo Qian.

"He definitely is garbage. He should be hunting for Qin Lie right now, not crying at his father's corpse." Xiong Ba's face was filled with disdain and he scoffed. "Such a character would probably never get a chance at revenge in his entire life. If Qin Lie doesn't die this time, it will only be too easy for him to kill such a person."

"Unfortunately, that kid is dead for sure," interrupted Water Moon Sect's Elder Luo Wei. "I just received news that not only has Shattered Ice Manor's Yan Wenyan sent the order to lock down the city, even Dark Asura Hall's commanders outside the city have reached the city gates to assist Nebula Pavilion in eliminating Qin Lie."

"Dark Asura Hall's commanders?" Ge Hong's expression changed. "Aren't they leaving for Dark Asura Hall with the First Hall Master tomorrow morning?"

"That was the original plan." Luo Wei explained, "There were a lot of them, so they didn't enter the city and temporarily stayed in the few towns outside the city instead. If it wasn't for tonight's business, they would be meeting with the First Hall Master and returning to Dark Asura Hall tomorrow morning, but now... in order to protect Liu Yuntao's image, the few commanders near the

city gates have already slipped inside.”

“Then Qin Lie truly is dead for sure.” Ge Hong gave a soft sigh. “Anyone of the commanders can easily kill either of us. Naturally, Qin Lie will not survive as well.”

Xiong Ba and Na Nuo’s group inside the house all felt their faces fall when they heard his words. They were almost certain that Qin Lie was a goner.

……

“Let’s go. There’s no need to wait for further news any longer. He’s definitely not going to survive the night.” In the other room, Li Zhongzheng received the letter from the messenger bird’s neck that had just arrived and glanced at it before standing up drunkenly. “I just received news from a friend at Dark Asura Hall that a few of their commanders have gone to the city gates. They should be going after Qin Lie.”

“Then he is already a dead man!” A person stood up with one hundred percent certainty.

Lu Li also nodded and stood up. With a cool expression, she said, “How unfortunate…”

“How can a kid with no background like him survive after killing the Vice Pavilion Master of Nebula Pavilion?” Li Zhongzheng laughed coldly. “What can he do even if he gets out of Icestone

City? Will Crimson Flame Association or Water Moon Sect dare to accept him? Who will dare to cover for him? The person behind Liu Yuntao is Dark Asura Hall's First Hall Master, Yuan Tianya!"

While speaking, the group got up and prepared to leave.

At this moment, Du Heng's cries came again from below, and Li Zhongzheng cursed underneath his breath, "Dammit, if it weren't for that retard screaming like a banshee, this daddy here was gonna drink for a little while longer..."

"Swoosh!"

The sound of a flying arrow suddenly rang out and caught everyone's attention.

Following the sound, they looked to the streets.

A silent arrow broke through the sky like lightning, dragging a bolt of deep blue electricity behind it and heading straight for Du Heng's neck.

"Spurt!"

The silent arrow pierced through Du Heng's neck, and the annoying cries finally ended with a start.

Everyone looked in the direction the arrow came from, and then,

they saw the bloodied and cruel-looking Qin Lie standing in the shadow at the far corner of the street.

While they were crying out in surprise, Qin Lie turned around and subsequently disappeared once again into the darkness.

Chapter 120: Rampage

Nebula Pavilion.

Liu Yuntao sat on top of a hard wooden chair while lightly knocking the table with one hand, seemingly waiting for something with a sullen look.

Dark Asura Hall's Yuan Tianya had long been arranged to rest at the VIP tower, so the only one left to accompany him inside the house was Wei Xing. As time passed, Liu Yuntao's expression grew colder and colder.

"How much longer until daybreak?" he said out of nowhere.

"Four hours," immediately responded Wei Xing.

"Today is the first day after rising to the position of Pavilion Master in Nebula Pavilion." Liu Yuntao cocked his head to aside and looked at Wei Xing. "There are many people who are watching both of us. If Qin Lie doesn't die tonight, both you and I will be disgraced."

"I know." Wei Xing nodded.

Both of them turned silent immediately after.

Ten minutes later, a hall master under Liu Yuntao rushed in and

quietly but respectfully exclaimed, “Both mother and son, Du Jiaolan and Du Fei, were found, murdered inside the Du Family’s house, and Du Heng… was killed by an arrow beside Vice Pavilion Master Du’s body! Qin Lie… is still alive, and he is heading deeper into the city in hiding.”

“Crack!”

The armrest on Liu Yuntao’s chair was crushed as he abruptly stood up and exclaimed with an extremely terrible expression, “Brother Wei! Please go and personally have a look!”

Wei Xing nodded and, without another word, exited Nebula Pavilion straight away.

……

At a corner of Icestone City.

Ling Chengzhi, Ling Feng, and the members of the Ling Family were woken up by the commotion inside the city. Bleary-eyed, they arrived at the courtyard entrance and listened to the cries and sounds of martial practitioners running about. They all grew cautious on the inside.

“Did something happen inside the city tonight?” Ling Feng frowned.

“Both Liu Yuntao and Du Haitian has taken the position of

Pavilion Masters, and tonight was to be the greatest day of their lives. Are they using the opportunity to do something to establish their power?" Ling Family's elder, Ling Kangan, said with the utmost worry, "All of you, be careful. It will be best if you close the doors tight and ignore everything that happens outside."

"What goes up must come down. If Du Haitian dares to kill my big brother, naturally, he won't think twice to kill us as well." Ling Chengzhi's face was ashen as he weakly said, "Let's hope that the Ling Family can survive tonight. Then, we will be able to leave the first thing in the morning and meet up with the people from Seven Fiends Valley."

While they were talking, the sound of clothes flapping came from not far away, causing the members of the Ling Family to turn pale.

"Not good!" They all thought that misfortune was about to befall them.

"Can this be the brothers of Ling Family?" Liu Yan's voice came from far away, and not too long after, he could be seen running over with his brothers from the Discipline Hall.

"Big Brother Liu!" Ling Feng exclaimed. "Why have you come over at midnight?"

"Something big has happened." Liu Yan truthfully answered, "Qin Lie challenged Du Haitian on the streets and beheaded him on the spot. After that, he murdered Du Jiaolan and Du Fei. Even Du Heng was killed with an arrow. Du Haitian's entire family has been

eliminated by him in just four hours. Now, the entire city has been riled up to hunt him down. I was afraid that the Ling Family may be affected, so I quickly came over to notify you."

"H-he killed Du Haitian's entire family?" Ling Chengzhi stuttered.

"Yes. Du Haitian's entire family is dead. Qin Lie has gone completely crazy; now, all of Icestone City has been turned upside down because of him." Liu Yan's expression was severe. "I heard that the people from Seven Fiends Valley have come looking for you. If you truly have a way out, I hope that you can leave Icestone City as soon as possible so that the Ling Family will not be affected by the aftermath."

"They're dead, the Ling Family's enemies are all dead!" Ling Chengzhi was no longer listening to Liu Yan; instead, he was dancing wildly with hot tears flowing out of his eyes. He actually cried out in sheer happiness.

"The heaven pities us! The heaven pities our Ling Family!" Ling Kangan was also shedding tears.

"Qin Lie!" Ling Feng's entire body shuddered somewhat as he tightly clenched his fists. His expression was filled with excitement.

……

“Kill! Kill! Kill!”

An inhuman voice resounded inside Qin Lie’s head as his eyes gradually became filled with violence and bloodthirsty thoughts.

“Boom boom boom!”

Thunder resounded again and again from inside his chest bones, and when he headed to Commerce Street, thunder and lightning also repeatedly struck his surroundings.

“Over there! He’s right over there!”

Three Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners at the ninth level of Refinement were patrolling nearby, and after they heard the sound of thunder, they quickly rushed over.

All three of them were martial practitioners under Du Haitian. In addition, they had all gone to Ling Town before and saw Qin Lie with their own eyes.

The moment they saw Qin Lie, bleeding all over while running along the road with a crazed expression, they did not think twice to block his way. One of them yelled, “Qin Lie! You will die today!”

“Scram!”

A wild and rampaging wave abruptly appeared from Qin Lie’s

body, and as the killing intent in his eyes solidified, he madly rushed towards the three like a bloodthirsty beast unleashed from its cage.

“Crack Crack Crack!”

Three light blue Thunder Lightning Balls swiftly formed in front of his chest before shooting outwards like three shooting stars.

The Thunder Lightning Balls struck their targets dead center!

There were three bone shattering sounds, and the three martial practitioners at the ninth level of Refinement were thrown up into the air like cannonballs before they landed on the ground while bloodied all over.

Qin Lie did not even look at the three dead men as he swiftly passed over their corpses and continued onwards.

This was the seventh wave of pursuers he had killed along the way. There were twenty or so bodies that were left behind the path he had taken.

“Something’s wrong! Something’s wrong with my body!”

Qin Lie roared madly in his heart with a hideous expression, his eyes filled with violence and madness.

He felt that his entire body was in pain, but instead of burning out and feeling exhausted, he was getting excited!

A surge of new energy seemed to be flowing out of the Soul Suppressing Orb little by little, and this energy caused the blood in his entire body to gush as if burning, so hot that his head was spinning and the only thing that he could think of was a mad thirst for blood. He felt an impulse to destroy everything before him!

It was as if that energy had ignited him and made him impossibly excited, urging him to murder in his madness until the very end!

“I am Pei An. We have met before at Li’s Shop, but today, I have been ordered to kill you.” On the streets in front of him, a burly man garbed in a big red cape stood proudly and coldly yelled at Qin Lie while holding a broadsword.

The seven martial practitioners under Wei Xing stood still at both the left at right corners of the street. They all held their respective spirit artifacts and frostily stared at Qin Lie.

“You must be careful, Hall Master Pei. He has taken more than twenty lives along the way,” someone warned him. “Look at his eyes. You can see that this guy has obviously gone completely crazy, and madmen are the scariest because they have no regard for their own life.”

“More than twenty men, eh?” Pei An grinned. “Interesting. I haven’t met such an interesting person in a long time. Come!”

Laughing loudly, Pei An walked towards Qin Lie while dragging his broadsword along the ground. Sparks flew from the stone ground like a fire dragon being dragged along by him, lending him a magnificent aura.

“Whoosh!”

The broadsword swung upwards, and the thick flames turned into a river that was like the undying flames from the Fire River of Purgatory, pouring right down onto Qin Lie’s head.

“SCRAM!”

Qin Lie exploded into a terrific roar and quickly stuck his left arm out.

“Boom boom boom!”

Thunder rumbled from the bones inside his arms, as if there were a thunder dragon roaring inside his veins. A terrific wave of thunder abruptly exploded from his palm.

The was the muscular strength of the Heavenly Thunder Sacred Body!

As if the mountains had crumbled and the earth had split in half, the thunder energy made contact with the fiery river above him!

“Bang!”

The fiery river instantly dispersed into countless sparks. The thunder continue to rumble and rampage, slamming into Pei An’s chest like an undercurrent.

“Dooong!”

Pei An’s chest resounded with a terrific dull sound as if a gong had been struck. Then, his face turned red as his burly figure flew backwards, rolling on the ground for ten meters.

A pair of deep markings a few inches deep could be clearly seen beneath his feet. It was as if they were ran over by a metal car!

“Crack Crack Crack!”

A crisp sound akin to the sound of beans being fried could be heard from every one of Qin Lie’s joints. Qin Lie was originally thin and smart-looking, but right now, it was as if he had grown a few inches taller and was overflowing with a violent and maddening aura.

The wisps of wondrous energy seeped out yet again from inside the Soul Suppressing Orb, and a new energy filled Qin Lie once more!

“Lock!”

His hands crisscrossed in the air and, with strange hand movements, conjured ten chain-like bolts of bright lightning that flew out of his ten fingertips.

The ten bolts of crystalline lightning were as thick as fingers and two arms long. They clipped onto Pei An's large body, and as the lightning began to jump, Pei An couldn't help but scream out in pain.

Qin Lie arrogantly closed in and repeatedly punched Pei An with his fists filled with thunder energy; every hit landed on Pei An's chest.

As if struck by a huge hammer, Pei An's chest immediately sank a few centimeters inward, and his entire complexion abruptly turned dark gray as the light in his eyes slowly began to vanish.

"H-hall Master Pei!"

All of his subordinates were so shocked they could faint. When they saw Qin Lie rushing towards them, they actually lost their courage to stop him and quickly retreated.

At this very moment, Qin Lie was like a violent beast or a god of brutality that had walked out of the ancient depths!

"SCRAM!"

Qin Lie yelled and continued rushing forwards. He did not glance at them.

A trace of icy-cold energy flew out yet again from the Soul Suppressing Orb. The energy spread out from inside his body and kept him in fighting condition.

“Why is there a trace of the Soul Devouring Beast’s aura inside this energy?” A trace of doubt appeared inside Qin Lie’s eyes.

From the moment he owned the Soul Suppressing Orb, the orb had never provided him with any energy. The only thing he knew was that there were countless unknown seals sealing many mysterious doors, preventing him from exploring deeper within for his memories.

However, ever since he had absorbed the Soul Devouring Beast’s main soul with the Soul Suppressing Orb inside the stone forest, he began to faintly feel the changes inside the orb.

He couldn’t say exactly what the change was, and he was also unable to detect where the Soul Devouring Beast’s main soul was. He only knew that a strange energy had slowly appeared inside the orb which he could detect but not capture... To be frank, he didn’t pay it too much attention.

But to his surprise, at a critical moment where he was about to become completely exhausted, he could feel the energy inside the Soul Suppressing Orb spreading outwards. It excited him and also caused him to regain his combat capabilities!

……

“Miss, what’s wrong?” Inside a quiet patio, Liang Zhong suddenly walked out and looked at Xie Jingxuan who was just standing there.

—she should be cultivating or resting at this time.

“My heart is a little troubled, and I feel like taking a walk alone. Do not follow me,” Xie Jingxuan answered indifferently before silently vanishing like a ghost; her trail and aura had disappeared almost too quickly.

Liang Zhong was left stunned and confused inside the courtyard.

Half an hour later.

The white garbed Xie Jingxuan appeared in front of Qin Lie. Staring at Qin Lie, brimming with murder and eyes filled with brutality and madness, she frowned slightly before saying in a cold and hard tone, “I said very clearly back then at the stone forest. If I sensed anything that even resembled the Soul Devouring Beast’s aura, I would not question you for a reason. Instead, I would kill you right then and there!”

Chapter 121: Let Him Come!

Numerous enchanting purple flowers formed by the purest of spirit energy fell from above like giant raindrops.

An aura that would freeze everything within range and seal the earth itself was imposed onto Qin Lie through the sky of flowers. They caused Qin Lie to freeze up and immobilized him immediately.

The enchanting and bright-colored flowers stabbed into his flesh like living roots the moment they fell onto his shoulders. The pain went deep into his bones!

In just a few seconds, Qin Lie had become an oddity with flowers blooming all over his body, the sole exception being his face. Even the surging evil energy in his eyes seemed to be suppressed by the fresh flowers, causing his gaze to turn dim.

There was not the slightest trace of emotions in Xie Jingxuan's pure as crystal eyes. The only thing present on her exquisite face was indifference. "The Soul Devouring Beast must not be allowed to exist on the Scarlet Tide Continent, or there countless lives will be lost on this land. There is a trace of the Soul Devouring Beast's aura on you, so even if it turns out to be a mistake, I will destroy you here."

The scythe in her jade white hand enlarged little by little. Its blade glittered with a cold sheen like the sharp teeth at the corner of a devil's lips.

Qin Lie's heart fell as he watched the scythe grow larger and larger. His body also gradually turned icy cold.

He knew very well how terrifying Xie Jingxuan's power was...

Once he was bound by the purple bewitching flower back at the stone forest, he had struggled with everything he had, but he could not break the bewitching flower's shackles at all.

His condition now was even worse than it was than that day, so how was he going to resist Xie Jingxuan's absolute determination to kill him?

"Miss Xie, how has my apprentice offended you?" Li Mu's lazy voice suddenly fleeted over.

Holding the scythe, Xie Jingxuan's expression quickly changed as a trace of absolute shock appeared inside those bright eyes of hers.

She still had her scythe lifted up high, but her body was strangely stiff, completely frozen. She wanted to move, but she discovered that she couldn't!

It was as if an invisible globe of shackles had chained her four limbs, layer after layer, preventing her from moving even a finger. It was to the point where she could do naught but stare straight at Qin Lie.

The bewitching blooming flowers on Qin Lie's body swiftly wilted at a swift rate.

Numerous petals dissolved into purple light even before they fell to the ground, dissipating just like smoke.

With that, Qin Lie regained his freedom.

"Milord, Qin Lie is over there!" The cries of Wei Xing's subordinates could be heard from behind.

"What are you standing around for? Get back to the shop already." Li Mu's voice fleeted over again as if he was right beside him, but no matter how Qin Lie tried, he could not detect even a trace of Li Mu's aura.

He frowned before staring oddly at the frozen Xie Jingxuan. After a pause, he said, "The Soul Devouring Beast really is dead."

Once finished, he left in a hurry.

After his figure disappeared, the mountain-like shackles on Xie Jingxuan's body promptly released her, and she subsequently regained her mobility.

Her pretty eyebrows were deeply locked against each other, and a deep sense of horror leaked out of her eyes. She thought on whether she should follow Qin Lie to Li's Shop after gazing in the direction of Commerce Street from afar.

“Lady Xie? Why are you here?” Wei Xing rushed over with tens of Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners.

“Qin Lie has gone to Li’s Shop at Commerce Street.” After a moment of thought, Xie Jingxuan coolly threw down those words before heading to Commerce Street without looking back.

“Commerce Street?” Wei Xing’s eyes showed his surprise as he suddenly hesitated.

“Milord, about Commerce Street… Dark Asura Hall had previously given the order that no one is to fight there. Both Shattered Ice Manor and Nebula Pavilion have obeyed this rule for many years without fail.” A Nebula Pavilion martial practitioner looked solemn. “What should we do now?”

“It won’t be long before daybreak.” Wei Xing’s face was ugly as he stared at the sky. He abruptly yelled, “Return to the Pavilion at once! We will receive orders on the matter from the Pavilion Master!”

“Yes sir!”

……

Qin Lie’s entire body was severely injured, and as blood flowed out one drop after another, his expression turned paler and paler.

He had made a mad dash the entire way until finally, just before his energy was completely exhausted, he arrived at Li's Shop and entered inside.

There was only a single oil lamp lit inside the dark shop. Li Mu's slightly shook in his rocking chair as if he had no idea that the entire city was shaken tonight.

Seeing that Qin Lie had returned, wounds covering his entire body, he nodded and smiled. "It's good as long as you survived."

"I was going to use my last Terminator Profound Bomb to blast a hole in the city wall before quietly slipping out." Qin Lie entered with a bitter smile. "The city gates aside, I didn't think that even the city walls would be stationed with Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners and people from Dark Asura Hall standing guard. My injuries are a bit severe, so I had no choice but to come back and hide in the shop for the moment. Once I recover a little, I will escape the city as originally planned and try my best not to implicate you..."

Just as he finished explaining, Qin Lie's vision turned black as he fainted and fell onto the ground on the spot.

Li Mu's expression changed as he abruptly appeared beside him and pressed a finger to his chest. After probing Qin Lie for a brief moment, he relaxed. "He just lost a bit too much blood."

Without delay, he placed Qin Lie onto the table and stripped off the Beastskin Armor. Then, he picked up the jar of liquor at the

side and poured the spirits right onto Qin Lie's body.

The sharp smell of alcohol immediately spread out. Soon afterward, blood stopped seeping out of the numerous wounds on Qin Lie's body as soon as the drink made contact with them.

Once finished, Li Mu returned back to his rocking chair and narrowed his eyes at Qin Lie. He whispered, "What a crazy kid..."

The large, snow-white wolfdog slipped out of the backyard and glanced inside the house with a pair of eyes filled with intelligence.

In a flash, his eyes brightened as he stared straight at the wooden sculpture the fainted Qin Lie was tightly holding onto. An indescribable emotion took surface inside those wolf eyes.

A while later, a strange wave of energy rippled from the big wolfdog.

Li Mu, who was narrowing his eyes at Qin Lie, suddenly froze as he frowned and took a closer look. After a while, he suddenly grinned and laughed while nodding. "Now ain't that a coincidence."

.....

"He went to Commerce Street?" Inside Nebula Pavilion, Liu Yuntao exclaimed with a scowl, "Wait right here!"

He passed through a quiet passage and arrived at Nebula Pavilion's VIP tower. He stopped in front of the five floor stone tower and did not say anything.

"What is the matter?" Yuan Tianya's voice came from the fifth floor of the stone tower.

"I hope I haven't disturbed your rest, Hall Master." Liu Yuntao bowed his head in shame. "That Qin Lie... has gone to a shop at Commerce Street. The higher ups had once laid down the order that no one is to fight on Commerce Street. Therefore, I have come to consult you on our next step."

"That order was laid down by Xuan Rui and I. Tu Shixiong is one of Xuan Rui's men, and Yan Wenyan is one of mine. We do not wish for Shattered Ice Manor and Nebula Pavilion's conflict to escalate and cause a loss to Armament Sect in Icestone City which is why the order was given," briefly explained Yuan Tianya before saying, "Nebula Pavilion is now under your control. Shattered Ice Manor and Nebula will no longer fight each other, so that order is now dispensable."

"In that case we may act on Commerce Street then?" Liu Yuntao's expression lit up.

"Naturally." Yuan Tianya smiled.

Liu Yuntao nodded his head and respectfully walked a few steps backwards. Only then did he swiftly walk away.

……

“The Pavilion Master has given his word that we can kill on Commerce Street!” The martial practitioners who had gone to Nebula Pavilion for questioning excitedly returned to Wei Xing’s side and conveyed Liu Yuntao’s message, “He wants us to bring Qin Lie’s head and see him immediately!”

Wei Xing smiled eerily. “Very good!”

The group of men swiftly headed to Li’s Shop.

An hour later, Wei Xing and the others had arrived in front of Li’s Shop. They immediately noticed that Xie Jingxuan was also standing to the side.

“Lady Xie?” Wei Xing’s took a step forward, respectfully bowed, and said, “The Pavilion Master has consulted the First Hall Master, and the First Hall Master has given us the green light to kill on Commerce Street…”

Xie Jingxuan maintained her cold expression. “I’m just here to take a look.”

Wei Xing gave a smile and did not answer. He waved his hands and ordered, “Charge inside and kill Qin Lie!”

“This shop has closed and will not welcome any intruders.” From inside the house, Li Mu’s voice came unhurriedly, “Enter at your own risk.”

Shock clearly shone from Xie Jingxuan’s eyes as she subconsciously took a few steps backwards, lending space to Wei Xing’s subordinates.

Wei Xing cracked open an ugly grin.”Pretentious bastard! Commerce Street is no longer the safe haven of Icestone City, so I won’t mind seeing who can hold us responsible! Get inside and kill Qin Lie!”

The six ninth level of Refinement martial practitioners under the leadership of a Natal Opening Realm martial practitioner gripped their spirit artifacts and rushed into Li’s Shop with murderous intent.

“Crack Crack Crack!”

The sound of ice freezing suddenly rang out from all around Li’s Shop. A bone-deep chilliness suddenly spread out and seeped even into their marrows!

The seven Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners almost instantly turned into ice sculptures the moment the spreading cold energy touched them!

The thick and translucent hard ice covered their entire bodies in

a most eerie fashion, turning them into living fossils sealed inside ice crystals.

With Li's Shop at the center, the cold energy spread out and froze the streets and stone floors, covering them with ice, and within less than half a minute everything within thirty meters of Li's Shop were all covered with a layer of solid ice!

An icy-cold aura from the snowy peaks in the depth of the Arctic Mountain Range came from inside Li's Shop, causing Wei Xing to shiver all over.

—He wasn't even within the range of the solid ice yet.

The light in Xie Jingxuan's eyes grew even more defined as she wordlessly retreated until she was at least fifty meters away from Li's Shop. Then, she stopped and continued looking at Li's Shop.

"My... my lord?" A hall master under Wei Xing stuttered out.

"It's already daybreak." Wei Xing lifted his head and looked to the sky that was as white as a fish's stomach. Then, with difficulty, he said, "Return to the pavilion and explain the situation here. Consult... Consult the Pavilion Master."

"Un... understood." The man looked at Li's shop like he had seen a ghost in broad daylight before departing in panic.

"Where have you come from, senior?" solemnly asked Xie

Jingxuan, fifty meters away with a trace of awe after a moment's pause. "Is Qin Lie your disciple?"

"Girl, regardless of what happened today, Qin Lie did help you before. It may be a bit unreasonable for you to kill him just like that" coolly responded Li Mu .

"He has a trace of the Soul Devouring Beast on him. If the Soul Devouring Beast that had escaped from Nether Battlefield had stepped into Rank Four, then the situation will become completely unmanageable. My duty this time is to eliminate that Soul Devouring Beast, and I do not wish to be greeted with any surprises. So as long as I felt that Qin Lie's existence may contribute to the Soul Devouring Beast's growth, I will not show any mercy," explained Xie Jingxuan with a cool voice. "If he does not have a trace of the Soul Devouring Beast on him, then not only will I not kill him, I may even... lend him a hand."

"I see." Li Mu nodded his head and casually placed a hand on top of Qin Lie's head. Then, he said, "There is a trace of a Soul Devouring Beast on him, but that trace has lost its soul consciousness. All that is left is the pure energy of the soul. If I'm not mistaken, then the Soul Devouring Beast's soul has been purified by him, so you can rest assured."

"Purified..." Xie Jingxuan's expression was strange. "Since senior has given his word, then I can relax now."

After a pause Xie Jingxuan started again, "Senior, your realm is unfathomable, and I know that I cannot match you. However, the Hall Master Yuan Tianya's true strength is just as unfathomable,

and he is inside Icestone City right now. I ask senior to think twice on the matter."

Li Mu smiled coolly and said in a casual tone, "It's okay, let him come."

Xie Jingxuan no longer said anything and simply quietly watched from the side. While she quietly waited for Nebula Pavilion's movements, she also wanted to discover Li Mu's true depth.

……

"What? Qin Lie has escaped into Li's Shop? Everything within thirty meters of Li's Shop has become frozen in ice?"

"Even the First Hall Master, Yuan Tianya, has been alerted?"

"My god, who on earth is living inside Li's Shop?"

"Yuan Tianya and Liu Yuntao have departed together to Commerce Street. Every elite in Nebula Pavilion and Shattered Ice Manor have also departed."

"I heard that Yuan Tianya has even summoned a few commanders with him!"

"This action, is he trying to kill Qin Lie or slaughter the entire city?"

“……”

The day was still dimly lit, but there were already countless voices like that in every corner within Icestone City.

Crimson Flame Association’s Ge Hong and Xiong Ba; Water Moon Sect’s Luo Wei and Na Nuo; Seven Fiends Valley’s Lu Li and Lee Zhongzheng; the former Pavilion Master Tu Mo and Elder Han Qingrui and Kanghui; Tu Ze, Zhuo Qian, and Kang Zhi; and even Armament Sect’s Pan Jueming had been alerted by the commotion. They had all set out the first thing in the morning and rushed to Li’s Shop.

For a time, the entire city was alerted as all kinds of characters gathered at Commerce Street and headed to the little secluded shop.

Thick layers of solid ice had frozen everything within thirty meters of Li’s Shop. The streets, the stones, the trees, even the air itself seemed to be frozen solid!

The only thing that remained unchanged was Li’s Shop. No signs of frost could be seen anywhere as it stood as an oddity at the center of the frozen land.

—The scene was so strange that it was practically unbelievable!

“Wh-what is this?” Many people could not help but cry out when

they saw that the truth was even more shocking and exaggerated than the rumors they'd heard.

"What's going on? Since when did Nebula Pavilion dare to take a life on Commerce Street?" Upon recovering from deep shock after he arrived at the scene, Armament Sect's Pan Jueming immediately and coldly stared at Wei Xing. "Have you forgotten all about the rules of Dark Asura Hall?"

"Please calm your anger, Elder Pan." Wei Xing bowed and said with an embarrassed expression, "This is the order personally issued by the First Hall Master."

"Yuan Tianya?" Pan Jueming let out a hmph. "How dare he go back on his own words. What does he think Armament Sect is? Even if Yuan Tianya is the First Hall Master of Dark Asura Hall, he is not allowed to do whatever he wants in Armament Sect's domain! Otherwise, Armament Sect will cancel any standing agreements and refuse to cooperate with Dark Asura Hall in the future!"

Wei Xing's expression bloomed all sorts of colors in anger when he was scolded, but he dared not retort and just lowered his head in silence.

"Armament Sect? Isn't it Armament Pavilion?" someone interrupted.

"Armament Pavilion is the business created by Armament Sect, and Armament Sect is a... Black Iron force. Moreover, this force is

formed by Artificers with the purpose of providing spirit artifacts to all forces. To anger Armament Sect is to refuse any further trade of spirit artifacts because no Artificers will be willing to forge artifacts for you anymore. It is not a consequence that even Yuan Tianya can bear," someone faintly said.

Pan Jueming went on a rampage, blowing his beard and glaring at everyone. On the side, all the people from Nebula Pavilion and Shattered Ice Manor kept quiet and did not dare to look at him.

"How incredibly horrifying. Who on earth is the owner of Li's Shop?" Lu Li came over and took a glance at the snowy lands, then at the lonely Li's Shop sitting at a secluded corner of Commerce Street, exclaiming in surprise, "I wonder why, but I feel like I'm standing at the deepest depths beneath the snowy peaks and glaciers of the Arctic Mountain Range. This is a... most terrifying feeling."

"Who is inside that house?" evasively asked as Li Zhongzheng's lips shivered with chattering teeth.

"Whoever he is, he is not someone you and I can face." Lu Li's expression was complicated. "How on earth did a small character like Qin Lie know someone like this? How strange..."

"Little Ze, do you know the background of this shop's owner?" Tu Mo asked.

Tu Ze shook his head with an expression filled with utmost shock. "We only knew that Qin Lie is working as an apprentice in

this shop. We have never had any contact with the owner. I cannot believe that such a godly person is hiding inside Icestone City!”

Zhuo Qian, Kang Zhi, and Han Feng’s faces were completely red, and they looked absolutely excited at the snowy scene before them.

“Qin Lie may be able to live!” they screamed inside their hearts.

“Miss...” Liang Zhong quietly arrived at Xie Jingxuan’s side. “What happened? Who on earth is inside that shop?”

“I don’t know.” Xie Jingxuan shook her head.

“The First Hall Master is here!”

“The First Hall Master has come!”

“Pavilion Master Liu and Manor Lord Yan are here as well!”

Suddenly, noise flared up in the area around them.

Amidst the countless soft exclamations, Dark Asura Hall’s First Hall Master, Yuan Tianya, arrived with Liu Yuntao, Yan Wenyan, and five imposing men clad in black iron battle armor. The crowd had parted on their own to allow their passage, and they stood in front of everyone on the frozen-solid, icy road.

Chapter 122: Suffer The Consequences

Originally, Yuan Tianya had no intentions of interfering with this small matter. He wasn't concerned with Du Haitian's death, and naturally, he cared even less about Qin Lie.

However, now that an anomaly has happened at Li's Shop and everything within thirty meters of it was frozen in ice, the matter now had his complete attention.

He stood on the streets covered in thick ice, looked to Li's Shop, and asked, "Who are you, sir?"

Xie Jingxuan, Lu Li, Tu Mo, Pan Jueming, and many characters of all kinds were scattered on the outer edge of Li's Shop. All of them gazed at the shop with an attentive expression.

They all wanted to know the answer.

Inside the shop, Li Mu leisurely laid on the rocking chair, slowly shaking and ignoring the Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners around him.

The snow-white wolfdog knelt quietly beside him with equally indifferent eyes. It seemed like it didn't mind about the threat outside at all.

Meanwhile, Qin Lie had been placed on the table. His body stank of thick alcohol as his breathing gradually turned even.

“May I ask who you really are?” Outside, Yuan Tianya frowned and asked again with a solemn voice.

“What do you care,” Li Mu replied impatiently.

At the end of the sentence, the tightly shut door suddenly opened wide, showing his figure.

Everyone’s pupils became locked as they all gazed at him. Some of them even lifted their heads up high in a hurry to see Li Mu, wanting to know what he looked like.

There were many people who frequented Commerce Street, and there were also plenty that walked passed Li’s Shop, but there were very few people who actually entered the shop before.

Therefore, there weren’t many people who had actually seen Li Mu yet.

“Qin Lie has disobeyed Nebula Pavilion’s rules and murdered Du Haitian in a challenge. While he was to be detained by Nebula Pavilion, he had then went to the Du Family’s courtyard to commit murder, killing both mother and son, Du Jiaolan and Du Fei. Then, he returned to the street and shot Du Heng to death. These cruelties have greatly exceeded Nebula Pavilion’s tolerance!”

Liu Yuntao took one step forward and, with a dark face, yelled, “While he was escaping, he also killed Fang Tong, Pei An, and

dozens of Nebula Pavilion personnel. He should be eliminated immediately in accordance with Nebula Pavilion's laws!"

"What? Du Jiaolan, Du Fei, and Du Heng were also killed?" many people cried out.

Many of those who had come here did not know what happened during the latter half of the night. Now they heard that after Qin Lie had taken Du Haitian's head, he actually went to the Du Family to kill Du Jiaolan and Du Fei instead of immediately fleeing. In the end, he even returned to the where he had first committed murder and shot the remaining Du Heng to death...

Everyone who was hearing about this for the first time was shocked due to how brutal and insane the killings were. It was almost unbelievable to think that the low key Qin Lie would have such a violent side to him.

"What has been killed has been killed. If you plan to carry out your punishment in accordance with Nebula Pavilion's laws, then why don't you come in and try." Li Mu narrowed his eyes and glanced once at Liu Yuntao while standing thirty meters away, smiling. "I'll be right here. Anyone who plans to commit murder in my shop shall suffer the consequences."

Dark Asura Hall's First Hall Master, Yuan Tianya, did not continue to speak after the shop's door had flung open.

He simply looked deeply at Li Mu, focused his mind, and observed Li Mu's every move. In addition, he had even quietly let

out his mind consciousness in an attempt to detect Li Mu's true realm.

However, when his mind consciousness spread out, he felt as if he was trapped amidst clouds; it was as if his perception was stumped by thick fog, and no matter how hard he tried, he couldn't enter Li Mu's surroundings.

Naturally, he could not determine Li Mu's cultivation.

Therefore, Yuan Tianya continued to keep silent. He dared not act rashly, and instead, motioned to Liu Yuntao to test Li Mu's depths and probe deeper before deciding on his next course of action.

"Elder Ye!" Liu Yuntao exclaimed before looking for Ye Yangqiu.

Ye Yangqiu, Gao Yu, and the group from Discipline Hall were also in the crowd. At the moment, Gao Yu was telling Ye Yangqiu something with a dark expression and his head bowed.

Ye Yangqiu nodded again and again with locked eyebrows. He appeared to be troubled by something.

Hearing Liu Yuntao's yell, Ye Yangqiu steeled himself and walked out. He glanced once at the bodies that were frozen into ice sculptures, bowed slightly, and said, "Discipline Hall's Ye Yangqiu, at your service."

“What is Qin Lie’s punishment according to the penal code of Nebula Pavilion?” coldly asked Liu Yuntao.

“Death,” Ye Yangqiu answered.

“Then why has the Discipline Hall not acted yet?” Liu Yuntao glared.

“We do not wish to be completely destroyed.” Ye Yangqiu paused for a moment as his expression grew colder. “If the Pavilion Master insists that the Discipline Hall should walk to their own deaths, then I will lead the sons of Discipline Hall myself and detach us from Nebula Pavilion!”

The moment he said those words, noise filled the field.

No one had expected that Ye Yangqiu would directly disobey his orders, with the price of leaving Nebula Pavilion resist the operation to enter the shop no less.

At this moment Pan Jueming’s cynical voice leisurely came over, “Elder Ye, if you can’t stay in Nebula Pavilion any longer, you can always come to Armament Sect. I can introduce you.” He then looked at Han Qingrui and Kang Hui before smiling, “Elder Han and Vice Pavilion Master Kang, both of you are welcome as well. Armament Sect has always been looking for talent, and you are just the kind of people we’re lacking.”

“Mister Pan, isn’t it a little disrespectful of you to try to poach

right in front of me?" Yuan Tianya frowned.

After Chu Yan died, Nebula Pavilion's influence had declined, and now that Du Haitian had also been killed, if Kang Hui, Han Qingrui, and Ye Yangqiu all left Nebula Pavilion as well, then Nebula Pavilion's true strength would take a massive hit and might not even be qualified as a Limestone power anymore. This wasn't a good thing for Yuan Tianya.

"Armament Pavilion is right here in Commerce Street. Isn't it a little disrespectful of you to have people fight here?" Pan Jueming snorted once.

"I will give you a proper account of the matter later." Yuan Tianya seemed to be wary of the Armament Sect behind Armament Pavilion as well. "From today onwards, there will no longer be any fights in Icestone City, and the business in Commerce Street will be even better than before. Conflicts will definitely not arise on the streets any longer, and I can also guarantee Armament Pavilion's safety."

While they were negotiating, Li Mu suddenly stood up from his rocking chair, causing the people at the surroundings to tense up in response.

"Don't worry, I'm just making something to eat." Li Mu's expression was indifferent as he headed straight to the backyard. His voice came out leisurely, "As long as you don't enter my shop, I couldn't care less about your shit..." He really did go to the kitchen and busy himself with culinary stuff, leaving the onlookers stunned.

“First Hall Master?” Liu Yuntao found it difficult to stop halfway, and he did not know Li Mu’s true depths. Therefore, he had no choice but to consult him again.

Yuan Tianya turned his head and glanced once behind him.

A black-iron, heavy-armored commander at his back suddenly pointed at a general. “Hu Chi, go over and have a look!” That person was a martial practitioner in the early stage of the Manifestation Realm.

“Yes sir!” The general had a rough-looking face, was about two meters tall, and was clad in Beastskin Armor.

His tiger-patterned, spirit light barrier covered his entire body as he stepped onto the stone floor covered in solid ice and walked towards Li’s Shop one step at a time.

“Twenty meters!”

“Ten meters!”

“Eight meters!”

Someone kept softly shouting and accurately reporting the distance between him and the shop. Everyone’s gaze was focused on this Dark Asura general named Hu Chi.

A cold, white frost abruptly spread out from the solid ice underneath his feet. It flooded him in an instant.

“Crack Crack Crack!”

The tiger-patterned, spirit light barrier on Hu Chi’s body broke apart like an egg shell, and wisps of cold, white frost slipped in through the cracks.

A layer of thin ice first formed on Hu Chi’s chest area before rapidly spreading out. Even more layers of ice began to form on his feet, arms, neck and face.

Light waves exploded and wildly shot from Hu Chi as he attempted to break through the ice with force. But he could not overtake the rate at which the frost froze him.

Seven seconds later, Hu Chi, in the early stages of the Manifestation Realm, had transformed into a fresh ice sculpture!

Under the glory of the rising sun, the many glistening ice sculptures refracted countless shiny rays of cold light.

The cold light was like needles inside every onlookers’ heart, causing them to feel chilled from the bottom of their hearts. Seeing that, the crowd’s murmurs were abruptly silenced.

All the martial practitioners gathered around Li’s Shop seemed to have turned into mutes. They were all quiet and kept their mouths

tightly shut.

“Stop looking already; leave and do what you’re supposed to do.” Li Mu’s tone was impatient. “Qin Lie is about to wake up, and once we’ve eaten some food, we’ll be leaving Icestone City.”

“You killed my men!” Severeness shone in the commander’s eyes who had ordered Hu Chi to move in. “How can someone who has killed my, Pu Jiao’s, men leave Icestone City!”

“Then I’ll kill you as well.” Li Mu raised his hand and pointed from afar at commander Pu Jiao’s forehead.

Everyone looked at Li Mu, carefully looking for even the slightest changes in the energy of the world in attempt to understand the origin of the killing blow.

However, they could not detect anything.

On the other hand, a new bloody hole had been added to Pu Jiao’s out of nowhere, and when a drop of blood dripped out of it, Pu Jiao’s tall and wide body crashed to the ground.

In an instant, Commerce Street had fallen silent.

All that was left were simply the numerous slightly-heavy breaths.

“Uncle Li...” It was at this moment, Qin Lie slowly woke up and weakly called out.

“I made you some porridge, it will be done in just a moment.” Li Mu cracked open a grin. “Once you’ve finished the porridge, we’ll leave.”

Qin Lie no longer said anything.

He saw the parade outside the shop; saw the familiar faces of Lu Li, Xie Jingxuan, Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian; and saw the countless expressions that showed how they had been shocked to the very core...

“What happened?” asked Qin Lie in shock after a while.

“It’s nothing.” Li Mu’s expression was cool as he went to the backyard and brought out a bowl of steaming hot porridge. “Eat something first. We’ll be leaving Icestone City soon. This place is no longer fun anyway.”

Qin Lie was dazed.

“Sir!” Dark Asura Hall’s First Hall Master, Yuan Tianya, yelled coldly.

Li Mu frowned and said impatiently, “What are you nagging about? If you want to take revenge for your subordinate, then get over here already. There isn’t too much of a difference between

killing a commander and a hall master anyway."

Yuan Tianya's expression turned cold, but he dared not take a step closer.

The others' expression had also changed.

After that, the crowd could only look in shock and fear towards Li's Shop, helplessly watching Qin Lie restlessly drink his bowl of thin porridge and Li Mu's perfectly indifferent look.

"Let's go." A while later, Li Mu walked out of Li's Shop with the snow-white wolfdog following close behind.

Although Qin Lie had a whole bunch of questions he wanted to ask, the only thing he could do now was to keep quiet. Just like that, he followed behind Li Mu and the large wolfdog, taking step after step towards the front.

The martial practitioners from all forces surrounding Li's Shop subconsciously moved away the moment they saw Li Mu coming out.

A grand path towards the outside was made by the crowd on their own, and Yuan Tianya and his subordinates were the only ones still standing unmoving at the center.

Yuan Tianya's expression was ugly as he stared straight at Li Mu as Li Mu walked in his direction. He experienced a great internal

struggle inside him.

"Give way, or die." Li Mu's footsteps never stopped as every step pressed hard against the ground as he leisurely walked towards them.

Qin Lie closely followed in tow.

Chapter 123: You Have Ten Steps, Withdraw, Or Die!

Step by step, Li Mu walked closer. His eyes were cool, his expression confident.

Blocking his path, the facial expression of Dark Asura Hall's First Hall Master, Yuan Tianya, grew uglier and uglier. Sweat began to quietly gather on his forehead.

Right now, to withdraw or not had become his biggest conundrum. It was a most miserable position.

Hu Chi had died; Pu Jiao had also died, and what was worse was that they were killed in an instant. He didn't even see what Li Mu did or feel any terrific waves of energy coming from him...

He still couldn't detect Li Mu's true realm!

That was why he didn't dare act recklessly.

If he didn't withdraw, he would face Li Mu's unknown attack and possibly die...

However, if he did withdraw, then Icestone City would become a mark of shame for the rest of his life!

It would become the most shameful memory in his life, and it

might even eat at his heart in the future and become a demonic barrier that will obstruct him from progressing further on the martial way!

A great struggle was taking place in his heart.

Countless gazes were focused on Yuan Tianya, watching his every move.

Li Mu's strength was now deeply rooted inside the hearts of everyone present, causing all bystanders to shudder. No one dared to stand in his way, and they could only move as much as possible.

As the First Hall Master of Dark Asura Hall, Yuan Tianya was the next most likely contender for the position of Grand Hall Master. His strength was just as unfathomable, and as of late, he was on the rise, faintly displaying the atmosphere of an aspiring Grand Hall Master.

Now, the two characters were about to clash with each other and spark a violent collision. The mere thought caused everyone to feel excitement.

While following behind Li Mu, Qin Lie calmly looked at the crowd around them and read the many stunned expressions on their faces...

At this moment, he realized just how important it was to have the power to sweep through everything during a critical moment!

He also finally understood that every difficult obstacle and heavy restrictions could be broken apart with absolute power!

Li Mu continued forward with a jestful look in his eyes, casually looking at Yuan Tianya.

His expression was perfectly calm, causing everyone to feel as pressured as having a mountain sitting on top of them. It seemed that Yuan Tianya was nothing to him; he did not treat Yuan Tianya as a worthy opponent.

Yuan Tianya had the exact same feeling; in fact, he understood this better than anyone else. This caused a trace of bitterness to develop within his heart.

“You have ten steps. Withdraw, or die.” Li Mu suddenly grinned and slightly slowed down. His expression grew more relaxed as time passed.

The sweat on Yuan Tianya’s face grew more obvious with each passing moment. Everyone could see his tension and began to feel conflicted in his place.

To retreat, or not to retreat. It was just as hard a choice as ever.

It was then that Yuan Tianya saw the big wolfdog behind Li Mu; he saw a pair of icy-cold eyes with not a trace of humanity in it. The light in those cold and ruthless wolf eyes caused Yuan Tianya

to abruptly shudder.

He suddenly recalled something...

“Move away! All of you, get out of the way!” Yuan Tianya’s expression changed massively in an instant as sweat poured from his face like rain. While urging his subordinates, he too quickly moved out of the way while Li Mu continued proceed, step by step.

—He had backed down without a fight.

“Hehe.” Li Mu smiled before passing through the passage opened by Yuan Tianya’s group with Qin Lie and the big wolfdog. With that, they headed to the nearest city gate.

“Open the city gates and let them go!” instructed Yuan Tianya as he grit his teeth .

Yan Wenyan and Liu Yuntao were chilled from the bottom of their hearts. Immediately after, they ordered for the people by the side to report to the city gate as soon as possible. In addition, they forbade anyone from blocking Li Mu on his way out.

And just like that, bringing one man and one dog with him, Li Mu passed through the center of the onlookers and leisurely made his way to the city gate.

“Hall... Hall Master.” Liu Yuntao’s tone was bitter.

Yuan Tianya's expression was just as ugly. Staring at Li Mu's back from afar, it took him a long while before he finally said, "That big wolfdog is the true king of beasts of the Arctic Mountain Range—the Icestone Snow Wolf King."

The moment the words came out, every single one of their expressions changed.

"BOOM!"

It was at this very moment that Li's Shop suddenly exploded into smithereens, instantly turning into a ruin.

The thick, solid ice that had frozen everything within thirty meters also turned into wisps of snow-white frost, flying towards the sky. The solid ice did not melt to become water, but instead, it somehow miraculously became thinner and thinner until it disappeared altogether.

"The Icestone Snow Wolf King!" Lu Li's body shuddered slightly, and the strange light in her beautiful eyes was piercing.

"Miss?" Liang Zhong was a little unsure. "Is it as the First Hall Master claims? That big wolfdog... is really the Icestone Snow Wolf King that suddenly disappeared from the Arctic Mountain Range?"

"It is." Xie Jingxuan nodded.

“Heavens…” Liang Zhong looked stunned. “Just who in the world is Li Mu?”

“God knows.” Xie Jingxuan spaced out, staring in the direction the two men and dog disappeared to.

“This Qin Lie you’ve bonded with probably has quite the background,” said Tu Mo without warning after a long pause.

Tu Ze, Zhuo Qian, Kang Zhi, and the others were still wallowing in deep shock. They had also been intimidated by Li Mu.

…The master of the Icestone Snow Wolf King. Who exactly was Li Mu?

No would could provide an answer.

All the onlookers were completely shocked as they discussed in private, making their respective guesses about Li Mu’s true identity. And yet, they could not figure out even a trace of it.

“Hall Master, are we going to just let go just like that? Even though a lot of my people died?” helplessly asked Nebula Pavilion’s Wei Xing.

“What are you saying?” Yuan Tianya glanced at him. “I lost a general and a commander, and I have no choice but to endure it.

What do you think?”

“Forgive me, Hall Master. This subordinate knows his mistake.” Wei Xing looked fearful.

“Let’s leave it at this.” Yuan Tianya’s scowled. “We’ll return to Dark Asura Hall first. Once we’ve reached there, I will inquire about this Li Mu’s background and figure out what kind of person he really is.”

Once finished, Yuan Tianya led his subordinate commanders in the direction of Nebula Pavilion. It was as if he was afraid of running into Li Mu again along the way.

Once he left, Liu Yuntao and Yan Wenyan’s group also immediately dispersed. No one dared to investigate what was inside the shop’s ruins.

“Miss?” Liang Zhong bowed.

“With such an influential person like Li Mu watching over him, there is no need to worry about Qin Lie’s path in the future.” Xie Jingxuan frowned. “Let us return to Dark Asura Hall as well.”

“Mn.”

“Senior Sister Lu, should we be leaving now?” The arrogance on Li Zhongzheng’s face had dissipated a great deal.

“Let’s first go to the Ling Family and bring their clansmen along. We will use this opportunity to leave the city.” Lu Li’s mind was incredibly clear. “Right now, Liu Yuntao and his men’s courage has been completely shattered thanks to the shop owner, and they would definitely not dare to cause more problems at the moment. We can borrow Li Mu’s intimidation and exit Icestone City with ease.”

“Senior Sister Lu is most wise,” praised someone .

Lu Li no longer said anything, and while still wearing a cold expression, she went straight in the direction of Ling Family.

She was still experiencing the huge shock inside her heart…

Two years ago at Ling Town, she had once given Qin Lie a Natal Ordering Pill to make him forget about Ling Yushi. She said that they would no longer belong in the same world.

She could still remember Qin Lie’s aggressive reactions. Furthermore, she could also remember his stubbornness when he opened the door and angrily threw the pill back at her.

When she saw Qin Lie again, she thought that the reason he was able to reach the Natal Opening Realm was all thanks to the effects of Ling Yushi’s secretly stashed away pills.

This caused her to grow more and more disdainful towards Qin

Lie. She had assumed that he was the kind of person who was tough on the outside, but was actually a useless person who relied on a woman to aid in his breakthrough.

It wasn't until the scene on the street where Qin Lie suddenly leaped down the window and, from out of nowhere, challenged Du Haitian to a fight even though there was a huge gap between their realms that she truly looked upon Qin Lie with admiration.

Later, he managed to kill mother and son, Du Jiaolan and Du Fei, and even killed Du Heng. Moreover, along the way, he slaughtered more than twenty Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners.

Qin Lie's series of crazy actions not only shocked everyone in Icestone City, but her as well.

Now, she finally realized that there was no possibility that Qin Lie relied on Dark Fiend Valley's pills to break through to the Natal Opening Realm. She could also now see that the person Ling Yushi could never forget was such a charismatic and spirited individual!

"She was right." She couldn't help but whisper to herself, "This Qin Lie... was definitely a someone special."

At the city gate of Icestone City.

With a man and dog in tow, when Li Mu arrived at the city gates, it was opened wide, and every guard stayed far, far away from the entrance.

Li Mu gave a cool smile and walked right through with the big wolfdog and Qin Lie. They easily exited Icestone City.

Once outside, Li Mu confirmed where he was going and led Qin Lie and the wolfdog onward.

“Uncle Li, why were you in Icestone City?” asked Qin Lie after a long period of time where he could no longer hold it in and finally came clear with the doubts inside his heart.

“I’m here for him.” Lu Mu glanced once at the big wolfdog.

Qin Lie grew more and more surprised. “Him?”

“Mn.” Li Mu nodded, and as he steadily walked forward, he explained in a casual note, “When I was younger, I once honed myself inside the Arctic Mountain Range. At the time, he was just a normal snow wolf. He was my… friend during those years.”

“Later when I left the Arctic Mountain Range, he had stayed behind to continue his cultivation. In an instant, many years had passed, and I traveled to many continents and experienced many important things in life. However, I came back because I promised him before that if I became accomplished one day, I would definitely come back to the Arctic Mountain Range for him.”

“So, after many years, I’ve returned yet again to fulfill my promise.”

“However, I did not expect that, after so many years, I wasn’t the only person who had become accomplished. He too had become the indisputable king of the Arctic Mountain Range…”

“He was a bit hesitant about leaving with me and said that he needed time to think. So I temporarily stayed behind at Commerce Street to wait for him to come around.”

Li Mu smiled and looked at the big wolfdog behind him. “Now that he has finally figured it out, naturally, I no longer needed to stay in Commerce Street.”

A trace of affection leaked out of the big wolfdog’s eyes. There even seemed to be a smile on the wolf’s face.

“…The indisputable king of the Arctic Mountain Range, Little Ice, the Icestone Snow Wolf King!” Qin Lie was shocked as he abruptly looked at the big wolfdog. He connected it with the thick, solid ice outside the shop and finally understood. “He’s actually the Icestone Snow Wolf King?!”

Li Mu smiled and nodded. “Exactly right.”

Qin Lie was dumbstruck.

He could not have possibly imagined that the big wolfdog that always appeared inside the shop and drank wine just like a person would be the true king of the Arctic Mountain Range—the Icestone

Snow Wolf King.

"So the reason he suddenly disappeared was because he found his master. The reason he left gave birth to a new beast king in the Arctic Mountain Range, causing the spirit beasts and martial practitioners to fight each other for over a year." After a long while, Qin Lie bitterly shook his head. "I could not have imagined that the true culprit behind these big changes was inside the yard right beneath my nose."

"No, there is someone else who is the true culprit you're referring to," said Li Mu.

"Who is it?" Qin Lie exclaimed.

"The person you're holding in your hand." Li Mu turned around and looked at the wooden sculpture in his hand. "The person who gave you that wood carving is the true culprit that caused the massive change in the Arctic Mountain Range. He is the one who gave Little Ice the true determination to leave!"

Chapter 124: Ice Crystal World

Wood carving? Grandpa!

Qin Lie's expression shook as he suddenly looked at the carving in his hand. His breathing suddenly sped up. "Uncle Li, he's my grandpa, I want to know. What happened?"

"Your grandpa?" Li Mu's eyes lit up as he quietly said, "Your grandpa is a capable person..."

Right as Qin Lie's desire to know more flared up, Li Mu told the Icestone Snow Wolf King, "We're far enough away from Icestone City. Mn, go ahead."

The large wolfdog the Icestone Snow Wolf King had transformed into nodded like a person and then spat out a mouthful of silver-white mist.

The cold mist was like a tent that wrapped around Qin Lie and Li Mu. Under the bright sun, Qin Lie, Li Mu, and the wolfdog quickly became covered in ice.

A short time later, the ice evaporated without turning into water and simply dissipated like mist.

Qin Lie, Li Mu and the large wolfdog had disappeared without leaving behind a single trace.

……

Qin Lie seemed to come to in a cold and quiet crevasse. When he opened his eyes, his expression changed as he shouted, “Where is this?”

What he saw were thick ice blocks. He seemed to be at the bottom of a glacial world with glaciers that were tens of meters, even hundreds of meters high stood tall. In addition, it was possible to discern that something was sealed inside the glacier.

The cold stones under his feet and the hard ice were everywhere. He was constrained to this narrow passage of ice, and it was difficult to move about.

“Come this way.” Li Mu’s voice came from in front of him. He and the Icestone Snow Wolf King were idly strolling along one of the passages of ice.

When Qin Lie stepped out, he suddenly froze in place. He found that there was an invisible ripple around him that was layered and seemed to help him deflect the iciness of the environment.

Puzzled, Qin Lie’s brow creased, but he proceeded to chase after Li Mu and the Icestone Snow Wolf King.

Walking like this, they slowly climbed up an ice mountain. After traveling for more than an hour, he followed Li Mu and the Icestone Snow Wolf King up to a glowing glacier and stepped onto

its peak.

“Look closely at the side,” said Li Mu, pointing it out in a serious manner.

Qin Lie closely examined a little ice mountain nearby and looked inside it...

There was a terrifying spirit beast that was similar to a Golden Crag Beast, but the one sealed within the ice mountain was more than fifty times larger!

This Golden Crag Beast that was fifty times larger than a regular one was ten meters tall and as vast as a mountain. Gold light flashed across its body, completely covered in thick ice. Its position seemed to be one of howling to the skies in discontent.

“Look at the other ice glaciers,” reminded Li Mu.

Qin Lie’s heart shook, and as he went to inspect the other surrounding glaciers, the shock on his face and in his eyes grew even more pronounced.

An enormous Ice Soul Python like a dragon. Its coiled body was thirty meters tall with layers of ice circling around the python’s body, so it appeared as though it was floating on a cloud.

This Ice Soul Python was also frozen by the glaciers and unable to move.

At the other end, inside a glacier, was an enormous lion was staring with its eyes wide open. Its eyes still glowed with a purple-blue light.

When Qin Lie glanced at it, it felt as though his heart was going to stop beating. The terror was so great it was like he was being chased down by a titanic monster.

“I do not know the names of these three spirit beasts. The Golden Crag Beast, the Ice Soul Python, and the present beast king, the Purple-eyed Flame Lion King probably descended from them,” Li Mu commented as he pointed to the more distant glaciers. “There are also enormous spirit beasts similar to these ones frozen inside those glaciers…”

“These are the ice mountains deep inside the Arctic Mountain Range?” Qin Lie took a deep breath and shouted, “Is this the place that the Icestone Snow Wolf King and the Purple-eyed Flame Lion King cultivate? The glaciers here are not as high as the rumors say?”

“You are correct but also not.” Li Mu smiled. “While we are in the depths of the Arctic Mountain Range, these are not the glaciers of the outside but a world hundreds of meters below the earth’s surface.”

“What? We’re underground? Hundreds of meters under the Arctic Mountain Range?” Qin Lie was astounded.

“Yes.” Li Mu pointed above his head. “Can’t you look for yourself?”

Qin Lie abruptly raised his head. He saw there were stalactites hanging down hundreds of meters above him.

There was no sky above, only the sharp icicles. Only an endless expanse of glaciers and ice could be seen, without any signs of life.

This was the world at the bottom of the Arctic Mountain Range!

“In the past, I once stayed in the Arctic Mountain Range. It is a pity that I did not know the wonders underground then,” Li Mu said quietly. “After I left, Little Ice was fortunate enough to have stumbled on this place. It was a snow wolf back then and could borrow the cold energy in this place to cultivate. With that, many years later when I came back, it had become the Icestone Snow Wolf King, the beast king of the Arctic Mountain Range.”

Li Mu looked at Qin Lie. “The achievements that Little Ice have made are all due to this wondrous place that is shrouded in extreme cold.

Qin Lie looked in wonder at the Icestone Snow Wolf King.

“your grandpa also came here.” Li Mu changed topics. “He waited for a few years in the Arctic Mountain Range. Furthermore, he seemed to have already known that there was a place like this and searched for it for several years. According to Little Ice, your

grandpa is a very ethical person. When he found this, he did not carelessly kill the spirit beasts of the Arctic Mountain Range, nor did he destroy the Arctic Mountain Range's environment..."

Qin Lie listened attentively.

"You grandpa finally arrived at the glacier above us. He found the entrance, and the entrance... has always been guarded by Little Ice." A thread of wonder flashed through Li Mu's eyes. "He defeated Little Ice at the entrance and came into here. He came to this glacial world deep within the earth and also saw these sealed spirit beasts."

At this time, the Icestone Snow Wolf King also had respect in its eyes.

"Your grandpa toured this place. He did not move or take anything. When he came out, he seemed very disappointed as though this was not the place he was searching for. Because he seemed to have found the wrong place... he came out empty-handed." Li Mu looked deeply at Qin Lie. "He talked for a while with Little Ice and then left the Arctic Mountain Range. Since then, he has never returned."

"Where did he go?" Qin Lie asked urgently.

"Haha, that is something we don't know." Li Mu shook his head. "It was Little Ice that told me everything about him."

“In the past, Little Ice thought it was the beast king of the Arctic Mountain Range, and felt it was strong enough. He could also continue to use the cold energy underground to cultivate, so he hesitated about leaving with me. After it was defeated by your grandpa, it knew that it was not as powerful as it imagined, so it decided to leave with me. After that, the Purple-eyed Flame Lion King became the new beast king, so there was the fight between spirit beasts and martial practitioners this time.

Li Mu smiled freely. ”So if we have to talk about the culprits, your grandpa is the main one. He pushed Little Ice into leaving.”

“What was he searching for? He was also searching for several years...”

Qin Lie’s brow was tightly locked. He suddenly realized that Qin Shan had taken him to Ling Town and settled down at the Ling Family so he could enter the Arctic Mountain Range and search for something.

But even this wondrous glacial world was not what he was searching for. What in the world did he want?

Where did he go after this?

A mystery was solved, but more mysteries arose. Now, Qin Lie had even more questions. He wanted to grab Qin Shan and ask all of his questions at once.

“Your grandpa once helped many spirit beasts in the Arctic Mountain Range, that wood carving… is the symbol of his identity. Many spirit beasts of the Arctic Mountain Range recognize the carving. Of course, the spirit beasts that recognize the carving are of high rank, the kind that have intelligence.” Li Mu was slightly regretful. “After I heard about your grandpa from Little Ice, I went to the mountain to see if I could meet him. It is a pity that I did not have the chance.”

Qin Lie became quiet. Long after, he asked, “Uncle Li, why have you taken me here? Just to resolve one of the things puzzling me?”

Li Mu grinned. “Your grandpa did not destroy this place. He clearly could kill Little Ice but chose not to. He also conversed with Little Ice about cultivation… Little Ice is grateful to him, so it wanted to show you its gratitude. So I have taken you here to let you comprehend frost concept.”

“Frost concept?” Qin Lie was dumbstruck.

“Yes, frost concept!” Li Mu’s expression became serious. “A long time ago, the Arctic Mountain Range should have been a rich forest with numerous ancient spirit beasts residing here. The reason that this place turned to the present Arctic Mountain Range, why there are so many ice glaciers underground, why there are so many ancient era spirit beasts frozen here, is all due someone pressing a palm down from a distance above…”

“Pressing a palm?” Qin Lie shouted in shock.

“Mn, a palm pressed down from a distance above. The land a hundred miles around the mountain range sank hundreds of meters below the surface. The cold spread and froze all the spirit beasts. The ice sealed the world under the ground, causing the mountains to become ice mountains, causing this place to remained as the Arctic Mountain Range.” Li Mu respect rose. “This palm truly upended the earth and caused the sky to change color. The frost concept contained in this palm is eternal and has stayed in this ice crystal world.”

He looked at Qin Lie and said, “Little Ice wants you to feel the frost concept here. As to whether you can comprehend it, that will be up to you.”

The gears in Qin Lie’s mind turned as he listened. He didn’t know if Li Mu’s words were true or not, but just thinking of the scene caused excitement to rise within him.

A palm that upturned the laws of the world, caused mountains to be covered in ice, resulted in the land within a hundred miles to sink deep into the earth. The frost concept never dissipated and was eternal. Could a person really do this?

“Un-Uncle Li, how… do you this was formed by a palm?” Qin Lie stammered out.

“Because the handprint is still here,” Li Mu said haltingly. “The handprint is covered by thick ice and snow. You cannot see it now. Gather your mind and use your heart to comprehend the frost concept here.”

“How much time do I have?” Qin Lie asked.

“Three months,” answered Li Mu. “Three months later, Little Ice and I will leave the Arctic Mountain Range. I have other arrangements for you.”

“How do I comprehend the frost concept here?”

“Simple.” Li Mu snickered.

The next moment, the invisible barrier around Qin Li suddenly disappeared.

Bone-chilling cold instantly came from all directions. Qin Lie felt as though he was suddenly pulled into ice, his entire body numbed from the cold as the bones in his body cracked.

……

Chapter 125: Frost Concept

The dark cold energy spread and coiled around his body like ice snakes, and the surface of Qin Lie's body was rapidly frozen.

"Crack crack!"

Strange sounds came from inside his body as thick ice formed and covered him.

Seconds later, he became sealed in ice. He was trapped inside and couldn't even move a finger.

The only thing that remained was his soul that could still feel the bone-chilling cold. His body gradually became numb and had almost lost all sensation. He could not detect his surroundings any longer.

"Frost concept..."

Inside the ice, Qin Lie's soul floated as his thoughts almost froze to a stop.

Cold energy gradually permeated his very being and was about to corrode his mind, freezing even his soul!

At this time, the Icestone Snow Wolf King that had turned into a wolfdog had a puzzled look in his eyes as though he was asking if

this would work.

Li Mu smiled. “I don’t know if this will work either. One handprint to seal the sky and earth, the person that sealed these hundreds of beasts deliberately left behind this frost concept. Maybe they intended for others to make a breakthrough and feel the profoundness of their spirit art. I’m extremely confident that if Qin Lie can comprehend the wonders of this frost concept, he can definitely step over the doorway and achieve this kind of frost spirit art.”

He shook his head and said regretfully, “You are a snow wolf, a creature of this land of snow and ice. What you have is a cultivation method imprinted on your soul. Even though you can use this place to help you cultivate, you can never comprehend the frost concept here and cultivate the wonders of that person’s spirit art.”

“And I... if I could have entered this place back then, I would have thrown myself completely into this. I would have used all my energy to comprehend the frost concept here to feel that domineering spirit art.” Li Mu sighed. “It is a pity that I am past that age. My spirit arts and techniques have formed, and it is very difficult for me to accept a completely new spirit art.”

As he talked, he looked at Qin Lie for a while and then said, “He won’t die. Let’s go out for now. We will come back for him in three months.”

The Icestone Snow Wolf King nodded.

Two balls of icy light wrapped around him and Li Mu. Once the icy light suddenly became blinding, the two figures disappeared.

……

Dark Fiend Valley.

Ling Yushi's clothing was wet while her beautiful body was immersed in the water as she practiced her spirit art.

Drops of sparkling water formed and spun around her like crystals as they gathered the moisture around her. They caused Ling Yushi's face to glow and become tender, almost like there was an otherworldly presence on her body.

A fire red figure flew close like the red sunset and landed next to Ling Yushi's pond.

"Sis!" Ling Xuanxuan's face was covered in tears, and her eyes were swollen. "Senior Sister Lu has come back. Sh-she returned with news about our family…"

"Xuanxuan, what happened?" Ling Yushi's expression changed.

"Daddy's dead!" cried Ling Xuanxuan as she burst into tears.

Ling Yushi's body shook. The crystal-like water droplets all

exploded.

"Third Uncle is outside the valley," Ling Xuanxuan said.

Ling Yushi instantly came ashore. She quickly changed clothes and went with Ling Xuanxuan to the forest outside the valley. At first glance, she saw the members of the Ling Family covered in dust as she and Ling Xuanxuan approached them.

"Third Uncle! Ling Feng!" Ling Yushi went forward, her eyes glistening with tears as she shouted, "What happened?"

Lu Li's expression was indifferent as she stood at the front of the group. Seeing Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan crying, her brow furrowed slightly. "That Du Haitian's scheme killed your father."

Separated for two years, Ling Chengzhi also teared up when he saw the two sisters. With red eyes, he explained the situation.

"Liu Yuntao, Du Haitian, and Wei Xing had Big Brother and the others go to that mountain valley. They didn't explain beforehand, so when Big Brother and the others encountered a great number of spirit beasts... they died due to that scheme."

"Liu Yuntao was promoted to become the Pavilion Master, and Du Haitian became the Vice Pavilion Master. Yuan Tianya of Dark Asura Hall thinks highly of them."

"Our Ling Family were helpless and could not get in contact with

you. Even Pavilion Master Tu Mo was forced to abdicate. No one was going to get justice for the Ling Family."

"There was only Qin Lie!"

"He challenged Du Haitian on the street and cut of his head! He killed Du Jiaolan and her son! He even killed Du Heng! And he continued to kill!"

Ling Chengzhi's eyes were red as he narrated everything that happened in detail.

"Qin Lie!" The the two Ling sisters shook as they asked in unison, "Where is he?"

"No one knows," Lu Li interjected. She paused, and then, a strange expression showed on her face. She nodded and said, "This guy that Junior Sister likes... isn't bad."

"Senior Sister, I need to leave the valley!" Ling Yushi suddenly exclaimed after having remained in silence for a while with her head down. "While Master is not in the valley, I need to leave. Senior Sister, please let me go!"

"What are you going to do?" Li Lu's brow creased. "Du Haitian's entire family has already been killed, justice has been achieved. Qin Lie has been taken away by that shop owner, and no one knows where he is. What point is there in leaving the valley at this time?"

“Senior Sister, please let me!” Ling Yushi did not explain and persisted.

“Do not beg me, I will not agree.” Lu Li’s expression was frosty. “If you are going to sneak out during the night, I will not be able to guard you every day, take care of yourself…”

Ling Yushi’s eyes lit up.

That night, she helped Ling Chengzhi, Ling Feng, and the Ling Family settle down. After asking for more details from Ling Chengzhi, she disappeared from Dark Fiend Valley.

……

In the land of ice.

Qin Lie was a statue of ice that stood at the peak of a glacier. There weren’t any signs of life on his body, just extremely faint spirit energy vibrations.

Wisps of cold energy spread from the ice and permeated his bones and tendons, causing even his bones to produce coldness.

His dantian’s spirit sea seemed to also have frozen over. There wasn’t a single wisp of spirit energy that could circulate. Even the thunder and lightning power inside his Natal Palace had been

frozen.

Other than his thoughts and soul which could still move, he could do nothing else.

“Frost concept, frost concept, frost concept…”

These words continuously echoed in his mind. He used his soul to feel the cruel coldness which resulted in the trembling of his soul.

When he used his perception to feel the cold, his thoughts would gradually slow as though they were being frozen.

The coldness here seemed to be able to even freeze thoughts. Even something that was intangible could not escape being filled with this coldness!

He didn’t know how much time had passed, nor did he know of the changes of the outside world. He maintained this state and used his soul to feel the existence of this icy-cold energy, to feel the cruel coldness of this land of ice and snow.

Days passed by, but he did not gain anything. He still could not discover the crux of the frost concept.

His body had lost all feeling long ago. Only his soul and mind were still active and told him how cold the environment he existed in was.

The wisps of cold energy were like strands that filled this land of ice. They were omnipresent and numbered in the billions. Each strand of cold energy would reach his bone marrow and swim as though they were fish…

They were moving in every piece of ice, every crag, every inch of frozen ground, every corner of this world!

The cold energy was alive…

It was like an unique lifeform, a special race. It lived in this land and was born relying on this land.

“Spirit energy… animation?”

A beam of spirit light was released, and when the spirit light touched the ground, life was bestowed upon it. It quickly turned to a new lifeform. This was spirit energy animation; it was a divine technique that belonged to the legends, a divine act…

The frost concept was active cold energy that seemed to possess life. Was this… spirit energy animation?

Under the effects of the cold energy, Qin Lie’s thoughts were slow. Every problem was difficult to think about, but he still tried hard to think through it.

The actively moving cold energy was like billions of lines that filled every corner of the world. Lines... spirit lines!

A light flashed through his head. Qin Lie suddenly caught the crux. His soul consciousness instantly scattered.

He went to feel the wisps of cold energy, to look at the distance between the wisps of cold energy, to see the minuscule vibrations of the cold energy, and to see the responses between them...

He treated the strands of cold energy in the world as spirit lines of a spirit diagram. With that method of comprehending spirit diagrams, he felt the profoundness here!

“All things are diagrams. The channels of the great earth, the veins of the human body, the path of the stars, and the changes of the world, each of these are all spirit diagrams!” He suddenly recalled what Qin Shan had taught him before.

His soul quieted down, and he used the method he initially used to study spirit diagrams to feel the omnipresent cold energy, detect the flow of every strand of cold energy, and grasp their minuscule movements.

He threw himself in.

Gradually, he forgot himself and entered the state of Thoughtless Tranquility to use all of his mind to feel the changes in cold energy around him.

The strands of cold energy were like the most complex spirit diagram in the world that crisscrossed this place and every corner around him.

Then, they slowly wrapped onto his body!

He didn’t know how long it had been when he felt coldness, coldness from his body!

Then, he suddenly found that, inside the frozen spirit sea of his dantian, a new Natal Palace was taking form!

This Natal Palace appeared to be an enormous glowing ball of ice, and as the ball of ice slowly rolled, The strands of cold energy tangled onto it and slowly became thicker and increased in size.

He didn’t know where the cold energy came from. All he knew was that it passed into the spirit sea in his dantian and gradually formed a new Natal Palace.

As he looked at the changes within his spirit sea, he was completely dumbfounded. In his state of Thoughtless Tranquility, he was like an outside observer, and nothing could affect his mind.

He continued to use his mind and soul to feel the changes in flow of the cold energy outside.

More cold energy came in and gathered on the ball of ice. It continued to slowly cause the ball to grow and also started filling it as well.

The amount of spirit energy in this land of ice seemed to lessen as his understanding of the strands of cold energy formed as though the land of ice had lost its soul...

In silence, time continued to move forward.

Gradually, the insides of the ball of ice in his spirit sea became completely filled with flowing cold energy, yet more still seeped in!

Then, his third Natal Palace started to form...

Three months later.

When Li Mu and the Icestone Snow Wolf King appeared again in this land of ice, Li Mu's expression shifted as he exclaimed, "The frost concept has almost disappeared!"

The eyes of the Icestone Snow Wolf King also showed shock as though it could not currently accept that.

"Was Qin Lie the one who did this?" Even Li Mu was in disbelief. "Comprehending frost concept is one thing, but directly absorbing it is a completely different matter!"

Li Mu and the Icestone Snow Wolf King quickly rushed to Qin Lie.

Chapter 126: Armament City

On top of the glacier, Qin Lie's expression was icy as a cold and intimidating presence came from all over his body.

Li Mu could see, through his narrowed eyes, icy strands that came from all directions and coiled around Qin Lie, seeping into his body like water.

"Th-the frost concept is gradually disappearing, disappearing into Qin Lie's body!" A moment later, Li Mu's expression shifted in shock.

The Icestone Snow Wolf King's eyes lit up. He deeply looked at Qin Lie and then looked at the strange changes of the frost concept in the surroundings.

It felt like this land of ice and snow seemed to have lost its soul, lost something extremely fundamental...

Li Mu said nothing more and observed with the Icestone Snow Wolf King from the side. Seven days later, the frost concept that had shrouded this land and never dissipated finally disappeared.

Qin Lie opened his eyes shortly after.

His eyes were cold, and his presence had changed tremendously. An uncomfortable coldness was emitted from his body.

“Crack!”

Moving an arm, the thick ice suddenly shattered and fell off from his body, piece after piece.

“Uncle Li,” quietly said Qin Lie.

He had woken up from his long state of comprehension...

Focusing and thinking, he felt there was a new diagram inside the Soul Suppressing Orb inside his body along with the Spirit Storage, Spirit Gathering, Amplification and Strengthening spirit diagrams.

Rather than calling it a diagram, it was more like a picture scroll.

A picture scroll of gleaming cold, filled with a cold and harsh concept, and made from ice—the land of ice and snow.

The picture scroll was composed from lines of glowing light, white snow, and towering ice crystals. The sky and earth were full of white frost and ice, filled with a cold and desolate aura.

With just a glance, Qin Lie felt as though his bones had frozen.

The picture scroll of the land of ice and snow inside the Soul Suppressing Orb was formed from the frost concept in this underground glacial world. The frost concept that had clouded this

land for many years had dissipated, and a picture had appeared in the Soul Suppressing Orb in his mind...

Qin Lie slowly understood.

His mind consciousness moved. Then, he discovered the spirit energy flowing in his dantian's spirit sea, and found the formation of two new Natal Palaces.

The two Natal Palaces that were shaped like enormous balls of ice moved around his spirit sea, and within one of the ice balls, the frost concept was pure and strong. The other ice ball had just formed, so its frost power was not at its strongest.

He tried to channel power and instantly heard the rumble of thunder. Thunder power moved from the thunder and lightning Natal Palace into the acupoints of his body.

There wasn't any change in the frost power inside the ice ball. They clearly did not listen to the direction of his Heavenly Thunder Eradication.

He gathered his spirit energy and discovered the power of the frost inside the ice ball still did not move...

Unable to direct the frost power, he was unable to use the power of the two new Natal Palaces. His brow creased slightly and quickly realized that he hadn't completely grasped the frost concept, so he could not control the frost power inside the Natal Palaces.

“The frost concept here has disappeared, and your presence has suddenly changed as though you are now another person.” Li Mu looked deeply at him. “As to what happened to your body, I do not want to inspect it. However, your presence’s sudden change will be beneficial in the days to come…”

“Uncle Li, the frost concept in this glacial land has formed a picture scroll in my mind, it’s like a spirit diagram.”

After the two ice-ball-like Natal Palaces formed in his dantian’s spirit sea, his presence became cold and his attitude became more frigid that it had been before. He now possessed a cold atmosphere.

His expression was distant which he was not accustomed to. Commenting on his new circumstances, he said, “There are two ice Natal Palaces in my dantian’s spirit sea as well, it feels… slightly strange. I’ve just woken up, so I don’t know what the situation is.”

Li Mu nodded. “No worries. You will have time to accustom yourself.”

Pausing, he then said, “…The frost concept has formed a picture scroll imprinted in your mind, it seems that you have many secrets.”

Finished speaking, Li Mu motioned to the Icestone Snow Wolf King.

The Icestone Snow Wolf King spat out a ball of ice, and the ball was the size of a fist, glowing and clear. Layers of icy light flowed and released an extremely cold power.

Qin Lie, Li Mu, and it were quickly frozen and covered in ice. A while later, the cold energy dissipated, and the three people had disappeared.

When they reappeared again, the three were in a small yard. Outside the yard was a city that was many times more busy and prosperous than Icestone City—Armament City!

The shop appeared to be exactly the same as the original Li's Shop.

"This is Armament City, the city that belongs to Armament Sect. It is the transaction center for Black Iron factions like Dark Asura Hall, Seven Fiends Valley and Dark Shadow Tower." Li Mu pointed at a spot behind him. There was an enormous crimson volcano behind him that produced thick smoke. Fire occasionally spouted out. "Armament Sect is on the volcano behind us."

There were many caves of various sizes that could be seen along the side of the crimson volcano. In addition, there seemed to be many people moving in the caves.

"Armament Sect is the same as Dark Asura Hall and Seven Fiends Valley, it is also a Black Iron power, but they are a force composed of artificers. This sect's primary focus is artifact forging, and many famed artificers have come from the sect." Li Mu introduced, "The

spirit artifacts of the nearby forces, such as Dark Asura Hall, Seven Fiends Valley and Dark Shadow Pavilion, are almost completely produced by Armament Sect. Due to this, Armament Sect's status among the forces is superior."

Qin Lie was muddle-headed and did not focus too much on Li Mu's words. He was instead overtaken by great surprise.

The first time he was frozen by ice outside Icestone City, even his thoughts had stopped. When he woke up, he had been in the glaciers at the bottom of the Arctic Mountain Range.

He had thought at the time that Li Mu and the Icestone Snow Wolf King had taken a long time to take him under the Arctic Mountain Range.

This time when he was frozen by ice, his soul and consciousness had not been frozen, so he knew… only a moment had passed.

He naturally had heard of Armament Sect, knew of this great sect, and knew the general location of Armament Sect.

—It was thousands of miles away from the Arctic Mountain Range!

In other words, in that instant, he had moved from the glacial world under the Arctic Mountain Range directly to Armament City under Armament Sect.

He suddenly shook and shouted, “Uncle Li! We-we came directly from under Arctic Mountain Range?”

Li Mu nodded.

Qin Lie looked completely dumbfounded. He tried to say something but was unable to produce a single word.

“Don’t ask. I’ll talk and you’ll listen.” Li Mu smiled and indicated for him to sit. He then continued, “The Li’s Shop in Icestone City was just for Little Ice to make a decision, it wasn’t for you. When you came to my shop to sell the Spirit Gathering Boards, the reason I took you in was because the Spirit Gathering spirit diagram on your Spirit Gathering Boards were the most complex I have ever seen. I took you in out of curiosity.

“Afterwards, I took a liking to you and found that you have exceptional potential to be an artificer, so I spoke to guide you a bit. The main reason I took you out of the city was because I did not want you to be killed so easily, and the other reason is because your grandpa helped Little Ice a bit.

“Allowing you to comprehend the frost concept is Little Ice repaying your grandpa for explaining things about cultivation to him in the past. It is also for you to help protect that place after he leaves.”

When this was said, the Icestone Snow Wolf King spat out an ice ball. Li Mu took the ice ball and handed it to Qin Lie. “This is the Eye of Frost, the key to enter that place. In the future, you can go

there to cultivate the frost concept that you comprehended."

Qin Lie took the Eye of Frost. Strangely, the ball of ice was only slightly cold in his hand and was not as bone-achingly cold as he imagined.

"The method to activate the Eye of Frost is very simple. Use the power of frost to activate the crux inside and the cold energy will freeze your body to take you in or out of the land of ice." After Li Mu explained, he smiled freely and said, "The reason I am saying so much is because Little Ice and I are leaving. We might return after a long time, or we might not return at all..."

"Uncle Li..." Qin Lie exclaimed softly.

"This thin ice mask is for you. If you stick this on your cheeks, your appearance will change greatly. Since your presence has become much colder, even if your friends come to Armament City to buy materials in the future, they will probably not recognize you." Li Mu handed him the mask. "You really have to use this. The martial practitioners of Dark Asura Hall, Seven Fiends Valley, and other factions will frequently visit Armament City. Maybe Yuan Tianya will also show up and you'll encounter him."

Seeing Qin Lie about to speak, Li Mu raised a hand to stop him and continued, "The spirit diagrams that you have grasped are very profound and contain the ultimate understanding of the world. If you can understand them on an even deeper level, you might be able to comprehend the spirit arts and techniques of ancient times. The picture scroll you have spoken of that was formed from the frost concept also has profound wonders

imprinted in it. If you can really comprehend it, you will have mastered the essence of the frost power."

"Armament Sect is a good place. You need to practice forging, so becoming an outer disciple of Armament Sect is a good choice. As long as you are not over twenty and have a certain amount of forging knowledge, it should not be too difficult of a test. Haha, I had told you to study with Yao Tai with the hope that you could enter Armament Sect. I think you will no issues."

"Qin Lie, change your name and identity first. Stay awhile in Armament Sect. You can study forging and cultivate in the land of ice at the same time to comprehend the frost concept. If there is a day that you become a core disciple of Armament Sect, you can resume your true name. Even if Yuan Tianya wants to move against you then, it will not be so easy."

Li Mu did not allow Qin Lie to interrupt. After giving many pieces of advice and a good number of warnings, he said he was tired which meant he was finished.

"I've said everything that I should say. It is probably fate that you and I encountered each other at Li's Shop. I've taken a liking to you, and because of that, I said a bit more on your growth. Mn, that's it." Li Mu nonchalantly waved his hand. "I've left this little residence for you. Little Ice and I will be leaving now. In the future, if you really do become as great an artificer as I hope, maybe Uncle Li will have to ask you for help one day."

Finished, he stopped Qin Lie from sending him off. The man and the dog strolled out and gradually moved away within the crowds

in front of the door.

Qin Lie looked on silently and watched as he disappeared. A long time later, he murmured, “Uncle Li, in the future, if I, Qin Lie, accomplishes something, I will definitely return the kindness you have given me today.”

Chapter 127: Cutting The Line

Armament Sect was divided into an outer sect and inner sect. The inner sect rested atop a Flame Volcano and was thus able to use the natural flames from within its depths.

Each of the Armament Sect's inner disciples were bestowed a little cavern, and within each of these was a smelting room which contained a furnace. Of course, the fire source for these furnaces were gathered from the volcano's natural flames.

The foot of the Flame Volcano, called Armament City, was divided into four districts, the earth, fire, water, and wind districts.

Armament City sold all sorts of spirit materials, spirit herbs, spirit pills, spirit stones, spirit artifacts, and other various cultivation materials. The entire city was governed by Armament Sect.

Armament Sect's outer sect was situated here.

Generally speaking, Armament Sect's inner sect was specifically responsible for forging artifacts. Thus, the status of the inner sect disciples was rather high, and there weren't very many of them. Each one was a true, ranked Artificer.

The inner sect was what truly controlled Armament Sect and gave it its high status.

On the other hand, the main responsibility of the outer sect was to sell spirit artifacts and manage the Armament Pavilions scattered in the various major cities as well as assisting the inner sect disciples with simple tasks. Tasks such as grinding and cutting up spirit materials so the inner sect disciples could more efficiently forge the spirit artifact, inscribe spirit diagrams, and infuse spirit into the “artifact” to turn it into a spirit artifact.

Armament Sect’s outer sect would recruit new disciples every year. As long as one had enough knowledge about forging artifacts, passed the examination, and was no older than twenty, one would become an outer sect disciple.

After becoming an outer sect disciple of Armament Sect, one would be assigned a personal teacher who would teach them about forging artifacts and guide them through the various smelting processes so that they would be able to assist inner sect disciples with simple tasks such as grinding and discarding spirit materials. Through two years of study, this would gradually reveal the talented practitioners amongst them.

At this time, the inner sect would arrange for specific people to go over and evaluate. Upon discovering a seedling who truly had the potential to become an Artificer, they would immediately be brought into the inner sect so that real Artificers could impart their fine, ingenious wisdom of spirit diagrams upon them.

This was the only way for an outer sect disciple to advance to become an inner sect disciple. Many outer sect disciples longed for this opportunity, and it was the true reason for why most people

entered the outer sect.

Upon becoming an inner sect disciple, one's status within Armament Sect would immediately rise an entire class. Not only would one be bestowed with their own refining cavern, one would also gain the guidance of a true Artificer and be supplied with a certain amount of spirit materials every month. Furthermore. one would be imparted with the core technique of inscribing spirit diagrams.

Upon becoming a true Artificer in the future, one could then occupy a position within Armament Sect and curry favor with various forces.

Today was the day when Armament Sect recruited new outer sect disciples every year. It was a fine, early morning, and the plaza in front of the outer sect was already filled with the faces of young people.

The great gate had still yet to open, but many youths had already arrived early to seize their spots. Surprisingly, amongst these youths, many wore the uniforms of the five great Black Iron Rank forces—Seven Fiends Valley, Dark Asura Hall, Dark Shadow Tower, Purple Mist Sea, and Cloud Sky Mountain. The brows of the people all carried a proud arrogance, and there were generally servants following around beside them.

"Yi Yuan, isn't that the Purple Mist Sea's Yi Yuan? Why would he also have come?" A shocked cry abruptly emanated from the crowd. Another person softly shouted, "Yi Yuan, this kid broke through into the Natal Opening Realm at the age of seventeen. This year, he is nineteen, and he should have already broken into

the late stage of the Natal Opening Realm. His cultivation along the martial path is going along so well, so why would he want to participate in Armament Sect's outer sect disciple exam?"

"Only the devil knows," someone muttered.

As everyone conversed, a youth with a warm smile on his face who wore purple clothes walked over from the street in front of them.

The youth looked ordinary and couldn't be considered outstandingly handsome. He also exuded an exceedingly comfortable aura. No matter who he looked at, it was always with a smile, causing everyone to feel favorable towards him.

"Yi Yuan, why have you also come?" asked a youth who was clearly also from Purple Mist Sea as he wore the same uniform as Yi Yuan. Upon seeing Yi Yuan walk over, a look of surprise made its way onto his face.

"Breaking through to the Manifestation Realm is too difficult, I haven't accumulated enough experience. Thus, I have come to Armament Sect to learn about forging artifacts and take my mind off of it for a while while also trying to see whether or not I can find some other road to take. Perhaps the people that I meet through forging artifacts will be able to help me take this step along the martial path." Yi Yuan treated everyone politely and didn't conceal his true intentions, explaining them outright.

"Liang Shaoyang! Isn't that Liang Shaoyang? Heavens, why did

he also come?” Another shocked cry emanated over.

There were many youths scattered across the courtyard. Upon hearing Liang Shaoyang’s name, their expressions all slightly changed.

Many people subconsciously moved out of the way, allowing a youth to quickly walk straight to the gate of the Armament Sect’s outer sect unhindered. Those youths who had lined up at the front, upon seeing him walking over, all subconsciously moved out of the way.

Liang Shaoyang, who had clearly arrived late, reached the front of the line in this manner, becoming the first person to take a spot in the outer sect examination.

“Who is he?” whispered some people quietly.

“He’s Liang Shaoyang of Dark Shadow Tower. Everyone knows what kind of place Dark Shadow Tower is, right? They take spirit stones to assassinate people. As long as the reward is high enough, Dark Shadow Tower’s people will take charge of helping you kill as many people as you want,” quietly explained someone. “Liang Shaoyang grew up in Dark Shadow Tower, and it’s rumored that he began assassinating people at the age of twelve. As of today, he just turned nineteen, and yet he already has at least several hundred lives on his hands…”

After this explanation, the expressions of many people inwardly changed as they all quietly moved a few more steps away from

Liang Shaoyang.

Purple Mist Sea's Yi Yuan was also amongst this crowd. Raising his head, he looked in the direction of Liang Shaoyang, his expression showing a strange smile. However, as he shook his head, he didn't say anything.

Even though Liang Shaoyang had just cut in front of him, he didn't seem to take it to heart and show no intention contesting Liang Shaoyang.

"Miss, please come inside." At this time, more people came in from outside. A bowed, old servant and an eye-catchingly beautiful young girl entered.

The young girl looked to be around eighteen or nineteen. Just from glancing at her phoenix-like eyes, willowy brows, and highly held jade-like nose, it was clear that she was used to having everyone's attention on her.

She wore a light blue dress, and at the corners of her clothes, strands of ice swirled like willow trees as her legs moved and caused her dress to swish.

She ignored all of the lustful gazes of the young men within the crowd as she naturally cut in line, directly moving in the direction of Liang Shaoyang.

"It's Mystical Fiend Valley's Ouyang Jingjing!" softly whispered

some people as they backed out of the way.

Upon hearing that this girl's origin was from the first ranked Mystical Fiend Valley of Seven Fiends Valley and also that she was surnamed Ouyang, even more people's hearts moved as they took initiative to make way for her.

The girl's expression was natural as she walked forward amidst the separated crowd. When she reached Yi Yuan's side, her footsteps paused as a trace of uncertainty flickered through her phoenix eyes. She said, "It seems like we have met before?"

Yi Yuan warmly laughed as he nodded, saying, "Haha, three years ago, when your father brought you to Purple Mist Sea, I was the one responsible for leading the way."

"Ah, so it's you," suddenly said Ouyang Jingjing. Afterwards, she slightly nodded, then passed Yi Yuan and continued forward.

She continued until she arrived behind Liang Shaoyang. Only then did she stop.

Liang Shaoyang's had his back turned towards her. From start to finish, he hadn't turned around and glanced once, only ever looking at the gate to Armament Sect's outer sect as he intently waited for the moment it would open.

"Hmph, there's actually still a foul guy..." muttered Ouyang Jingjing while narrowing her brows as she looked at Liang

Shaoyang's back after she had stopped moving.

Upon seeing that Liang Shaoyang and Ouyang Jingjing were now at the front of the line, those who had moved out of the way earlier promptly retook their positions, reforming the long, winding line.

Standing towards the back of the line, Yi Yuan heartily laughed, not minding it at all.

At this time, there were more and more young men and women constantly arriving one after another. After arriving, they all orderly took their place in the line. No one else cut in line.

A youth with an indifferent expression and an ice-cold aura quietly entered from the long street and lined up at the end of the line.

The two people who had arrived before him, upon him taking his spot, all of a sudden felt that the temperature had just plummeted as they instantly grew goosebumps in response.

They narrowed their brows as they shot several glares at the youth behind them who seemed to be exuding cold air from his body. Afterwards, they silently put a bit of distance between him and them.

As the sun's rays slowly but surely heated up and the time till the opening of Armament Sect's outer sect gate neared, the line atop the courtyard also gradually grew longer.

A robust, sturdy youth, wearing Dark Asura Hall's uniform , suddenly emerged from the long street behind the courtyard with a grin, laughing.

After he arrived, he glanced at the long, winding line. Looking around, he saw that there was surprisingly just enough space for a person to cut in both in front and behind a youth that had an indifferent expression on his face.

He couldn't help but show an expression of joy as he inwardly thanked the heavens and immediately rushed over.

There were spots both in front of and behind the indifferent youth. Thus, without even thinking, he chuckled and swiftly went to cut in front of the indifferent youth.

Right when he cut in and before he could even relax, a cold voice suddenly emanated out from behind, "Scram!"

An ice-cold, bone-chilling hand suddenly grabbed his shoulder, and a chill as cold as a severe winter frost directly infiltrated his body.

The former person began to incite his spirit as he fiercely turned his head, his face showing a fierce expression. "Kid, you're seeking death!"

"I told you to scram!" The indifferent youth's eyes began to show

an obvious violent light as his other hand unexpectedly moved like lightning, grabbing the person by their neck in almost an instant. With a casual toss, the former was promptly thrown out.

“Boom!” The sound of a heavy landing accompanied by a miserable scream could be heard at the same time.

The gazes of people everyone on the long, winding line all cast over as they looked at the youth from the Dark Asura Hall who had landed on the ground.

Someone couldn’t help but shout, “That’s Dark Asura Hall’s Tian Jianhao! He has a cultivation at the early stage of the Natal Opening Realm, and his father is a commander under one of the Hall Masters. How could he have been thrown out by someone?”

After that statement, everyone’s curiosity rose as they subconsciously tried to find the one who had done such a thing.

Even Liang Shaoyang and Ouyang Jingjing, who were at the front of the line, along with Yi Yuan, who was at the middle of the line, curiously turned their heads to observe the disturbance behind them.

The expressions two youths who had originally been standing in front of and behind the indifferent youth, upon seeing Tian Jianhao be thrown out in one move as he attempted to cut in line, slightly changed.

The two of them subconsciously lumped together and then opened up another bit of distance between them and the indifferent youth. They seemed to be afraid of causing unnecessary conflict and trouble.

“You f*cking dared to throw me?” angrily shouted Tian Jianhao as he stood up. Extremely angry, he rushed over again.

“Scram!”

The indifferent youth narrowed his brows, waiting for Tian Jianhao to approach him before suddenly kicking again with his foot.

It directly hit Tian Jianhao’s chest.

Tian Jianhao had a robust, sturdy body which could be compared to an artillery shell. Regardless, he was sent flying once more, landing back onto the ground with a bang.

After he fell this time, Tian Jianhao’s entire body began to shiver. On top of his chest, there was surprisingly a thin layer of ice. The raging flames within his heart had seemingly been frozen in but an instant.

This time, he didn’t speak again; instead,his eyes still showed an obvious trace of fear.

After a while, Tian Jianhao stood up again and obediently took a

spot at the very back of the line.

Everyone naturally began to snicker as they were all well aware that he had been beaten honest.

Chapter 128: Examination

That indifferent youth was none other than Qin Lie.

After Li Mu and the Icestone Snow Wolf King left, Qin Lie started living by himself within the small residence and begun relying on the Eye of Frost to enter and exit the depths of the Arctic Mountain Range's frozen earth.

During this time, he contemplated the picture of the ice crystal world within the Soul Suppressing Orb, using his soul to sense the frozen essence within it.

Each time he sent his soul into the picture scroll of the ice crystal world while within the frozen earth, a dense, cold frost energy of nature would begin to gather up near him.

Cold energy began to gradually gather within the other ice, sphere-shaped Natal Palace within him, rushing in until the Natal Palace was completely filled with frozen ice energy.

The cold energy even began to gather around his various limbs and organs, lingering around them and causing his aura to suddenly change to one which gave others a kind of piercing, cold feeling.

Because he had still yet to fully comprehend the picture scroll formed from the frost concept, it was still impossible for him to use the frost energy within his ice ball-shaped Natal Palace. Thus, he also wasn't able to disperse the cold energy which had

converged upon his bones, muscles, and veins. This made it very hard for him to control his body's aura and condition.

Furthermore, as cold energy fluctuated around his entire body, currents of cold energy would surge out whenever he moved.

This made it so when he fought his enemies, even his most basic moves would accompanied by the cold energy that filled his body, empowering his attacks with the effects of frost.

After being hit by Qin Lie's most basic attack, Dark Asura Hall's Tian Jianhao had felt chills run through his entire body. This was why fear had blossomed in his heart.

Perhaps it was because of his recent daily study of the mysteries of the frost concept, Qin Lie's aura and temperament had also gradually become affected as his heart slowly became cold...

"Creak!"

Armament Sect's outer sect gate opened, and Tong Jihua walked out from within to the registration point while accompanied by six Armament Sect disciples.

His gaze swept across all of the youths within the square as he said with a bit of surprise, "There are quite a few of you this time, I wonder how many of you will pass the examination in the end."

Tong Jihua was an elder of the outer sect and was specifically

responsible for the annual recruitment of new disciples. He was quite accustomed to the scene in front of him within the square and knew rather well how alluring being a true Artificer was to these youths.

Thus, even though this was just the recruitment for outer sect disciples, it was still rather harsh and difficult.

For every ten or so applicants, only one or two would pass the exam. The rest would all be eliminated.

Even after one passed the exam, if one couldn’t show the potential of an Artificer within a certain period of time, one would also be directly dismissed.

Every year, several hundred young men and women from various forces in various places would all come to Armament Sect to register, but in the end, at most, only twenty to thirty of them would pass the exam.

Out of these twenty to thirty youths, the greater half of them would be dismissed within the next few months of observation. At the very end, the number of youths who could truly enter into the outer sect would number no more than ten.

Out of the few that remained, it was considered good if one or two of them demonstrated talent and were chosen to enter the inner sect.

Thus, although Armament Sect's outer sect held yearly recruitments for new disciples, they were always left with vacancies.

"Everyone should be clear with the rules, thus I won't elaborate on them. In order to prevent people from wasting time, everyone who registers has to pay a Profound Grade One spirit stone. Regardless of whether you pass or not, this spirit stone will not be return. Mn. If there are no questions, then registration will begin from the start of the line. First person!"

"Liang Shaoyang!"

"Second person!"

"Ouyang Jingjing!"

"....."

Tong Jihua sat in front of the gate and asked for each participant's name. Upon receiving a Profound Grade One spirit stone, he allowed them to enter into the sect.

He didn't ask about their identity or cultivation progress, nor did he ask about their origin or background. It seemed as if he didn't care about these things.

The long, long line, in the wake of Tong Jihua's cries, slowly thinned out. After about an hour, it was finally Qin Lie's turn.

“Name!”

“Qin Bing!”

Qin Lie replied with the pseudonym that he had prepared a while back and handed over a Profound Grade One spirit stone.

Tong Jihua grabbed it and casually tossed it into the basket behind him.

He recorded down the name and threw a numbered stone tablet to Qin Lie. Not asking anything else, Tong Jihua nodded, indicating for Qin Lie to go ahead and walk straight in.

“Number two hundred and thirty,” commented Qin Lie as he glanced over the tablet and entered through Armament Sect’s outer sect gate.

“This way.” Within a vast, large courtyard, several Armament Sect practitioners who were responsible for receiving and guiding exam takers brought Qin Lie into a nearby room and arranged for him to sit at a long table. Afterwards, they gave him a brush and paper.

Qin Lie didn’t reply. Sitting down, he looked at the paper scrolls and discovered that they all contained questions which pertained to the distinct characteristics of various spirit materials.

What spirit material, when combined with Fiery Solar Jade, will cause the fire energy within the jade stone to quickly become volatile? What is the main distinguishing characteristic of Heavenly Cloud Crystal? Explain the three ways to use Dragon Bone Jade...

All of them were questions along those lines.

After having followed Yao Tai around for the greater half of the year and carefully studying Yao Tai when he forged spirit artifacts, he had become familiar with these basic materials like they were a part of him.

He took up the brush and began to rapidly write, quickly answering all of the various questions which pertained to spirit materials. His brush seemingly never stopped moving. When he finished, after looking it over once, he called over Armament Sect's proctor and returned the paper scrolls.

"Your speed is indeed rather quick." The young Armament Sect disciple nodded as they pointed to another room, saying, "Go over there and wait for instructions."

Qin Lie indifferently began to walk towards the other large room, quickly entering it without a word. Upon entering, he immediately felt several gazes land on him.

Liang Shaoyang, Ouyang Jingjing, and Yi Yuan. The three of them were surprisingly also within the room and were all seated atop a long bench.

Liang Shaoyang and Ouyang Jingjing glanced at Qin Lie, then retracted their gazes, cold and indifferent.

Only Purple Mist Sea's Yi Yuan was the only one to not only smile at Qin Lie, but took initiative to scoot sideways and make room for Qin Lie atop the bench.

Qin Lie indifferently nodded and directly sat beside Yi Yuan as he observed the insides of the room.

Other than Liang Shaoyang, Ouyang Jingjing, and Yi Yuan, there were seven other youths within the room. All of them wore rather luxurious and magnificent clothes, making it clear that their backgrounds weren't ordinary.

The other seven were scattered all over. Some were familiar with another, quietly conversing in hushed tones, while others lowered their heads and remained silent.

"I'm from Purple Mist Sea. My name is Yi Yuan. Friend, where did you come from?" Yi Yuan turned his head, smiling at Qin Lie.

"I'm Qin Bing. I came from a little place that's not worth mentioning," answered Qin Lie indifferently.

With a warm smile, Yi Yuan said, "Your origins don't matter. As long as you are able to become an Armament Sect outer sect disciple, your future will be vast."

Qin Lie furrowed his brows, not answering.

Soon, more and more youths entered. Each person who entered would glance around and then take whatever seat they found.

However, there were three clearly empty spots which none of the later arriving youths dared to take. They were the ones by Liang Shaoyang, Ouyang Jingjing, and Qin Lie...

Even when the room became crowded, there were still open spots beside the three as the other late comers would rather stand than sit down.

Four hours later, noontime.

Tong Jihua's voice was suddenly transmitted from within the courtyard, "Those who have their tablet number called may continue to the second round of exams. Those whose numbers are not called, please leave. One, two, nine, seventeen..."

Liang Shaoyang, Ouyang Jingjing, and several other youths who registered early proudly stood up as they followed behind each other to the courtyard behind them.

"Ninety."

Yi Yuan stood up from beside Qin Lie and politely smiled at Qin

Lie, stating, “I shall leave first.”

Tong Jihua continued calling numbers.

“Two hundred thirty.”

Qin Lie got up when his number was called out.

Within the second courtyard, many small smelting furnaces had been stationed there. Spread out below were several fire crystals of the lowest level, and on a nearby table various types of low level spirit materials had been placed there.

Qin Lie, holding his stone tablet, was lead to one of the furnaces. Afterwards, he discovered that Liang Shaoyang, Ouyang Jingjing, and Yi Yuan were all standing not far in front of him. They were all seemingly waiting for something.

Ten Armament Sect outer sect disciples were scattered across the edges of the courtyard, looking at the group within with serious expressions.

Those whose numbers had been called filed in one by one, each of them being directed to a different spot, waiting in silence afterward.

The sound of Tong Jihua’s voice eventually stopped. He also arrived. Afterwards, the gate to the second courtyard was heartlessly closed, directly eliminating those whose numbers had

not been called as they didn't have the qualifications to take this second round of assessments.

This time, over four hundred youths had registered. After the first round of assessment, only one hundred people had the necessary qualifications to continue on. Three quarters of them had already been eliminated.

"Everything has already been prepared for you all. I presume that you all have already guessed what we want you to do. That's right, you will have to refine an artifact. Metal, wood, water, fire, and earth; the five elements. Of them, metal artifacts are the easiest to forge as the smelting and combining of metal is the easiest. Use those spirit materials however you want to create whatever kind of artifact you can. Forks and knifes, swords, hammers, anything is fine as long as it can be created!"

Tong Jihua walked to the center of everyone and loudly shouted, "It starts now!"

Liang Shaoyang, Yi Yuan, and Ouyang Jingjing all seemingly moved in the same instant, becoming the first ones to ignite their fire crystals and fire up their furnaces.

Everyone else acted moments later, also beginning to take action as they ignited their fire crystals.

Meanwhile, Qin Lie who had mixed into the crowd was in no hurry to ignite a fire. Instead, he first picked up and identified each and every spirit material.

“Quicksand Gold, Bluelight Copper, Quicksilver…”

As he silently recited their names, the forging process of the Terminator Profound Bomb was the first thought to emerge within his mind as it was the only artifact that he had forged so far.

The spirit materials provided by Armament Sect naturally weren’t specifically for the forging of a Terminator Profound Bomb, but it was extremely easy to smelt metal element spirit materials and thus it wasn’t difficult to make an artifact into a specific shape.

After silently pondering for this moment, Qin Lie didn’t dare be rash and decided to forge a Terminator Profound Bomb shaped artifact, lest he failed and lost this opportunity.

In his mind, he thought over the several critical junctures of forging the Terminator Profound Bomb until they became clear. Only then did he ignite a fire crystal with the indifferent expression on his face gradually becoming solemn and focused.

Tong Jihua wandered amidst the group, observing this year’s batch of examinees. He closely observed Jiang Shaoyang, Ouyang Jingjing, and Yi Yuan, making sure to never stray too far away from them.

Not only did these three have the highest martial cultivations of the examinees, their backgrounds were also not ordinary. Within their own sects, they had probably carefully studied the art of

artifact forging before.

Thus, regardless of whether it was their experience or their movements, they were remarkable in all areas. Tong Jihua couldn't help by inwardly nod.

He was certain that not only would these three smoothly pass the examination, they would also be this year's cream of the crop, perhaps even obtaining the opportunity to enter the inner sect.

To those who could possibly become inner sect disciples, Tong Jihua would naturally pay a bit more attention so that he could make preparations in advance...

"Senior Sister Tang!"

"Senior Sister Tang, why have you come?"

"Senior Sister Tang!"

A fiery red figure suddenly floated over. It was as if a blazing ball of fire had appeared within the courtyard.

It was a beautiful, twenty or so year old girl. Even the loose Artificer Robe that she wore seemed to be unable to hide the seductive curves of her body. Her perky twin peaks, lithe waist, and slightly flared out buttocks created a heart-moving, soul-stirring figure which seemed to be able to entice any man.

As soon as she appeared within the courtyard, all eyes of the Armament Sect disciples became filled with an apparent fervor as they each stared while greeting her.

Even the minds of the many of the examinees who were focused on refining became restless. Their concentration suddenly dissipated as they began to occasionally glance at her figure while they forged their artifact...

“Siqi, why have you come today?” asked Tong Jihua with a bright smile. Greeting her with a wave, he continued, “It’s good that you have come. In a while, help me grade them. There are quite a few outstanding youths this time, so you can take note of them in your mind now. Then it will be easier for you directly request for them in the next few days...

“Uncle Tong, I came just so I could pick out people. All the good seeds from the previous few times were all taken away by my fellow disciples. This time, I will look closely. I must not lose out again.” Tang Siqi’s beautiful eyes sparkled with a radiance as a smile emerged on her beautiful, blushing face, resulting in an extremely moving yet faint charm.

“Haha, who told you to act so conceited the last few times?” said Tong Jihua with a great laugh. “You thought that there weren’t good seeds each time and treated it like a joke. In the end, there were several outstanding ones who helped your fellow disciples properly separate and smelt basic spirit materials. Just how much energy did they save?”

“As if it wasn’t because there were only crooked melons and split dates before that? There wasn’t even a single usable one, causing me to give up on all of these new recruits. That’s why I didn’t pay any attention,” responded Tang Siqi.

“Then you must pay careful attention this time,” said Tong Jihua, chuckling.

Tang Siqi nodded with a smile and began to move through the courtyard like a blazing ball of fire, wandering next to each of the examinees to observe their artifact forging process.

Each examinee, upon being approached by her, would all smell an intoxicating fragrance, resulting in their mind immediately being thrown into a mess, slowing their movements.

At these times, Tang Siqi would always shake her head, crestfallen, and would immediately leave without hesitation.

Chapter 129: I'm On Fire!

A fiery red figure zipped through the many examinees in the courtyard like a lithely-dancing red butterfly.

There were many Armament Sect disciples around whose eyes were hot with passion and could not help but look to the side to pursue the beautiful figure. It did seem that they were slowly forgetting the reason they had come here in the first place.

"Yet another useless person who cannot affirm his mind and focus on forging artifacts..."

Tang Siqi's hot figure fluttered about as a drunken fragrance spread about and shook the minds of countless, hopeful artificers, causing them to be unable to focus.

Tang Siqi shook her head repeatedly. Her coquettish and seductive face was filled with disappointment.

"Siqi, there are three people that you you should pay serious attention to. They may be able to reach your expectations." When she had returned to Tong Jihua's side again, Tong Jihua smiled lightly and pointed, from afar, at Liang Shaoyang, Ouyang Jingjing, and Yi Yan, quietly saying, "Their backgrounds are all extraordinary, and they have a certain amount of experience with artifact forging. They will definitely pass the examination."

Liang Shaoyang and the other two were at the front part of the courtyard. Tang Siqi had previously wandered that place for a lap;

those three were all at the center of the crowd.

After being reminded by Tong Jihua, she lightly smiled in thanks with her head lowered before dropping right beside Liang Shaoyang in a whisk of fragrant wind.

An obvious air of murder surrounded Liang Shaoyang. The moment Tang Siqi stood still, her eyes lit up.

Cheerfully, she closed in on the furnace. Her eyes suddenly turned passionate, and she stared at Liang Shaoyang while her expression turned into one of worship and obsessiveness.

—This was one of her usual methods.

A fiery, soulful stare and an obsessive gaze of worship. She had not failed once up until this day whenever she unleashed them on a man. There were very few men who could resist her charms.

When forging an artifact, a person could not be distracted for even a moment. If there was a single slight ripple in their hearts, then it would reflect through minuscule movements...

She observed Liang Shaoyang's every move.

Compared to the other competitors, Liang Shaoyang was far calmer. Under her passionate stare, Liang Shaoyang continued to intently stare at the small furnace before him and handle the spirit materials without the slightest bit of impatience. He was always

able to throw the correct spirit material into the furnace at the critical moment it was needed.

There was not the slightest mistake in his skill or movements.

Tang Siqi nodded on the inside as her heart turned mildly surprised. The seductive smile on her face grew brighter and brighter, causing all the onlookers from Armament Sect to feel hot all over.

Still facing Liang Shaoyang, she pursed her lips and let out a seductive smile. Moving lithely, she abruptly appeared on Liang Shaoyang's left.

Her hot and attractive body unwittingly pressed closer, as she let out a sweet breath and breathily said, "You're a little different from the other men, aren't you..."

Liang Shaoyang's eyebrows jumped as a ripple suddenly appeared in his heart. His left pinky could not help but shudder just a little.

"Crunch."

He accidentally crushed a piece of Bluelight Copper about the size of a fingernail, splitting it into many tiny bits.

Tang Siqi glanced at him once before suddenly pulling away from him, her graceful lips curling into scorn as she smiled lightly. "But you're not that different..." Once finished, she no longer took even

a single glance at Liang Shaoyang before changing her target yet again, heading towards Yi Yan this time.

"And here I thought he could ignore Senior Sister Tang's charm, but in the end, that is all he is. This is normal though. There... aren't actually that many people in Armament Sect who are completely immune to her charm."

"Of course, Senior Sister Tang has been the sect's most talented disciple for the past ten years. She has... also been the most beautiful one for the past ten years."

"If she weren't so young, then she will definitely be the number one person in the inner sect. She is practically a genius when it comes to artifact forging."

"Sigh, I really wish I would be chosen by Senior Sister Tang. I would be satisfied even if the only thing I do everyday is to polish spirit materials for her."

"Me too."

The few outer sect disciples close to each other and standing at the edges of the yard were whispering to each other, all looking at Tang Siqi with infatuation.

While they were whispering, the beautiful, tall, and hot Tang Siqi had suddenly appeared beside Yi Yan.

Yi Yan had originally been focused on smelting the artifact. At this point, he suddenly stopped his movements, lifted his head, and smiled at Tang Siqi before immediately closing his eyes and temporarily pausing the smelting process.

He chose to stop everything.

Tang Siqi had just adjusted her state of mind and was getting ready to test Yi Yan's inner fortitude. Just as she pushed a bright smile onto a face, she then saw Yi Yan closing his eyes, not moving a muscle. She immediately froze on the spot.

"This brat..." On the other side, Tong Jihua could only laugh at the scene.

Since Yi Yan had closed his eyes and stopped forging, naturally, Tang Siqi had no way of affecting him. She would just be wasting her effort if she stood there doing nothing. Therefore, she had no choice but to harshly glare at Yi Yan before helplessly giving up.

Tang Siqi then turned to look at Ouyang Jingjing before shaking her head slightly and quietly whispering, "She's a girl. There's nothing I can do then..."

She returned to Tong Jihua's side and commented in a low tone of voice, "Liang Shaoyang is still useful I suppose."

"How about the other two?" Tong Jihua asked with a smile.

“We have no choice but to wait until they finish forging to see how well they will do.” Tang Siqi had on a disappointed expression. “When that happens, the rest of the seniors might have arrived and it wouldn’t be as convenient to pick someone anymore.”

“Should I… book Liang Shaoyang for you first then?”

“Give it a while longer. I’ll take another look. If there really isn’t anyone suitable, then I can only pick Liang Shaoyang.”

Tang Siqi frowned beautifully. She was obviously not truly satisfied with Liang Shaoyang, and after interacting with Tong Jihua for a brief moment, she returned again to the center of those hundreds of hopeful artificers and headed towards the few corners she hadn’t wandered to before. She wanted to test her luck and see if she might run into an unexpected boon.

While wandering at the corners, her eyes examined the many youths one at a time, and occasionally. she would even close in and passionately stare at her target.

A few seconds later, she realized that her target’s eyes would always avoid hers and their actions would always slow down by just a fraction right before they made a mistake.

She would then immediately leave and choose a new target to test. However, she continued to be disappointed every time she selected her next target…

Icy cold energy suddenly spread from a figure at the front, and amidst the burning yard, that very energy caused her to sneeze.

“There are only a few people left. If it still doesn’t work. then I guess I have no choice but to pick Liang Shaoyang,” she whispered once as she headed over to the youth with cold energy emanating from his body. She circled the young man’s back and arrived at his front.

With that, she glanced at the expressionless youth.

“His looks are still fine, but his temperament is way too cold. To think there would be a person who cultivates a cold spirit art that would want to become an artificer. It really is a bit strange...”

Or so she thought inside her head while observing Qin Lie. After that thought had finished, her gaze fell upon the artifact inside the furnace.

“A ball-shaped artifact...” In response, her eyes lit up a bit.

The uneven and miniature shape of a metallic ball had already been formed inside the small furnace before Qin Lie. There were many round holes on its surface.

At this moment, Qin Lie was melting even more spirit materials into liquid form. He was injecting a liquid that could enhance the metallic ball’s endurance little by little.

A ball-shaped artifact was far more difficult to forge than a knife, fork, or spear. It tested an artificer's skill greatly. The shaping of a ball-shaped artifact was often incredibly difficult, and during the latter stages, it also required more effort and attention to polish and perfect the surface of the ball...

When Tang Siqi saw that Qin Lie's artifact was a ball, she was surprised a little on the inside and could not help but view him in a better light.

Then, a thin but seductive smile appeared on her beautiful face. Her eyes burned with passion as she stared soulfully at Qin Lie. She began to exude a most crime-inducing charm from her body...

Qin Lie's cold eyes did not glance at Tang Siqi for even a second. All of his attention was placed on the ball in his small furnace.

"These aren't the materials needed to forge Terminator Profound Bomb, so they don't fit well enough with each other. If they can't merge with each other properly, then it will break easily..."

He frowned heavily as his fingers unconsciously slid across the spirit materials. Quickly, his mind spun, "Which one of my current spirit materials has the right properties to thoroughly stabilize a ball-shaped artifact?" He was sunk in deep thought.

In his eyes, it was as if there wasn't a beautiful woman standing in front of him. He had completely ignored Tang Siqi's passionate gaze.

“A bit interesting…”

The curl on Tang Siqi’s lips deepened as the smile on her beautiful face grew brighter and brighter. It was as if she had found a new toy, and her eyes started glittering at Qin Lie.

“An interesting one just like Liang Shaoyang, I see. Let’s hope that you won’t disappoint me; let’s hope that you can… hold out for a while longer.”

Suddenly, she giggled, and in a flash, her voluptuous figure had arrived on Qin Lie’s left.

Then, with a smile, she closed in and prettily said, “It’s pretty hard to forge a ball-shaped artifact. When I first started forging, I also made quite a lot mistakes and could not succeed no matter what, you know?”

Her firm breasts were just three fingers away from Qin Lie’s left arm, and the heat on those plump and seductive breasts seemed to radiate from that thin veil of hers…

Her plump and red lips, the fragrance that emanated from her as she moved, her fiery eyes, glittering with waves of passion, the attractive figure that closed in on his shirt, and a heart-melting voice… at this moment, her charm and allure became limitless, and she could practically melt even a hard stone.

“Gulp…”

The Armament Sect disciples on the side could not help but swallow their saliva as they watched Tang Siqi's alluring appearance and intentionally displayed seductiveness. An evil flame rose uncontrollably from the bottom of their hearts.

Many people who were originally standing straight had no choice but to bow into hunchbacks in order to disguise a certain protrusion on their bodies.

"A bunch of useless crap!" Tong Jihua glared and scolded on the inside as he watched the surrounding outer sect disciples. "You all totally deserve to stay in the outer sect for the rest of your lives. Without even the slightest bit of mental fortitude, you all would only be qualified to sell spirit artifacts at Armament Sect's many branches. You will never truly enter the artificer's hall."

If these outer sect disciples in Armament Sect failed to display a talent in artifact forging after a long period of time or failed to be chosen by an inner sect disciple as assistant, then they would be assigned somewhere a year or two later to work at a spirit material shop similar to Armament Pavilion in Icestone City. They would specialize in selling all kinds of spirit materials for Armament Sect.

Most, if not all of the outer sect disciple today would be facing such a fate and would be let go by Armament Sect.

Qin Lie did not know that Tang Siqi had come to specifically choose someone. He had only assumed that she was intentionally creating trouble, and seeing that she just had to press closer and

begin slowly affecting his next step of merging his artifact, his expression grew colder and colder.

"Judging from the level of your practice, you should have experience in artifact forging. I'm really curious, who did you learn artifact forging from?" Tang Siqi's smile was as bright as a flower as her hot body pressed closer and closer. Judging from her pose, it was as if she couldn't wait to lie on top of Qin Lie already.

The eyes of all the surrounding onlookers had become fixated on that very figure.

Qin Lie frowned and grew impatient. When he pushed the spirit materials inside the furnace in his left hand, he did it with slightly larger movements.

"Bang!"

A few sparks flew out from the furnace, and as if they had grown a mind of their own, they all flew at Tang Siqi on the side.

Meanwhile, Tang Siqi continued to ease into Qin Lie as she thought: How dare you play a fool in front of me. See if I'll play you to death!

Suddenly, she heard a strange noise, and after she turned around to look, her expression turned horrific.

The thin clothes at her waist were actually burning!

“Ah, I’m on fire!” Tang Siqi screamed out in panic.

Chapter 130: Bearing Curses...

“Senior Sister Tang!”

“Senior Sister Tang!”

The Armament Sect outer disciples standing at the edges of the courtyard all shouted in unison as they flusteredly rushed over.

Tong Jihua’s expression also gradually changed as he sternly shouted, “Dumbasses, go fetch a bucket of water!”

Liang Shaoyang, Ouyang Jingjing, Yi Yuan, and the rest of the examinees’ attention was all attracted by the commotion as each and every one of them from the front of the courtyard to the back turned their heads in the same direction.

Tang Siqi’s beautiful face no long possessed a charming smile. Instead, there was only a look of panic as she beat at the fire on her waist with her jade hand. Her eyes stricken with horror, she repeatedly shouted, “I’m on fire!”

A spark had ignited between her lower abdomen and waist, and a burning pain seared over her flat, fat-less lower abdomen. Her thin robes couldn’t help but catch on fire as the flames began to ferociously burn.

All of the Artificer Robes she wore had been custom made so that, while the outside was loose, the inside was a tight-fitting silk dress

which flaunted her curves.

Now that the outer layer of robes had caught on fire, the inner layer of silk was immediately revealed. The flames continued burning, and soon, her entire waist was on fire.

Tang Siqi was considered a genius Artificer by Armament Pavilion and cultivated a fire type spirit art. If she were to circulate her spirit energy, it would increase the fire spirit energy around her which would only nourish the flames. It would definitely not help extinguish them.

She knew this extremely well, and thus, she didn't dare circulate her spirit energy. All she could do was hope that the outer sect disciples would be quick at fetching water.

Of those who had come to participate in Armament Sect's examination, the majority of them cultivated fire type spirit arts as well, and thus, there wasn't a single one who was able to help her extinguish the flames.

The sparks which had shot onto her were flames which had exploded off of Fiery Solar Jade. After landing on her body, it was actually quite difficult to extinguish.

Previously, Tang Siqi had been wandering from one furnace to the next, teasing the examinees. Thus, the robes that she wore had long since been roasted until they were extremely flammable. Thus, as soon as the clothes at her waist had caught on fire, it had immediately gone out of control...

Burned by the flames, Tang Siqi felt extreme pain on her lower abdomen as her eyes closely watched the flame spread above and below her waist.

She could only beat at the flames on the clothes over her waist and loudly cry for the Armament Sect disciples to bring water.

Her mind was as anxious as the fire, having long since lost her earlier calmness. As she embarrassedly jumped and hopped around, she loudly swore about Qin Lie's shamelessness.

—She naturally had already figured out that the sparks had come from Qin Lie's furnace.

At this time, Qin Lie finally turned his head around. A look of surprise arose on his gloomy, cold face as he quickly stuck out his hand to beat at the flames on Tang Siqi's abdomen.

The reason he had created sparks was because he wanted Tang Siqi to leave and stop distracting him. He had never intended to cause any actual harm.

Moreover, he hadn't expected that Tang Siqi would be so wholeheartedly focused on trying to tease him that she wouldn't notice the sparks when they made contact with her... which was how the current scenario had unfolded.

"Get away from me!" repeatedly screeched Tang Siqi when she

saw Qin Lie raise his hand. Her stunningly beautiful face was full of anger.

“The clothes over your chest and lower half are just about to catch on fire…” coldly reminded Qin Lie.

Tang Siqi lowered her head, looked, and then began to loudly screech again. Seeing that the people who had gone to fetch water were nowhere to be seen, her bright eyes reddened as she shouted, “I’m going to kill you!”

She suddenly rushed at Qin Lie.

A current of ice cold energy, like a severe winter frost, spilled out from Qin Lie’s body.

As soon as she approached Qin Lie, she discovered the raging flames strangely began to be immediately suppressed, as if they were they were about to be extinguished.

The current of frigid, ice-cold energy which was released from Qin Lie’s body was actually able to extinguish the flames!

At this time, the pain from the skin on her waist being burned by the flames had almost caused her tears to start flowing. Once the clothes over her waist were burned, if the clothes over her chest and below her waist were also burned… then wouldn’t she be completely naked?

Currently, there were over a hundred people within the courtyard watching her. If her clothes were all burned, then how could she possibly meet people in the future?

"I-I won't let go of you!" screeched Tang Siqi. With her waist still on fire, she surprisingly threw herself head first into Qin Lie's chest, tightly hugging him while looking at him face to face.

The nearby observers all became petrified.

"This..." Tong Jihua also showed astonishment as an extremely strange look emerged on his face. He secretly thought to himself: This method of not letting go of him, isn't it a little too stimulating?

"Uhh..." Qin Lie returned the embrace.

A sumptuous, arousing body, under the gazes of more than a hundred people, had suddenly thrown itself into Qin Lie's chest and tightly hugged him.

Qin Lie sensed the astonishing heat and elasticity of the seductive body, as well as... the burnt, charred scent. He became dazed, blank as he stood on the spot, not moving.

"Sssssss!"

As soon as Tang Siqi tightly hugged Qin Lie, she immediately saw smoke rise from her charred clothes as the flames were assaulted

by the cold energy and quickly extinguished.

She instantly knew she had made the right choice by closely pasting herself onto Qin Lie as the ice cold energy which was released by Qin Lie's body was able to extinguish all of the flames on her clothes.

Continuing on, she hugged Qin Lie even more tightly, using the bone chilling cold energy which emanated off Qin Lie's body to reduce the stinging pain from the burn on her abdomen.

Glancing at the number on the table, her chattering teeth and eyes filled with a copious amount of hate. She shouted, "Number two hundred and thirty, I won't let go of you!" Still hugging Qin Lie, she loudly threatened, "Just you wait number two hundred and thirty. I will definitely let you know what happens when you aggravate me!"

"The water's here! The water's here!"

Three Armament Sect outer sect disciples, carrying a bucket of water, sprinted over. Not even sparing a moment to look at the situation, they scooped out a ladle of water and tossed it over.

"Splash splash splash!"

Three ladles of water were thrown, turning Tang Siqi and Qin Lie into drowned chickens, instantly drenching their clothes.

“Senior Sister Tang, you, what are you doing?” One of them, after throwing their ladle of water, finally took a clear look at the situation and asked in shock, “Why are you hugging him so tightly?”

Tang Siqi felt as if she wanted to climb into a hole and die. Her eyes seemed to be shooting flames as she loudly swore, “F*ck off for me however far away you can f*ck off!”

Only after swearing did she realize that her thin robes were completely drenched and were now closely sticking to her, clearly presenting every mountain and valley on her body.

What made her feel even more embarrassed was that—she was still tightly hugging Qin Lie at this time, her towering twin peaks pasted to Qin Lie’s chest and her abdomen pasted to his abdomen.

After a terrifying cry, Tang Siqi, instantly ran away like an electrocuted wildcat, leaving no trace of her behind.

Qin Lie’s expression was indifferent even though his entire body was also drenched. The fire within the small furnace behind him itself had become weak like a candle in the wind, about to go out at any time.

He furrowed his brow as he just stood there. As he looked in the direction that Tang Siqi had disappeared in, a strange light appeared in this eyes.

“This girl, although she lacks common sense and her head seemingly isn’t screwed on properly, she still… is the real thing.” Thinking back over the sensations from just now when Tang Siqi had pasted her body on him, Qin Lie couldn’t help but inwardly appraise them. Afterwards, he looked at Tong Jihua and shrugged, saying, “I need to change clothes and also need a few more fire crystals. It was one of your people who got me wet.”

Tong Jihua’s face twitched. The,n he waved his hand, beckoning someone over and instructing them, “Help him get it done.”

“You burned Senior Sister Tang, yet you actually dare to complain? Do you not want to f*cking live anymore?” shouted the Armament Sect disciple, their expression ruthless as they rushed over seemingly about to take action.

Qin Lie’s expression turned cold as he replied, “It was she who tried to distract me first!”

“Liu Ke!” sternly reprimanded Tong Jihua as he coldly instructed, “You are to do what you are told!”

The disciple immediately shut his mouth, still hatefully staring at Qin Lie. However, he no longer dared to take action. He angrily led Qin Lie to a nearby side room and let Qin Lie change his clothes.

All of the Armament Sect outer sect disciples stared in Qin Lie’s direction with red eyes. It seemed as if they all wanted to help Tang Siqi by killing Qin Lie on the spot.

The examinees on the other hand had strange looks on their face as they all envied Qin Lie, their hearts relishing the images they had just seen.

“Whether it was intentional or not, for such a stunningly beautiful girl to willingly throw herself into my arms—to just be able to hug her for a while—my life would have been worth it!”

Even Liang Shaoyang’s gaze in Qin Lie’s direction was filled with jealousy.

“Don’t think that you’ll safely making out of this. After offending Senior Sister Tang, even if you enter Armament Sect, you won’t be able to rest even for a day!” After the Armament Sect disciple named Liu Ke brought Qin Lie into the side room, his expression turned cold as he angrily said, “I advise you to scram out of Armament Sect as early as possible and f*ck off as far as possible from Armament City. Otherwise, else you’re gonna get it!”

“Don’t waste your breath.” With an indifferent expression, Qin Lie completely ignored Liu Ke’s threats, focusing only on changing his clothes.

Behind this courtyard, several exquisite small buildings were situated within a bamboo forest in the depths of Armament Sect’s outer sect.

At the moment, Tang Siqi was within one of these small buildings. By this time, she had already changed into another red dress and was currently lifting the area of the dress over her

abdomen and spread green ointment over her injured skin. As she applied it, she grit her teeth and swore, “Number two hundred and thirty, two hundred and thirty, if you have any happy days in the future, my name isn’t Tang Siqi!

“Siqi, when did you return?” A clear and gentle voice could suddenly be heard from outside the door. Afterwards, Lian Rou directly barged in.

Lian Rou was also an Armament Sect inner sect disciple. Moreover, she was Tang Siqi’s roommate. Her appearance, when compared to Tang Siqi’s, clearly seemed to be extremely ordinary. She looked just like a girl next door as she had no eye catching characteristics. Only her clear, gentle personality was unique.

That was to say, whenever she was together with Tang Siqi, she was eternally just a foil, a green leaf to complement the flower which was Tang Siqi.

“Sister Rou! I-I suffered a big loss!” miserably cried Tang Siqi as she wiped ointment on her burns and swore at Qin Lie. “Within the front courtyard, I was plotted against by a despicable bastard. I was almost burned to death! That bastard was number two hundred and thirty, but I don’t know his name. I only know his tablet number. I... right now I don’t have the face to return. I would like you to go and tell Uncle Tong that I want him to book that bastard for me so that I can happily mess with him for a while!

Lian Rou’s black brows narrowed as she looked at Tang Siqi’s abdomen. Afterwards, she sternly said, “Your burns are not light. Mn, it’s good that you didn’t die, but you deserved it!”

After speaking, Lian Rou couldn't hold back any longer, suddenly laughing as she mocked, "Even without thinking I can guess what happened earlier over there. Just what were you doing? It's the same as before, right? You tried to distract people while they were forging their artifacts? Haha, only you didn't expect that this time you would encounter a wolf who not only ignored your charm but actually steeled their heart to use such a cruel tactic to hurt a flower like you. Even I feel some admiration for this guy."

By the end of Lian Rou's remarks, Tang Siqi's face had already turned green as she said, "Stupid Lian, is this how you console a fellow sister?"

"I'm joking, hee hee, I'm joking." Lian Rou gently smiled as she said, "Okay, I will go to the front courtyard and meet this hero who dared to use such cruel methods to hurt Armament Sect's most beautiful flower."

Lian Rou walked out, laughing the entire way as she completely ignored the livid expression on Tang Siqi's face.

Chapter 131: Lucky Fellows

Qin Lie changed into a new set of clothes and returned to his forging station. The new fire crystals had already been supplied by the time he returned.

Silently, he retook his spot with his expression indifferent as he continued a new round of artifact forging. It seemed as if the small twists and turns which had occurred just now had not the slightest effect on him.

Many outer Armament Sect disciples all coldly glared at him, their expressions displeased.

Tong Jihua's expression was also strange. His gaze had moved away from Liang Shaoyang's as he began to focus on observing Qin Lie. As he watched, he became momentarily stunned. Afterwards, he subconsciously began walking towards Qin Lie.

His eyes were glued onto the metal ball which was within the furnace in front of Qin Lie. He watched as Qin Lie punched holes into the metal ball and then injected both water and fire.

Tong Jihua had silently moved over. He had finally became interested in Qin Lie and was now carefully observing Qin Lie's every move.

He discovered that every time Qin Lie added spirit materials, the way he controlled the flames to polish the metal orb was very skillful. Furthermore, every time Qin Lie grabbed spirit materials,

the way be moved was seemingly pleasant to look at, as if he had repeatedly done these actions hundreds if not thousands of times...

These discoveries caused Tong Jihua's eyes to gradually light up.

Lian Rou's figure quietly appeared. She pursed her lips and gently chuckled as she walked next to Tong Jihua and gently greeted him, "Hello Uncle Tong."

Tong Jihua retracted his gaze from Qin Lie as he nodded with a smile and asked, "Have you seen Siqi, that girl?"

Lian Rou's eyes curved into crescent moons as she laughed, asking a question in response, "What exactly happened just now? Which heroic youth was it that actually caused Siqi to take a loss?"

"Yes? Ah, this one," replied Tong Jihua, pointing at Qin Lie.

Lian Rou's expression changed as she too moved slightly closer to Qin Lie' and began watching him along with with Tong Jihua. Immediately, her eyes lit up somewhat as she gently commented, "This guy's pretty good, huh..."

"Mn." Tong Jihua and Lian Rou were only ten or so meters away from Qin Lie. Lowering his voice, he explained, "Earlier, I wasn't paying attention to him. Only now that I've observed him have I discovered that this kid's techniques are rather experienced. He's definitely had a fair share of experience in forging artifacts. If I haven't seen wrongly, he is much better at decomposing spirit

materials and controlling the flames of the furnace than many of the people here.”

Lian Rou became increasingly attentive. She inwardly observed Qin Lie’s every action, watching as Qin Lie meticulously polished his metal ball and didn’t let a single rough point through and watching his expression which was so focused that it seemed like he had forgotten himself...

“If I had known earlier, I wouldn’t have agreed to Siqi’s request,” muttered Lian Rou as she reluctantly shook her head. “She wants me to book number two hundred and thirty for her. If this person is utilized properly, he will definitely become a great helper who will save us a lot of work. Siqi must have immediately noticed and purposely troubled him!”

“Her vision is indeed strangely accurate,” said Tong Jihua, nodding.

“Are there any other good seeds this time?” quietly asked Lian Rou.

“Those three in the front are also not bad,” mentioned Tong Jihua as he pointed at Liang Shaoyang, Ouyang Jingjing, and Yi Yuan.

Right when he pointed at Yi Yuan, even though he originally had his back towards them, he unexpectedly turned around. Yi Yuan resplendently smiled at Lian Rou, exposing his pure white teeth as he said, “Little Sister Lian Rou, didn’t I say that we would

definitely meet again?”

“Yi Yuan!” Lian Rou couldn’t restrain her shock as she shouted, her pretty face full of surprise, “Y-you, how come you are here?”

The events of five years ago suddenly reemerged within her mind…

Five years ago, Lian Rou had gone to Purple Mist Sea with one of Armament Sect’s elders. At Purple Mist Sea, she met Yi Yuan, their guide for the a period of time who had guided them around Purple Mist Sea’s various eccentric locations of as they picked a great number of rare spirit plants and spirit herbs which were unique to the area.

It was during this time that Yi Yuan quietly found an opportunity to confess his love for her.

At the time, she, who had never been confessed to by a stranger before was stunned and immediately rejected him. Afterwards, she felt a sense of dread and had constantly avoided Yi Yuan all the way till when she was about to depart which was when she encountered him again.

At that time, Yi Yuan had watched as she left Purple Mist Sea. The only words he had left her were, “We will meet again.”

Five years later, right when Lian Rou was about to forget Yi Yuan, Yi Yuan had suddenly appeared once again as an examinee

who was trying to enter Armament Sect.

—For her.

“You two know each other?” curiously asked Tong Jihua.

Lian Rou’s expression was very unnatural as she nodded her head, strenuously saying, “We met before at Purple Mist Sea.”

“I hope Miss Lian Rou will choose me. I am most willing to become Miss Lian Rou’s assistant and will be willing to do any task for her.” In front of more than a hundred people, Yi Yuan brilliantly smiled. His expression was sincere as he bowed and made his request. Boldly, he expressed his love, not seeming to mind all of the surprised gazes of the crowd.

“Fool! Madman!” lowly swore Lian Rou as she hurriedly left as if she were fleeing.

Tong Jihua was stunned. He stared at the boldly shouting Yi Yuan. After a good half a while, he recovered his senses, muttering to himself, “This time is indeed truly interesting.”

Qin Lie who had been focused on forging artifacts also temporarily stopped his movements for a moment, raising his head to look at Yi Yuan, who was in front of him while professing his love as if there was no one else around. Watching as Yi Yuan’s two sentences shocked Lian Rou away, he was similarly shocked as he inwardly thought, “This fellow normally just smiles when he see

people, but it seems that a person as kind as him still has their own crazy side?”

“Brother Qin Bing, Miss Lian Rou is someone who I had already claimed five years ago, you must not fight with me over her,” said Yi Yuan, looking at Qin Lie. With a brilliant smile, he saluted Qin Lie from a distance, continuing, “Miss Tang Siqi is much more beautiful than her, but her temper is also too vicious. I hope Brother Qin will narrow his focus a bit more and show magnanimity towards my Lian Rou...”

After his remark, the crowd went into an uproar. As for Armament Sect’s outer sect disciples, they had all already begun loudly swearing.

“F*ck, at first this fellow from Purple Mist Sea didn’t seem like anything special, but how come he became so crazy as soon as he saw Lian Rou? What kind of place does he think Armament Sect is? Did he come here just to find a wife?”

“Does he know just how precious Senior Sister Tang and Senior Sister Lian Rou are? He actually dares to talk with that bastard who burned Senior Sister Tang about splitting our two senior sisters in front of everyone within this large courtyard? This daddy here has already stayed at Armament Sect for three years and still doesn’t dare to speak rudely towards the two of them. Just what kind of place have these bastards jumped out from?”

“This daddy has also stayed for a long time. It’s best to not let these two in, otherwise I might not let go of them till they are dead!”

All of the Armament Sect disciples began to shout curses, each one filled with justice driven resentment. It was as if Yi Yuan and Qin Lie were snatching away the treasures that they considered their own.

Liang Shaoyang's gaze also changed as he too raised his head and looked over at Yi Yuan.

"Madman!" cursed Ouyang Jingjing.

Yi Yuan loudly laughed. From when Lian Rou had appeared, he had seemingly suddenly become a different person, as if he were high shot up on drugs.

Yi Yuan didn't pay any attention whatsoever to the curses and ridicule as he only looked at Qin Lie and continued, "Since Brother Qin isn't saying anything, I'll take it as if you have agreed. I'll thank you first." He cupped his hands and then once again focused on the furnace in front of him. His entire person was in high spirits as if he had suddenly become filled with energy and confidence for the future.

"So he's also a madman," muttered Qin Lie to himself. He lowered his head back down.

Lian Rou flusteredly returned to the small house where Tang Siqi was applying medicine on herself. Her pretty face was a bright red, as if she were drunk.

“Madman, I’ve met a madman!” she shouted as soon as she entered. Stomping her feet, she continued, “It’s already been five years, but that bastard is still lingering around me like a phantom. He actually chased me all the way to Armament Sect!”

“Who?” curiously asked Tang Siqi.

“The person I told you about before, the guy from Purple Mist Sea It’s been five years, and he, he actually came over this time! Dammit! Just now within the great courtyard, he, in front of everyone, requested that I choose him as my assistant!” Distress was written all over Lian Rou’s face as she said, “I, I ran away…”

“Hahaha, ahahaha!” Tang Siqi clutched her stomach as she began to loudly laugh, “You’re unexpectedly so useless! If it were me, I would have smashed that guy’s face into bits!” She powerfully waved her fist and repetitively made punching motions, her gorgeous face showing a cute, fierce expression.

“Then how come you weren’t able to smash in number two hundred and thirty’s face? How come you are hiding here?” angrily retorted an embarrassed Lian Rou.

“I-I…” Tang Siqi’s face became entirely flushed red. Breathing rapidly, she frustratedly exclaimed, “That bastard burned my clothes. I was almost fully exposed, so I could only retreat. Rest assured that once he falls into my hands, he’ll get what he deserves!” After speaking to this point, Tang Siqi expression changed as she loudly clamored, “How can we two sisters just

accept being bullied by men? I definitely won't let go of that number two hundred and thirty. Why don't you choose that bastard who dared to spout so much nonsense as well and color him pretty?"

"Then let's do that!" agreed Lian Rou, clenching her fist. She firmly exclaimed, "I'm going to get him back too!"

……

"Time's almost up. Whether or not you have the qualification to remain is now becoming more apparent," said Tong Jihua as he walked up to the front after calculating the time.

Starting with Liang Shaoyang, Tong Jihua would grasp each examinee's forged artifact and sense the cohesion of its insides. Afterwards, he decide whether or not he would record down the examinee's number.

Each person whose number was recorded had successfully passed the examination. If Tong Jihua shook his head, it meant that the examinee had been eliminated.

As Tong Jihua touched each artifact, people were constantly eliminated and their hopes were incessantly destroyed. The number of people within the courtyard, which originally numbered over a hundred, gradually declined.

Liang Shaoyang, Ouyang Jingjing, and Yi Yuan, who were all in

the front, all had very relaxed expressions as Tong Jihua moved past them.

—They had all seen Tong Jihua record down their numbers.

Before long, Tong Jihua arrived beside Qin Lie. After touching the smooth surface of the metal ball for a moment, his eyes lit up and he profoundly gazed at Qin Lie for a second before also recording down Qin Lie's corresponding number—two hundred and thirty.

Tong Jihua continued onwards.

Time flew by, and a full hour later, only twenty six people remained standing within the courtyard.

Those examinees whose numbers hadn't been recorded all self-consciously left. They didn't have the face to remain behind and wait for Tong Jihua to announce the final results, so they had all long since left the courtyard.

"Twenty six people passed the exam. Tomorrow, inner sect disciples will come and pick assistants from amongst you. If any of you are fortuitously selected, you will have the opportunity to experience true artifact forging." Tong Jihua's expression was stern as he continued, "Becoming an inner sect disciple's assistant and helping them break down and grind their spirit materials, as well as aiding them while forging artifacts, will be a great help to your own growth. I hope you will all have this luck..."

“Elder Tong, Miss Lian Rou has sent over a note.” At this time, an outer sect disciple handed over a little slip of paper.

As Tong Jihua read it, his expression suddenly became abnormal as he began to laugh. Afterwards, he said, “There are already lucky fellows. Number nineteen, Yi Yuan! And number two hundred thirty, Qin Bing! Congratulations on being the first two to be selected. After taking a good look at you two, heh, I trust that your lives in the future will certainly be luxurious ones.”

Only at this time did Qin Lie finally understand the purpose behind Tang Siqi’s wanderings beside him. Upon hearing that he had been selected beforehand, not only did he not feel the slightest bit of happiness, he also felt a bad feeling blossom inside him, “Uh oh…”

Meanwhile, Yi Yuan was indeed elated as a smile overflowing with joy emerged on his face. He seemed to be unaware about what was coming.

Chapter 132: Wind Agent

“Number two hundred and thirty, Qin Bing, number ninety seven, Yi Yuan. The two of you can go ahead and leave, you no longer need to stay here.” Tong Jihua’s smile was a little sinister. “In three days, bring your clothing and daily necessities to Armament Sect. You will be staying in Armament Sect’s outer sect from now on.”

He then looked towards the rest of the people and said, “The rest of you will stay behind. You all have to wait for the inner sect apprentice selection tomorrow. Once the results are out, then you will also be given three days to prepare.”

Once he finished, Qin Lie walked outside without another word.

“Wait for me, Brother Qin.” Yi Yan smiled and chased after Qin Lie before passing through the courtyard with Qin Lie, shoulder-to-shoulder. And like that, they exited the Armament Sect.

“Brother Qin is truly amazing. Even a difficult woman such as Tang Siqi was completely tamed by you. Hehe, she even jumped into Brother Qin’s arms on her own and held you tight...” Yi Yan cupped his hands. “I am impressed. I am truly impressed by Brother Qin’s methods. Compared to you, that tactic of mine was completely skilless. All I had relied upon was just a thick skin. May Brother Qin watch over me in the future and teach me some awesome techniques.”

Qin Lie’s face shuddered as he turned his head to look at Yi Yan,

coldly saying, “Do you think I’m the same as you, that I’ve come here for a woman?That to attract that Tang Siqi’s expression, I purposefully burned her clothes with the sparks?”

“Was I wrong?” Yi Yan countered, “Tang Siqi is Armament Sect’s most beautiful pearl. Her beauty is famed throughout Dark Asura Hall, Seven Fiends Valley, Dark Shadow Tower, Purple Mist Sea, Cloud Sky Mountain, and other forces. She is the dream woman of countless men. Every year, there would be young men from these forces who would come to Armament Sect just for her, hoping to be chosen as her assistant. Countless men had wrung their brains for this, but she hadn’t ever selected a single person from the outer sect over the past few years. Brother Qin’s method this time is unique though. You immediately attracted her attention and was chosen by her in advance. I wonder how many people are so envious of you that they could die…”

Yi Yan bobbed his head about. “Brother Qin must have spent quite a bit of effort. This method is practically unprecedented. I am truly impressed!”

—He was absolutely sure that Qin Lie had come for Tang Siqi.

Qin Lie was speechless. He did not expect Tang Siqi’s fame to be this terrific, to be able to attract countless young men to Armament Sect just for her alone. Judging from the meaning behind Yi Yan’s words, all the young heroes of Dark Asura Hall, Seven Fiends Valley, Dark Shadow Tower and other forces had even ‘wrung their brains’ to curry her favor?

“Tang Siqi…” He couldn’t help but recall that woman who had

hugged him tightly and the feeling of her hot body pressing closely against his. Then, he nodded. “She does have the charm alright.”

“Sigh, I am far lousier in this aspect.” Yi Yan shook his head and sighed. “I was sure that I would succeed this trip. It’s been five years. For the past five years, the only thing that filled my mind was her figure…”

“You really came for that Lian Rou?” Qin Lie frowned. He did not see anything special about that woman. Her appearance was very average and very normal—how could she have made Yi Yan this crazy?

“Of course.” The moment Lian Rou was brought up, Yi Yan immediately was in high spirits. “I knew it from the moment I laid eyes on her for the first time five years ago. I will never let her slip through my grasp for as long as I live!”

Qin Lie couldn’t really understand Yi Yan’s obsession towards her and shook his head. He carelessly asked, “Do you know any big incidents that have happened nearby as of late?”

“What do you want to know exactly?” Yi Yan asked curiously.

“Anything that’s happening among the huge forces.”

“Then you should take a trip to the ‘Wind Lane’ in the Wind District of the Earth, Fire, Water, and Wind Districts of Armament City. You can just find a few Wind Agents randomly and you’ll find

the news from all parties." Yi Yan explained, "This is what they do for a living. Hehe, the things we did at Armament Sect today should be known over there already."

"Wind Agents?" Qin Lie looked surprised.

"Yeah. They're a bunch of people who sell information for a living. They have a great number of sources, so you can buy all sorts of information from them."

"Thanks."

"You're welcome. Do watch over me in the future, Brother Qin."

"Oh."

……

Two hours later, Qin Lie appeared at Wind Lane in Armament Sect's Wind area.

The Wind Lane was the small lane where the Wind Agents gathered together. Every Wind Agent working inside the city would be moving about this lane, selling all kinds of information.

Qin Lie entered a house at random and took out a Profound Grade One Spirit Stone. He said, "I want to ask about something."

A thin and emaciated young boy walked over. He looked about fourteen to fifteen years old and his skin was dark, but his eyes were very intelligent. “Call me Wind God. Go ahead and ask whatever you need.”

“Wind God?” Qin Lie’s eyebrows jumped as the air around his body turned cold.

The boy’s legs shuddered somewhat as he quickly backpedaled a bit from Qin Lie. The slovenly look on his face was gone as he seriously said, “Those who stand at the top of the Wind Agents are given the title of ‘Wind God,’ and I am a man who aims to become a Wind God! A-although I’m not one yet, I will definitely become a Wind God in the future!” he exclaimed with conviction.

Qin Lie’s expression was indifferent as he nodded. He said, “Wind God? Alright, I’d like to hear any news related to Nebula Pavilion. What can you tell me?”

“How long ago?” The boy’s face turned serious, as if he had become a changed man the moment the matter of work was brought up.

“News from four months ago.”

“A Profound Grade One spirit stone is too much…”

“Tell me first.”

“Right.”

The youth sucked in a deep breath and began to narrate in a serious manner with great detail, “Nebula Pavilion is the vassal force under Dark Asura Hall. They are stationed along with Shattered Ice Manor at Icestone City. The place is very close to the Arctic Mountain Range and its former Pavilion Master is called Tu Mo…”

“Get to the point!” Qin Lie yelled coldly, “I want to know the big incidents!”

“Big incidents, is it? Okay!” The youngster paused and thought for a moment, “Four months ago, the biggest incident that has happened was the position of Pavilion Master being handed over. Dark Asura Hall’s First Hall Master, Yuan Tianya, had unexpected arrived at Nebula Pavilion. Liu Yuntao had replaced Tu Mo as the Pavilion Master, and the elder Du Haitian had gloriously ascended as the Vice Pavilion Master…

“A relatively unknown young man at Nebula Pavilion named Qin Lie challenged Du Haitian on the streets and killed Du Haitian, Du Jiaolan, Du Fei, Du Heng, Fang Tong, Pei An, and twenty more Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners. Severely injured, Qin Lie had escaped to a spirit material shop called Li’s Shop, and the First Hall Master, Yuan Tianya, had brought Liu Yuntao and many other powerful men to surround the place in attempt to kill Qin Lie…

“A strange man named Li Mu appeared out of nowhere, killed Dark Asura Hall’s commander with an invincible posture and

brought Qin Lie and a huge wolfdog, rumored to be the Icestone Snow Wolf King, out of the city. No one dared to stop them. After they left the city, they haven't been seen since.

"This was a rather hot news recently, and every force knows about this. After the First Hall Master Yuan Tianya had returned to Dark Asura Hall he had been looking out for any information regarding Li Mu, but to this day no one can confirm this man's identity.

"This is the biggest incident that has occurred in the past four months. Almost everyone knows about it, so it isn't worth a Profound Grade One spirit stone."

Incredibly, the young boy's story was completely correct. It was as if he had personally been there and had clearly seen each critical event.

"Naturally this isn't what I'm asking about." Qin Lie nodded on the inside. "What I want to ask is where Tu Mo and his people have gone to, how is Nebula Pavilion doing currently, whether the Ling Family are still at Nebula Pavilion, and Ye Yangqiu, Han Qingrui, and Kang Hui's movements..."

"So that's the information you're looking for."

The young boy exclaimed in realization before continuing, "Tu Mo and his younger brother, Tu Ze, are now at Dark Asura Hall working under the Second Hall Master. They are given great regard by Second Hall Master Cao Xuanrui. The rest of the Ling

Family have gone to Seven Fiends Valley's Dark Fiend Valley as the Ling sisters' servants and live as a small force around Dark Fiend Valley.

"Ye Yangqiu is still working at Nebula Pavilion. He is a man of justice since the beginning, and Liu Yuntao also believes that he is still helpful in managing Nebula Pavilion's Discipline Hall which is why he continues to use him. However, the other two men, Han Qingrui and Kang Hui, stood against Liu Yuntao in the past, so both of them left Nebula Pavilion, and under Armament Sect's Pan Jueming's recommendation, they are temporarily staying in Seven Fiends Valley's domain as Armament Sect's outer sect foreign delegate. They may come to Armament Sect in the future for work..."

"The Ling sisters of Dark Fiend Valley. Do you have information on these two?" Qin Lie's eyes abruptly lit up.

The young boy was shocked. He felt that the sharp aura on Qin Lie had abruptly increased. He subconsciously took a few steps backwards again and answered in a hurry, "I do, I do! The younger one is still at Dark Fiend Valley and is cultivating her spirit arts under Granny Jiu's guidance, and as for the elder one... she slipped out of the valley and went missing. Because of this, Granny Jiu was furious, and she sent people to look people for her everywhere."

Ling Yushi slipped out of Dark Fiend Valley? Where did she go?

Qin Lie was shocked on the inside, and after a moment of thought, he suddenly had an idea and guessed that Ling Yushi might have gone to look for him...

Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian had gone to Dark Asura Hall. The Ling Family clansmen had moved into Seven Fiends Valley. Ye Yangqiu was still holding a position at Nebula Pavilion, so naturally, Gao Yu was there as well. Han Qingrui had become Armament Sect's outer sect delegate. Kang Zhi and Han Feng had likely left Nebula Pavilion as well, and since Granny Jiu was famed as a master who protects her own, even if Ling Yushi had left Dark Fiend Valley, there shouldn't be anyone who would dare do anything to her.

—Especially when Ling Family's true nemesis, Du Haitian's entire family, had been killed by him.

Liu Yuntao and Wei Xing did not hold any grudge against the Ling Family. They would definitely not be stupid enough to become Ling Yushi's enemy and provoke Granny Jiu's insane retaliation.

So judging from this matter, if Ling Yushi could not find him, then naturally, she would obediently return to Dark Fiend Valley and continue her cultivation.

After finding out all he wanted to know, Qin Lie slowly relaxed. Finally, he could stay at Armament Sect in peace. "Wind God, is it? Hmm, I am very satisfied with the information you brought me. This Profound Grade One spirit stone is a bonus. I hope that you can pay attention to anything regarding the Dark Fiend Valley's Ling sisters for me when you're free. I'll come look for you in the future."

“Thank you very much.” The young boy accepted the two Profound Grade One spirit stones and bowed with the utmost gratitude. “Don’t worry, I will pay extra attention to any information regarding those two sisters! Hehe, I knew at first glance that you are a character of extraordinary taste and that you enjoy twins… I get you. I totally get you!”

—He had assumed Qin Lie as a character who had a special fetish for twins.

Qin Lie nodded and did not explain further. Just as he was about to leave, an idea struck his mind as he asked, “Have you ever heard of the name Qin Shan?”

“Qin Shan?” The young boy shook his head. “No, I’ve never heard of him.”

“Oh. In that case, please watch out for this as well. If there is someone who is called Qin Shan, and he is also an artificer, then do everything in your power to gather all the information on him that you can. I can pay more for it.” Qin Lie also knew that it was a slim hope, but he still seriously instructed him. “I hope Wind God will watch out for this.”

“Got it.” The young boy slapped his chest in assurance.

Chapter 133: The Twelve Spirit Pattern Pillars

On the deep ice land at the bottom of the Arctic Mountain Range.

The ice peaks stood, and the ice glaciers never melted. A cruel, cold energy covered this place and caused it to be frozen without life.

Qin Lie was sitting on the top of a small glacier like a statue made from ice as he studied the frost picture scroll inside the Soul Suppressing Orb with his eyes closed. He was feeling the cold essence in the picture scroll and silently understanding the changes inside his dantian's spirit sea.

In the early stages of the Natal Opening Realm, the spirit sea would form three Natal Palaces. Only when the three Natal Palaces were all filled with power would one have the qualifications to create new Natal Palaces and step into the middle stage of the Natal Opening Realm.

At present, he had not comprehended the core of the frost concept, but whenever he studied the frost picture scroll inside the Soul Suppressing Orb, the two Natal Palaces inside him would absorb the icy energies of this icy land which would condense into cold spirit energy and gather in his Natal Palaces.

Of the three Natal Palaces, one was filled with furious lightning and thunder while the other two were extremely cold, filled with a special cold energy.

“For the middle stage of the Natal Opening Realm, I will need to create three more Natal Palaces...”

An unknown amount of time later, Qin Lie opened his eyes. His gaze was bone-chillingly cold as he quietly murmured with a creased brow, “If I can’t comprehend the essence of the frost picture scroll, I can’t grasp the method of channeling frost power. Consequently, I can’t use the power of the two frost Natal Palaces. This might possibly... become a chain on me. If I cannot break this restraint, I will be unable to create new Natal Palaces and break through to the middle stage.”

What entered his eyes were the cruel and cold glaciers. Within them were ancient spirit beasts that were frozen inside.

“Are these spirit beasts... dead or d=alive?” A thought suddenly rose in Qin Lie’s mind. He looked at the shadows of the enormous spirit beasts inside the glaciers and couldn’t help but feel coldness. “If the ice here melted, I wonder if these ancient spirit beasts, which have been frozen for so many years, would open their eyes?”

When he thought of this, Qin Lie’s expression became grave. Then, as he looked at the colossal spirit beasts inside the glaciers, he felt a sliver of uncertainty.

Within the scope of his knowledge, these enormous spirit beasts that were like little mountains must possess immeasurable power.

“Rank Five? Rank Six? Or Rank Seven?

He didn't dare to imagine it, nor did he dare to imagine which force on this continent could stand up against these spirit beasts if they woke up. Who would face the onslaught of these terrifying spirit beasts?

"They should be dead..."

After reassuring himself, he estimated the time. He took out the Eye of Frost and activated the crux.

The cold energy wrapped around him as though it was intelligent. With a strong wave of dizziness, his figure slowly disappeared.

Ten seconds later, he appeared inside a little yard in Armament City. Then, he put away the Eye of Frost and took his spirit tablets, spirit stones, and clothing with him as he walked to Armament Sect's outer sect.

This was the third day and also the day he was to go to Armament Sect to report in.

"Sir, who are you?" questioned two guards in front of the sect gates of Armament Sect.

"Qin Bing, reporting in," responded Qin Lie as he stood at the gates of Armament Sect.

“What is your number?”

“Two hundred and thirty.”

“Two hundred and thirty?” A guard froze and then suddenly chuckled. He nodded and said, “Go in, someone will take you to your residence.”

Qin Lie nodded aloofly.

A while later, an outer sect disciple of Armament Sect lead Qin Lie past beautiful buildings to Flame Volcano’s base.

Rows of stone towers made from limestone stood at the base of Flame Volcano. In addition, there was a large lake in the center of the crowd of towers. The lake water was clear enough that the bottom could be seen with many fish swimming around.

There was a circular plaza beside the lake that was paved in limestone, and twelve stone pillars stood above that very plaza. There were many exquisite patterns and diagrams of flora and fauna carved on the pillars which appeared extremely beautiful and seemed to hold a special meaning.

Many outer sect disciples of Armament Sect were scattered around the pillars on the plaza as they focused on the diagrams on the stone pillars. They seemed to be concentrating on inscribing something with the spirit tablets on their hands...

After Qin Lie came over, he also looked at the inscriptions on the stone pillars. His eyes lit up and he thought, “Are these also spirit diagrams?”

“What are you looking at?” The outer sect disciple leading Qin Lie had a clear expression of disdain as he mocked, “Can you even understand the diagrams inscribed on the spirit pattern pillars on the plaza?”

This person then had an expression of reverence on his face. “These spirit patterns were personally carved by Armament Sect’s first sect leader and contain great profoundness. Only those with true intelligence can comprehend the profound meaning from the inscriptions of flora and fauna.”

“Supposedly, the spirit patterns on the spirit pattern pillars were ones that the sect founder had copied from other places. He imprinted them onto the spirit pattern pillars for himself and the disciples of the sect to understand, so they could feel the wonders of the diagrams on the spirit pattern pillars...”

“Armament Sect was founded nine hundred years ago. Generations have passed, and we have taken in new disciples annually. After all these years, there have been more than thirty thousand people that have come here to experience the wonders of the spirit pattern pillar’s diagrams. Some people stayed for decades by these pillars... but there has only been twenty-seven people that have gained from the spirit pattern pillars in these nine hundred years!”

“All twenty-seven of these people were outstanding artificers in

Armament Sect's history and are the pride of Armament Sect. They are the true foundation of Armament Sect on this land!" This person's expression was grave. "At present, every spirit diagram of Armament Sect is the product of the genius of these twenty-seven people, formed through slowly comprehending the diagrams on the spirit pattern pillars."

"These twelve spirit pattern pillars are Armament Sect's foundation. All the spirit diagrams of Armament Sect come from them. The strength of Armament Sect also originates from these," he said lowly.

Listening to the other's explanation, Qin Lie's expression shifted, and he looked even more attentively at the twelve spirit pattern pillars.

The twelve spirit pattern pillars were positioned at various parts of the plaza. Their location seemed to contain a hidden meaning. Qin Lie looked closely and his eyes suddenly lit up.

In the past in Herb Mountain at Ling Town, his grandpa, Qin Shan, had once set up eight stone pillars. The stone pillars reached the ceiling of the cavern and guided the weakened lightning power to help him cultivate Heavenly Thunder Eradication.

The setup of the eight stone pillars inside Herb Mountain's cavern was an octagon and not exactly the same as the position of these twelve spirit pattern pillars. But he looked closer at the twelve spirit pattern pillars on this plaza and found that the position of the central eight pillars also seemed to be a faintly discernible octagon.

“Is there any special meaning?” He was slightly curious and noted it down before he looked at the diagrams on the spirit pattern pillars.

The twelve spirit pattern pillars were all more than ten meters tall. They were also extremely thick and would need five people linking hands to surround it.

Different diagrams and lines were inscribed onto each spirit pattern pillar to form all kinds of strange spirit beasts, mountains and rivers, flowers, and beasts in flight. The irregular diagrams did not contain any meaningful lines and even had pictures of demons and evil spirits… it included thousands of things.

Qin Lie gazed for a while and found the diagrams did not have any connection to normal spirit diagrams, but they seemed to hold the same meaning as the frost picture scroll inside his Soul Suppressing Orb.

“In the last thirty years, only two people have comprehended the wonders of the spirit pattern pillars and gained new understandings from three of the twelve spirit pattern pillars.” This person looked coldly at Qin Lie. “One of them is Elder Mo Hai. Twenty years ago, he sat under the spirit pattern pillars for three whole years. He comprehended a new diagram from one of the spirit pattern pillars… right now, Mo Hai is the First Elder in the inner sect! The second is Senior Sister Tang Siqi. Four years ago, she miraculously entered the world inside the spirit pattern pillar when she was looking at the diagrams. She also entered the inner world inside two different spirit pattern pillars one after

another…”

This person’s expression became even colder. “We do not know what Senior Sister Tang gained from that. Only Sect Leader and Elder Mo Hai knows what Senior Sister Tang gained. We only know that after that, Senior Sister Tang became the most talented disciple in Armament Sect. She can use all the rare spirit materials in the sect as she wishes. Sect Leader and Mo Hai teaches her personally and uses the power of the entire sect to nurture her.”

“She is the greatest treasure of Armament Sect and we definitely do not allow those with ambitious and ruthless hearts to disrupt the calm of her inner heart!”

Qin Lie’s brow creased as he snorted with a cold face, but did not say anything.

The person lead Qin Lie to a stone tower near the plaza and gave him his identity card. Then he said, “In the future, you will be here. Your contribution points depend on how much you contribute to Armament Sect. The sect will have elders lecturing about artifact forging at regular intervals. If you want to listen to the class, you must pay contribution points. You can also use contribution points to pay for the books on forging and spirit materials in the outer sect…”

He introduced the rules of Armament Sect’s outer sect. Qin Lie listened indifferently. He found that it was almost the exact same as Nebula Pavilion’s and there was no novelty.

“How do I obtain contribution points?” Before this person left, Qin Lie asked his only question.

“Work to accumulate contribution points.” This person’s expression was impatient. “Cutting spirit materials, smelting simple artifacts, preparing spirit herbs, spirit stones, and other things to gain contribution points. You do not need to worry, Senior Sister Tang will plan missions for you. Each mission will have a corresponding number of contribution points. As long as you can complete them in the time allotted and reach the amount required…” He left with a strange laugh.

Qin Lie circled around inside the stone tower. He found that the tower had two floors. The upper level was a resting room and had a wash room and bedroom. There was also a very small cultivation room.

The lower level had a storage room and a forging workshop. Inside the workshop, there were some simple tools. In addition, there was a small guest room.

Just as he was examining the stone tower, he smelled a strong stench from the stone tower next to his. Yi Yuan’s sighs occasionally could be heard. “This vicious woman actually is making me do this kind of thing. How much do you hate me?”

Qin Lie was shocked. He put his clothing down and went next door. Then, he saw Yi Yuan was squeezing the bile from a spirit beast’s gall bladder in the little workshop. The stench was coming from that black bile…

There were many spirit beast gall bladders next to Yi Yuan. The stench inside the little workshop was extremely powerful. When Qin Lie neared, he felt his guts wanting to heave.

Seeing him appear, Yi Yuan squeezed out a smile that was uglier than crying. “This is the mission that Lian Rou has arranged for me. It is going to be terrible. I don’t know how long I will stink for. Brother Qin, did you just arrive? Ha, Tang Siqi will definitely not rest. I think your missions definitely won’t be more comfortable than mine…” Yi Yuan’s eyes were full of schadenfreude as though he wanted Qin Lie to immediately suffer together will him.

Chapter 134: Hard Labor

“Come, over here. Carry everything over!” Tang Siqi called out.

She wore a rosy-red, tight-skinned, long skirt, and it perfectly outlined the wondrous curves of her attractive body. The three Armament Sect outer sect disciples watching her from the back nearly shot fire from their eyes.

Those three outer sect disciples were carrying over two large boxes of bones to the front door of Qin Lie’s stone tower.

“You may leave.” Tang Siqi waved her hands and sent the three reluctant outer sect disciples away. Then, she yelled out loudly, “Number two hundred and thirty! Number two hundred and thirty!”

“She’s calling for you.” Yi Yuan laughed gloatingly inside the stone tower. “I knew she was about to show up.”

Qin Lie frowned and helplessly left. He returned to his own stone tower.

There were two big boxes in front of the entrance of the stone tower. The boxes were filled with gray-white bones. Many of the bones were smooth, white, and clean, but there were also some that had rotted—gray-white on the surface but glowing with a faint, phosphorous light.

“Help me grind down these bones into dust. It has to be thinner than fine sand. Half a kilogram of bone dust will be worth a single contribution point.”

Tang Siqi looked smilingly at him with ill intentions in her eyes. “You have five days to complete the task. If you exceed that time, then it will be considered a failure, and you will not... get a single contribution point. Yep, better watch out, I’ll be back in five days.” Once finished, she giggled and left cheerfully.

With a scowl, Qin Lie carried the two big boxes back to the stone tower and, after pausing a moment, got to work.

Bone dust was a commonly used spirit material. It could be fused into the interior of many artifacts and was used to enhance the compatibility of artifacts. It made a lot of special artifacts harder.

In addition, bone dust could also be merged into spirit armor and increase its defense. It could even be used to make medicine...

Qin Lie knew that his days in Armament Sect would definitely not be calm ever since he offended Tang Siqi three days ago and had mentally prepared himself a while back. Thus, he conscientiously worked with the tools he had to break the bones and grind them into dust with a grinder. Then, he loaded the end product into a wooden barrel.

“Zzt!”

A phosphorous spark flew out from a bone and landed on the back of his hand. Part of the back of his hand painfully and suddenly decayed.

The stench of the phosphorous fire spread out inside the small workshop, and after sniffing it a few times, Qin Lie's expression turned slightly pale. He felt upset and could not calm down any longer.

"It stinks way too badly at my place so I came here to rest and take a look at what you're working at." Sometime in the evening, Yi Yuan barged into Qin Lie's stone tower with an ungodly stench, speaking while checking out Qin Lie's task. "Grinding bone dust? This is far simpler than what I have, doesn't look like Tang Siqi mistreated you, did she?"

"Look closer!" Qin Lie said chillingly.

Yi Yuan walked up and focused his attention on Qin Lie's two arms. He noticed that there were many bloody wounds there. The back of his hands and his palms—they had all been corroded by phosphorous fire.

"Phosphorous poison?" Yi Yuan's expression changed.

Qin Lie nodded.

Yi Yuan's expression turned ugly. "From the looks of it, part of the bones came from a place with strong dark energy, and they

must have been there for quite some time for phosphorous poison to form inside the bones. The corrosiveness of phosphorous poison is incredibly strong. If they spilled onto the human body, then your skin would fester on the spot. Moreover, the smell of phosphorous poison makes it easier for someone to become… upset or even incite a fiendish rebound. It causes people to lose control over their minds…"

He sucked in a deep breath. "It looks like your work is even trickier than mine."

After a pause Yi Yuan nodded once and said again, "…It's not really a surprise. You nearly burned Tang Siqi's entire dress in front of a hundred people, and even though she obviously hates you, she had no choice but to hug you tightly. It may be Tang Siqi's most embarrassing moment in her life. If she actually let you off easy, then something would be truly amiss."

"Do we have to listen to their every instruction?" Qin Lie asked coldly.

"They're the disciples from the inner sect, and… they even went out of their way to choose you and me as assistants. According to the rules of Armament Sect, we actually do have to listen to their every order." Yi Yuan smiled bitterly. "Unless you and I can become inner sect disciples and share the same status as them, then we will not need to listen to their orders."

"How do you become an inner sect disciple?" Qin Lie asked again.

“You need to be acknowledged by the elders of the inner sect, prove that you have the talent to become a powerful artificer, and show your potential in artificing…” Yi Yuan smiled while looking at Qin Lie. “Of course, there is also the easiest method and fastest shortcut.”

“Which is?”

“If you can gain something from the twelve spirit pattern pillars and incite a reaction from anyone of them… then you can immediately enter the inner sect and even acquire the acknowledgement of all important characters within the inner sect. They will treat you as Armament Sect’s future!”

“Spirit pattern pillars…”

“Hehe, I’m just saying that for the heck of it, you don’t have to take it seriously. For the past thirty years, Mo Hai and Tang Siqi were the only ones to have gained something from the spirit pattern pillars. Every day, there are Armament Sect disciples who attempt to gain something from the spirit pattern pillars, but in the end, they are just wasting their time. Without talent or exceptional potential, don’t even bother dreaming about acquiring a great opportunity from the spirit pattern pillars.

Not caring about the ungodly stench on his body, Yi Yuan sat down on his own, and consoled Qin Lie, “Just bear it for the moment. Those two women are just pissed off for now which is why they took it out on us. Once they’ve calmed down, they won’t continue to make our lives difficult any longer.”

Qin Lie kept quiet. In his head, the profound ice picture scroll appeared again and an idea regarding those twelve spirit pattern pillars came to mind.

Half a year ago, after he had successfully inscribed the Spirit Storage, Spirit Gathering, Amplification, and Strengthening Diagrams, he could vaguely feel that the Soul Suppressing Orb's second door was about to be unsealed. He felt that he would be able to break through the seal very soon and uncover the world behind it.

However, the frost picture scroll that had evolved from the frost concept had suddenly turned into a diagram in that world, and the door that was about to be opened seemed to be sealed tight yet again.

It was as if he would only be able to get through to the next area by completely learning the essence of the frost picture scroll and all of the diagrams and pictures in this world.

"The frost picture is very similar to the twelve spirit diagrams. If I can comprehend the essence of the frost picture, then maybe I can understand the diagram inscribed on the twelve spirit pattern pillars as well. Then, I can easily enter the Armament Sect's inner sect," Qin Lie inwardly thought as he decided to spend more effort on comprehending the frost picture.

"C'mon, let's go and get something to eat. I'm starving," Yi Yuan suddenly said after nagging for a moment.

“Does eating require contribution points?” Qin Lie came to.

“Not really. Heh, of course it’s their responsibility to provide food and housing.” Yi Yuan gave a cool smile and pulled Qin Lie outside. “Just follow me. I know where the dining hall is. If the two of us go in together, then I guarantee that, whether they be human or god, they will stay away.”

He made it clear that he had no intentions of bathing or changing his clothes, and he did not allow Qin Lie to clear the smell of phosphorous poison from his body either. The two gods of plagues then rushed to the dining hall together.

There was the ungodly stench of spirit beast bile on Yi Yuan’s body, and Qin Lie’s arms were still riddled with the bloody wounds corroded by the phosphorous poison which was a kind of sour stench on its own. When the two headed into the dining hall, every Armament Sect martial practitioner who met them covered their noses and escaped far, far away in disgust.

When the duo arrived at Armament Sect’s dining hall, the dining hall, which originally had the smell of food, immediately became enveloped by a terrible stink.

“Dammit, who the fuck fell into a shithole and came in without washing themselves?” The disciples eating inside the dining hall abruptly shot up from their seats, covered their noses and broke into loud curses.

“It’s that number ninety-seven from that day! And number two hundred and thirty!” The person’s face chilled as he cried out, “My seniors brothers, these two are the perverted bastards who insulted Senior Sister Tang and Senior Sister Lian Rou, and that number two hundred and thirty even touched Senior Sister Tang with his evil claws. They should die ten thousand times over!”

“Dammit, so it’s those two bastards!”

“As expected, they look just as shitty as the shit on them. These two fuckers must have come here on purpose to ambush us. They’re planning to kill us with their stench!”

“Teach them a lesson!”

“They have been an eyesore since a long ago!”

Seven or eight Armament Sect outer sect disciples rolled up their sleeves and angrily rushed over. Spirit energy surged from their bodies even as the random assortment of spirit artifacts swung down beforehand.

“Ding ling ling!”

The sweet sound of a bell rang, and sparks of cold light appeared from the sky. When examined closely, one would discover that these star-like cold lights came from metal sheets about the size of a fingernail.

These metal sheets were sharpened razor-thin. Cold light glittered off of them, and the spirit energy wave the sheets emanated was not weak at all.

“Bang bang!”

Once the metal sheets flew over and landed on the stone table, the stones had exploded upon impact. It took only one glance to know that its power was impressive.

Qin Lie weighed the odds in his heart, and just when he was hesitating about whether he should use Heavenly Thunder Eradication or not, Yi Yuan abruptly stepped forwards and coolly opened an umbrella.

The umbrella enveloped both him and Qin Lie as the metal sheets fell like show and shot at the umbrella’s surface. Sparks flew ignited upon contact.

Yi Yuan let out a gentle smile on his face, but there was now a sharpness in his eyes as he softly said to Qin Lie, “It’s likely that all of the outer sect disciples have a bone to pick with us. If we don’t display some of our strength, then we may face an endless wave of nuisances in Armament Sect.”

Once he finished speaking, Yi Yuan turned the handle as rays of purple light suddenly shot from the sides of the umbrella.

The purple light was like a sword beam or an arrow, shooting in

every direction and causing the Armament Sect disciples' expressions to immediately shift. At once, they put on some fine spirit armor, and it only took a glance to realize that many of these sets of armor were of extraordinary quality. They were of much better compared to Dark Asura Hall's Beastskin Armor.

However, the moment they were struck by the purple light, the Armament Sect disciples still staggered backwards and turned pale.

After three people of slightly lower realms were struck dead center in their chest by the purple light, there were obvious cracks on their spirit armor. There was even blood at the corner of their lips.

Qin Lie was right under the umbrella. He could see how the spirit energy inside the umbrella flowed when Yi Yuan spun the handle and felt that Yi Yuan's aura had changed out of nowhere. It was a wave that was as wide and dangerous as the sea.

"The late stage of the Natal Opening Realm and nine Natal Palaces. This Yi Yuan... is not simple." Qin Lie was moved on the inside.

"We are all Armament Sect's outer sect disciples. Why must we fight and kill each other. Isn't it nicer to just hang out together peacefully?" Yi Yuan's smile was brilliant as he looked at those injured outer sect disciples and said, "I personally do not like to fight, but I also dislike it when someone has it out for me. So please restrain yourself in the future, or I may not always hold back in the future."

“How boastful!” While Yi Yuan threatened the crowd, a roar came from outside the dining hall as a figure burst into the fray.

Chapter 135: Pang Feng

A golden clump of light that was like a rolling stone and as bright as fireworks abruptly crashed into the umbrella in Yi Yuan's hands.

"Bang bang!"

Rich light scattered from the umbrella in Yi Yuan's hands as a terribly heavy pressure penetrated the umbrella's surface and pressed down on him like a mountain.

Yi Yuan groaned once. His figure shuddered as an unhealthy red appeared on his face.

Under the umbrella, Qin Lie was also jarred to the point that his knees felt weak. It was as if someone had shoved him down, and he almost couldn't endure it and was about to drop to the ground.

"Senior Brother Pang Feng!"

"Senior Brother Pang Feng is here!"

The Armament Sect outer sect disciples that had been shot by Yi Yuan with the purple light from his umbrella promptly cried out in pleasant surprise. A trace of fearful respect could be seen in their eyes.

A young man who was just over two meters tall suddenly showed up at the entrance to the dining hall with a handsome and broad face while wearing dazzling golden armor.

The moment he showed up, the dining hall became filled with the energy of the keen metal element, and the person himself was like an unsheathed blade giving off a sharp feeling.

“Pang Feng…” Yi Yuan frowned and withdrew his umbrella when he saw the young man who had unexpectedly appeared. He softly warned Qin Lie, “Careful.”

“Were you the one spouting nonsense just now, Yi Yuan from the Purple Mist Sea?” Pang Feng strode over to them in wide steps with a wild and domineering aura emanating from his body. He glanced coldly at Yi Yuan, then turned to stare at Qin Lie once before saying, “Every year there will be new disciples who enter the sect, but there aren’t many who are as rude as you are. You haven’t even passed the exams yet, and yet you dare hit on the disciples of the inner sect. You have no idea of the immensity of heaven and earth!”

“Whatever we do is our own business. You need not worry for us, Senior Brother Pang.” Yi Yuan’s smile was warm.

“It looks like there are quite the number of thorns this time.” Pang Feng snorted once. “As your senior brother, I have the responsibility to teach you some manners.”

Pang Feng clenched his fists. He wore two exquisite and

luxurious golden boxing gloves on his fists, and they were obviously tailor-made for him since it perfectly fit both of his hands.

He punched his fists together as golden light radiated from the boxing gloves. A heavy and frenzied atmosphere abruptly exploded outwards.

“Golden Stone Fall!”

Pang Feng let out a low shout before suddenly unleashing some kind of boxing style. While his two fists swung at them, the dazzling golden fist imprints solidified into golden rolling stones.

The many fist-sized rolling stones all shone with a golden light. They were formed through pure metallic energy, and like a meteor, they charged down at Yi Yuan and Qin Lie’s heads with great force.

“Mist Form!”

Yi Yuan’s smile persevered. He channeled a spirit art conjuring purple smog from his body.

The purple smog rolled like actual waves as they miraculously condensed into a blurry, purple spirit beast. The spirit beast made a swallowing motion, and it actually consumed the golden rolling stones one after another.

“Bang bang!”

Qin Lie stood right beside Yi Yuan, and he could see clouds of golden light falling to the ground from his sleeves, causing the dining hall’s stone floor to shatter and explode.

From other people’s point of view, when the thick purple smog had condensed, Qin Lie and Yi Yuan could no longer be seen. It was only because Qin Lie was so close that he could see that even though Yi Yuan’s expression was relaxed, he was already channeling every bit of spirit energy in his body to resist Pang Feng’s rolling, golden meteors.

He could also see that Yi Yuan was growing tired…

“Pang Feng’s cultivation is in the late stage of the Natal Opening Realm, and he is only one step away from breaking into the Manifestation Realm. His golden spirit energy is extremely profound. I can’t resist his attacks indefinitely.” Just when Qin Lie was about to interfere, Yi Yuan lowered his voice and said this. Then, he said to everyone else, “Never mind, let’s go first.”

The thick purple smog suddenly shrunk, and the spirit beast formed from the smog also shifted towards the closest door. “Senior Brother Pang, we’ll be moving ahead for business. No need to send us off.” Yi Yuan’s voice appeared from inside the smog, and when the voice had fleeted outside the dining hall, the purple smog had also slowly cleared away.

Naturally, the horrible stench filling the dining hall disappeared.

Only then did Pang Feng turn his head and talk to the person behind him. “Shishi, those two bastards haved departed, left and the stench has also disappeared. Come and have a meal.”

“Mn.” A soft-looking girl sharing nearly the same looks as Pang Feng obediently walked in from the outside.

“So Shishi has returned from the inner sect. No wonder Senior Brother Pang became so angry at the two newcomers all of a sudden,” said someone in realization.

“Pang Feng loves his sister the most. He accompanied his sister to Armament Sect because he was afraid she would be bullied. Those two smelly bastards walked into the dining hall to cause trouble and stopped Shishi from entering dining hall. That naturally that pissed off Pang Feng. Otherwise, with his mature demeanor, he might not have interfered.”

“Mn, they totally deserve it.”

Everyone was discussing about the matter.

Meanwhile, Qin Lie and Yi Yuan had returned to Qin Lie’s stone tower. Yi Yuan let out a sigh and said, “It was meant to intimidate the outer sect disciples, but I didn’t expect that we would run into Pang Feng. I guess we were unlucky.”

“Pang Feng?” Lowering his head, Qin Lie thought for a moment and commented, “His nine Natal Palaces are filled with energy, his

body is as tough as stone as steel, and the spirit art he cultivates is strong and overbearing. He's a character alright."

"Of course." Yi Yuan laughed bitterly. "Pang Feng is Cloud Sky Mountain's most talented fellow for the past ten years. His cultivation of 'Golden Stone Art' is superb, and he is reputed in Cloud Sky Mountain as a person that is 'full of gold.' The Mountain Lord of Cloud Sky Mountain also has great expectations of him. When he had expressed his intention to accompany his sister to Armament Sect, everyone in Cloud Sky Mountain grew anxious. It was said that the Mountain Lord of Cloud Sky Mountain even talked to him personally, hoping that he would stay at Cloud Sky Mountain while promising to spend everything to cultivate him..."

Qin Lie listened closely.

Yi Yuan then shook his head. "Pang Feng's parents were famous Cloud Sky Mountain martial practitioners in the past, but unfortunately, they died in battle a long time ago. He didn't have any other relatives except his single sister Pang Shishi. For many years the two depended on each other, and he has practically raised his sister singlehandedly. In his eyes, his sister is everything to him."

"Pang Shishi is interested in artifact forging and wants to become an artificer. Since she wanted to come to Armament Sect, Pang Feng accompanied her. Because of this, he even rejected the offer from Cloud Sky Mountain's Mountain Lord to raise him..."

Yi Yuan paused for a moment before continuing, "He is a

respectable fellow. It must have been because Pang Shishi was also outside the dining hall and wanted to eat that he had attacked out of rage today. Our smell... probably affected Pang Shishi which was why he was incited."

Yi Yuan grew embarrassed, "Um, there is also the fact that I may not necessarily be Pang Feng's opponent and was in the wrong in the first place. Let's avoid him if we can."

Qin Lie nodded on the inside and felt a little bit of good will towards Yi Yuan. He also committed Pang Feng to memory.

"Both Pang Feng and Pang Shishi were outer sect disciples at first when they arrived together at Armament Sect. But soon after, Pang Shishi's talent in artifact forging shone, and she gained smooth entry to the inner sect while the elders of the inner sect placed great expectations on her." Yi Yuan then started again, "Pang Feng has no interest in artifact forging and wholeheartedly wished to pursue the martial way. His improvement at the outer sect was also respectable which gained the favor of an outer sect elder. It is possible that he may become an outer sect elder in the future.

"Outer sect elders may not necessarily love forging or have the ability to forge artifacts." Yi Yuan explained, "Armament Sect is scattered in all areas of Armament Pavilion, and they need to be watched over by capable personnel. The transportation of spirit artifacts also need to be protected by powerful practitioners, and there are also a number of inner sect disciples who are good at forging artifacts but dislike fighting. So when they head out, they also need to be guarded...

“Therefore, Armament Sect needs powerful practitioners to watch over the sect and powerful martial power support them. The outer sect elders of Armament Sect will fulfill this role. Pang Feng had come for the position of outer sect elder the moment he entered Armament Pavilion. He is ready to use force to protect his sister Pang Shishi so she can focus on artifact forging without any worries.”

Yi Yuan smiled at Qin Lie. “I’m not interested in artifact forging, and it was only for the past half a year that I’ve seeked out an artificer on my side to learn some knowledge to pass the entry exam. My goal is the same as Pang Feng, actually. We are both aiming for the position of outer sect elder. He did it for family, to protect Pang Shishi. Whereas I did it for love, to protect my Lian Rou in the future...”

“How about you? Are you really here to learn artifact forging, or are you here for Tang Siqi?” Yi Yuan suddenly asked.

“For artifact forging,” answered Qin Lie.

Yi Yuan let out suspicious laughter before nodding his head and responding, “There is no conflict between learning how to forge artifacts and chasing skirts. From my point of view, you’re here more for Tang Siqi, haha.” He slapped Qin Lie’s shoulders and earnestly said, “Brother Qin, your path will be harder than mine. That Tang Siqi is the brightest pearl in Armament Sect and desired by god knows how many people. She is far harder to chase after than Lian Rou, and your competitors also number far more than mine. If I’m not mistaken, that Liang Shaoyang from Dark Shadow

Tower ... has also come for Tang Siqi, so Brother Qin had better be mentally prepared."

Qin Lie's expression was cool and he did not say anything in response to Yi Yuan's words.

For the next five days Qin Lie had covered up both his hands and arms with gauze, and enduring the debilitating effects of the phosphorous poison inside the bones, he focused his mind on meticulously grinding the bones into fine powder that was many times tinier than even fine sand. He worked with even harsher requirements than those Tang Siqi had imposed on him.

During these five days he had temporarily stopped his cultivation of the martial way.

While he was focusing on grinding bones, he attempted to enter the state of Thoughtless Tranquility to try to understand the wonders of the frost picture scroll with his soul inside the Soul Suppressing Orb.

While he was working, he was like an ice sculpture. His life force was completely hidden and cold energy emanated from his body, turning the entire small workshop ice cold.

Sometimes, his soul consciousness would turn flighty, and it was as if he had entered the world inside the frost picture scroll...

It was as if he had been instantly transported beneath the Arctic

Mountain Range, as if he was standing naked amidst a world of snow and ice, experiencing the chilling feeling of having his bones and flesh eaten away and his heart invaded bit by bit.

"Perhaps I can try sketching the frost picture inside a spirit tablet just like inscribing a spirit diagram. I can inscribe it inside a spirit tablet... and treat it like a spirit diagram." While in the state of Thoughtless Tranquility, no emotions surged inside his eyes as he mechanically grinded the bones. However, the fluctuation inside his mind was incredibly strong.

"Number two hundred and thirty, calling for Qin Bing! I finally know your name!" With a mind to see Qin Lie embarrassed, Tang Siqi radiantly stood in front of the entrance and cried out once before pushing the stone door open and barging right in. "Qin Bing! It's been five days, I'm here to check if you've completed the task. If you have not, then you won't get even a single contribution point!"

A bone chilling feeling rushed over as Tang Siqi's entire body began to quiver.

When she glanced inside the stone tower, she couldn't stop herself from crying out in surprise. Her eyes were filled with a strange light

Chapter 136: Super Trick?

It was as if it was snowing inside the stone tower. The bench, table, and floor, all made of stone, were frozen in ice, and the horrible cold someone to feel freezing cold all over.

Outside, sunlight was shining high, the lake was shimmering, and the temperature pleasant. In contrast, the inside of the tower was like the middle of winter—practically another world compared to the outside—and it caused Tang Siqi's expression to change as she couldn't help but cry out in surprise.

Inside the frozen little workshop, Qin Lie's eyes remained indifferent with not the slightest trace of emotion inside his eyes. It was as if he didn't notice her arrival at all.

Qin Lie continued to use the simple tools to break down the bones and grind them into bone dust. From beginning to end he never lifted his head to look at her even once, treating her like air...

Tang Siqi had been raised with love and care since she was a child, and ever since she arrived at Armament Sect, she was even beholden by all eyes. She was every young man's dream lover, and no matter where she went, she was the focus of attention. Her voluptuous figure was always chased by countless gazes, and she had never been ignored so thoroughly by anyone before.

She did not receive the passionate gaze a normal man should have from Qin Lie. The cool and indifferent look in Qin Lie's eyes

made her feel extremely uncomfortable, almost as if she was being humiliated.

However, when she bent over and looked at the bone dust inside the wooden barrel, her eyes lit up a little.

The bone dust grinded by Qin Lie inside the wooden barrel was like the ashes of burned yellow paper. This was true powder without a single granule shaped substance to be found.

Withstanding the cold inside the tower, Tang Siqi arrived next to the wooden barrel, extended a jade-like finger into it, and stirred for a little.

Her eyes grew brighter and brighter as she exclaimed softly in her heart, “This perfectly meets my needs! If I were to do it myself, this is about what I could manage!”

Recently, she required high quality bone dust to use with a few sets of spirit armor.

Even though she was so talented, as an Armament Sect inner sect disciple, she was still required to forge artifacts on time for Armament Sect. One of the reasons was to ensure their artifact forging skills didn’t decay, and the other was to increase Armament Sect’s income.

The spirit artifacts distributed by Armament Sect to each Armament Pavilion were also forged by disciples and elders in Armament Sect. The spirit stones earned were then used again on the sect to buy all kinds of rare spirit materials so the inner sect

disciples and elders could continue to research artifact forging and increase their artificer rank.

When Tang Siqi instructed Qin Lie to grind the bones, she didn't expect much. The bones she had people deliver were also a little special—they mostly came from the Land of Profound Yin.

It was easy for phosphorus poison to form within bones from Land of Profound Yin. They could easily hurt whoever was grinding them and even cause them to lose control of their mind.

Originally, she was not planning to use the bone dust Qin Lie had grinded. This was because she knew that it wasn't easy at all to grind down so many bones in just five days.

Even if he did succeed, the bone dust he grinded would never have met her expectations.

Therefore, she actually had a different arrangement set up already—she had asked Tong Jihua to look for a few older outer sect disciples to help her grind the bones.

Before she came here, she had looked through the bone dust grinded down by the outer sect disciples—they had achieved her minimum requirements.

Her trip here today was mainly to humiliate and make life hard for Qin Lie. She wanted to make him pay.

—She thought nothing about Qin Lie's bone dust from the beginning and had never planned to use it at all.

However, when she had felt the bone dust inside the wooden barrel grinded by Qin Lie for a while with a jade-like finger, she immediately changed her mind—she was going to use the bone dust Qin Lie grinded!

The quality of Qin Lie's bone dust was leagues better than any grinded the others. It had greatly exceeded her expectations, and was also the most suitable ingredient for her to use on the sets of spirit armor.

"If there are good quality materials to use, then why would I use mediocre ones?"

She muttered silently. Carefully watching the bones inside the small workshop, she discovered that, out of the two boxes of bones, there were only nine bones left. The rest was all grinded to dust. She then checked the bone dust in the other barrels and found that all of it was just as high quality.

"I suppose he is a serious person, and his attitude towards artifact forging... is acceptable, I guess, far better than those who do a half-hearted job." Tang Siqi nodded on the inside as her view on Qin Lie changed just a little.

At this moment, Qin Lie woke from the state of Thoughtless Tranquility. As his gaze changed, the chilly atmosphere in the room was also quickly withdrawn.

“Senior Sister Tang,” Qin Lie said coldly.

Tang Siqi shuddered, surprised by Qin Lie suddenly calling out to her. She then humphed once, nodded, and said, “The quality of the bone dust you grinded isn’t bad, but there are still nine bones that you haven’t completed. I’ve told you before that you must grind all the bones to powder in five days!”

“It’s hasn’t been a full five days yet, I still have an hour left.” Sitting straight, Qin Lie lifted his head to coldly stare at her with derisive eyes, “You seem to have misremembered the time?”

The moment that indifferent gaze fell on her, the burning anger in Tang Siqi’s heart immediately rose to the surface. She suddenly recalled the scene from that day again. “Wh-what’s with your attitude?”

“This is my attitude.” Qin Lie opened the gauze wrapped around both his hands and revealed the bloody wounds on his arms and the back of his hands. “Supposedly, special gloves would be provided to the grinder to prevent them from getting hurt when grinding bone dust with phosphorous poison.” He stared at Tang Siqi with an even colder expression. “Where are my gloves?”

Seeing the bloody wounds on his hands, Tang Siqi’s attitude suddenly turned weak. “I-I don’t know. All I did is to give out the task. I wouldn’t care about the distribution of the appropriate tools a-and I couldn’t care less about it.”

Qin Lie frowned and bowed his head silently for a while. Suddenly, he waved his hands as if he was sweeping away flies with a face full with impatience. “Please leave and stop wasting my time or disturbing my work. I still have an hour left, and I would like to finish the rest within that hour.”

“You—Very well! Qin Bing! I’ll remember you!” Tang Siqi stomped her feet with her beautiful face beet red as she grit her teeth and retreated.

Like a ball of flame she arrived at Lian Rou’s VIP pavilion and angrily sat down, “I’m so angry, that bastard made me so angry!”

“Qin Bing?” Lian Rou picked up a wooden spirit tablet and was inscribing a spirit diagram on it. When she saw her coming in with a face filled with anger, she put down the spirit tablet and asked with a smile, “You went to collect the goods didn’t you? How is it? Did he grind the bone dust with the most malicious manner possible and give you some bone bits instead?”

Lian Rou’s thoughts were the same as hers. She had assumed that Qin Lie wouldn’t treat this seriously and would do sub-par work, resisting her with bone bits.

“It’s not like that. The bone dust that guy made was a lot better than the ones I asked Uncle Tong to find others to do.” Tang Siqi angrily continued, “Even if I were to do it myself, that was the best I could’ve done. It wouldn’t be better than the bone dust he made—he is a very diligent person, and there are no flaws that I find with it at all.”

“Then why are you angry?” Lian Rou was slightly surprised. She sat up straighter as she grew more and more curious.

“It’s, it’s his attitude. The way he looks at me! The way he talks to me!” Tang Siqi said in a flustered and exasperated manner. Her beautiful face was filled with anger. “In his eyes, it’s as if I’m not a woman. No, that’s not right, in his eyes it’s as if I’m not even a person! He never looked me in the eye. He treated me like air, like I couldn’t even compare to the stone bench or stone table in his house! That bastard even said that I intentionally left out the gloves, what the hell does it have to do with me? The ones who distribute them are the outer sect disciples, I’ve never said a thing about it, on what basis is he putting that blame on me?”

“Siqi. You don’t usually get angry this easily, but it appears that you get riled up quite easily as of late.” Lian Rou looked deeply at her.

“Ever since I ran into that bastard and got my clothes burned by him, I just feel a well of anger inside me. It’s as if I can’t stand anyone anymore.” Tang Siqi grit her teeth with what seemed like flames burning inside her eyes. “This can’t go on. I want to control him, I want him to listen to me obediently, I want him to feel fear when talking to me! Hmph!”

Lian Rou’s expression turned strange. “Siqi, you’re so dumb!”

“What?” Tang Siqi grew confused.

“This is his method! This is his way to attract your attention, just like that crazy Yi Yuan who ask me to choose him in front of everyone. Qin Bing is also using this way to make you pay attention to him. See, didn’t you fall for it?—These are all tricks of men!” Lian Rou said with an experienced outlook, “Compared to Yi Yuan’s methods, this Qin Bing is on a much higher level than him. Look at you, hasn’t he made you completely upset? Once you’re upset, then you might fall into a passive position. You’re about to fall into his trap!”

Once she said that, Tang Siqi seemed to have come to a realization. “So what you’re saying is... he is just like those guys who have specifically come for me? It’s just that he used a completely new method—riling up my anger—to attract my attention?”

“That must be it!” Lian Rou was very sure.

Tang Siqi blanked out slightly before she began giggling. Her beautiful face was filled with high spirits. “So this is how it is. Interesting, how interesting! I’ve not seen such a shrewd person in a long time. Ha, I’m going to have a lot of fun with him alright!” When she reached this point, she grit her teeth yet again.

“Also, you should be careful with Liang Shaoyang, he should be here for you as well. Make sure you don’t fall for it,” reminded Lian Rou again.

“I knew that from the beginning.” Tang Siqi nodded. “I only played a little trick when I stood beside him, and he was distracted already. There must be something up his sleeve!”

“Shishi’s brother… also seemed to think about you a little,” Lian Rou softly said after a moment’s discretion.

“Pang Feng?” Tang Siqi frowned before shaking her head. “Maybe not. He seldomly takes the initiative to contact me, and the only one in his heart is his sister. Most of his time is spent cultivating in the martial way, and he is completely focused on becoming an outer sect elder. Maybe you’re thinking a little too much about this.”

“I hope so.” Lian Rou did not continue explaining either.

……

“Brother, you should be more proactive. If you don’t reveal your feelings a little, she’ll never know about them.” At the foot of Flame Volcano, beside the glittering lake, Pang Shishi stared at the lake surface and softly said, “There are so many people chasing after Senior Sister Tang, and it’s possible that she doesn’t even remember many of their names. If you never tell her, then when will she ever look to you?”

Beside the lake, Pang Feng quietly sat, facing the lake like steel and stone. He quietly replied, “Shishi, you don’t have to worry about me. You just focus your energy on artifact forging.”

“How can I not worry?” Pang Shishi wrinkled her nose elegantly. “Let’s exclude those guys from the past or some of the seniors of the inner sect. Let’s talk about this new batch of people. That

Liang Shaoyang and Qin Bing have also come for Senior Sister Tang. Not only that, but Liang Shaoyang is the youngest son of Dark Shadow Tower's Tower Lord. Neither his realm nor his looks are worse than yours, he is not weak competition."

"There's also that number two hundred and thirty Qin Bing. To this day, I haven't found out anything about his background, but his methods are definitely amazing... Even if it was a little despicable and shameless, he has succeeded in his goal and was directly selected by Senior Sister Tang to be her assistant. He will have more and more chances to come into contact with Senior Sister Tang in the future."

"People often say that time breeds affection. His advantage now is pretty obvious. At the very least, he's better than Liang Shaoyang. Someone who can come up with such a shameless idea must be a very insidious person. When he came over, he must have had an entire plan already thought up. If he is allowed to wander around Senior Sister Tang, then your position will be truly precarious!"

"I told you, you don't have to worry about it!" Pang Feng yelled out quietly.

"Fine, see if I care, hmph!" Pang Shishi angrily turned her head and walked away.

"Number two hundred and thirty, Qin Bing..." After she left, Pang Feng frowned and whispered while looking at the lake's surface.

……

On the other side, Liang Shaoyang's expression was gloomy inside the same type of stone tower that had been arranged for Qin Lie and Yi Yuan.

Armament Sect's inner sect disciple, Yin Hao was also inside the room. A few days ago, he had selected Liang Shaoyang as his assistant, and right now, when he was facing Liang Shaoyang, not only did he not have the slightest bit of arrogance in his behavior, there was even a trace of flattery in his expression. "Shaoyang, is the Tower Lord doing well as of late?"

"Thank you for your concern, Senior Brother. My father is doing well." Liang Shaoyang came to his senses. "I will like to trouble senior brother to investigate that Qin Bing's background."

"Don't worry, Shaoyang. I already have my men on the job." Yin Hao nodded before saying, "Tang Siqi had caused reactions in two spirit pattern pillars and is highly regarded by the current sect master and inner sect's First Elder, Mo Hai. She herself is a true artifact forging genius, and if there are no accidents, she will definitely become the next sect master."

He looked to Liang Shaoyang, "If you, Shaoyang, can move her heart and form a connection with her, then in the future, Armament Sect will become Dark Shadow Tower's spirit artifact warehouse. All of Armament Sect's artificers will be serving under Dark Shadow Tower, and Dark Shadow Tower's strength will

immediately reach completely new heights!”

“Naturally, I understand.” Liang Shaoyang nodded proudly. “That is my goal in coming to Armament Sect, for Tang Siqi!”

“But now you have a stumbling block,” Yin Hao said.

“Qin Bing? I will sweep this obstacle as soon as possible!” Liang Shaoyang snorted coldly.

Chapter 137: Special Gift!

Two hours later, three Armament Sect outer sect disciples came to Qin Lie's stone tower to weigh the bone dust.

Five days ago, it had been this trio that had delivered two large boxes of bone.

"Thirty-seven and a half kilograms, two contribution points per kilogram. Qin Bing, you have received seventy-five contribution points." The person named Kan Yang coldly looked at Qin Lie. He glanced at Qin Lie's arm and muttered in a small voice, "He wasn't wounded..."

The other two people carried out the wooden buckets filled with bone powder. They had to deliver the power to Tang Siqi so they were standing outside at this time.

Qin Lie heard what Kan Yang muttered. His expression turned icy. "When you delivered the bones, you should have warned me about their origins and told me there was phosphorus poison in there. Also, you should have given me the specialized gloves!"

"What gloves?" asked Kan Yang in feigned ignorance.

"What is he talking about?" The two people outside chimed in agreement, "I don't know what he means."

Qin Lie knew that a portion of the outer sect disciples thought of

him as an eyesore and would act against him if they had the chance. From the expressions of the trio, he knew that the specialized gloves had been provided, and even if they were not the ones that hid them, the three of them definitely were involved.

"Nothing."

Qin Lie's eyes turned icy as he raised a porcelain bowl covered in animal skin by his side. Under the puzzled gazes of Kan Yang and the other two, he suddenly took off the animal skin on the bowl.

With a shake of his arm, the glowing light inside the bowl sprayed out. The dots of green phosphorus fire flashed as they landed on Kan Yang and the other two.

"Phosphorus poison!"

The trio paled and yelled as they retreated. Their eyes were filled with terror.

As the phosphorous fire shot out, a smell that could cause people to lose their mind spread throughout the room. Qin Lie had to focus to deal with it.

When he learned from Yi Yuan that bones containing phosphorus poison needed to be handled with specialized gloves, Qin Lie had made preparations—he gathered a portion of it.

—Specifically to deal with the people that dared to withhold the

gloves from him!

The phosphorus poison sprayed like sparks from a fire. Even though Kan Yang and the others had retreated outside the door, some phosphorus poison still made contact with their bodies.

The corrosive phosphorus poison caused their clothing to rot when it landed on them. Their flesh also immediately started to burn and crack.

The trio couldn't help but shout.

There were many inner and outer sect disciples active under the twelve spirit pattern pillars in the plaza nearby. Hearing the wails, they all looked over.

"This is the taste of phosphorus poison that I have experienced over the past five days." Qin Lie's eyes were frigid as he said in an icy voice, "Next time, if I have to experience pain, I will let you taste it all and have you experience it with me! This phosphorous poison is the special gift I prepared for you!"

"Qin Bing! You dare to deliberately harm people, we definitely will not let you off! I will tell an elder and get the elder to punish you!"

The phosphorous poison on Kan Yang's chest were like spots that rotted his flesh. As he bared his teeth in pain, he threatened in a vicious tone.

“Up to you. I want to see if the elders of Armament Sect listen to reason,” Qin Lie said with a cold face.

The trio’s bodies were being corroded by the phosphorous poison. At this time, he didn’t dare to speak more. Taking the buckets filled with bone dust, they hurriedly left. They had to treat their wounds as soon as possible.

Qin Lie knew that, according to the practices of Armament Sect, there would at least be a day or two of rest after completing a mission.

He shut the door to his stone tower after the trio left since he needed to leave Armament Sect and go to the little compound that Li Mu left behind. This was so he could use the Eye of Frost to go to the land of ice to cultivate.

On the plaza, many inner and outer sect disciples were gathered under the spirit pattern pillars.

Many people did not know their own limits and had delusions. They felt they were fated and could also understand the wonders of the diagrams on the spirit pattern pillars, that they could cause the pillars to react.

The twenty or so new disciples that had just been admitted naturally wanted to try after learning about the wonders of the spirit pattern pillars as well, so many people were present.

The Tian Jianhao that Qin Lie had beaten, Liang Shaoyang of Dark Shadow Tower, Ouyang Jingjing of Seven Fiends Valley. Even Yi Yuan, who said he was not interested in forging, was sitting under a spirit pattern pillar as though he was concentrating and using his heart to feel it...

If Qin Lie had to leave Armament Sect, he had to pass through this plaza. Many people paid attention to him when they saw him come over.

Pang Feng's younger sister, Pang Shishi; inner sect disciple Yi Hao, Liang Shaoyang; and Tian Jianhao all looked at him as though they wanted to see his weaknesses and true personality.

"You're going out?" asked Yi Yuan with a smile when Qin Lie walked past him, .

Qin Lie stopped and nodded. He then inquired with a creased brow, "Didn't you say you were not interested in artifact forging?"

"I'm not interested," Yi Yuan's expression was slightly awkward, "but I want to try too. I want to see if I can understand the diagrams on the spirit pattern pillars, to see if I can cause changes in the spirit pattern pillars. Ha, those that pass the exams will all think they are unique, that their intelligence is above the rest, and will want to try. Even though I am not that interested in artifact forging, I am not immune."

"Hope you succeed," Qin Lie left behind as he sped up his pace to

walk out of the plaza and leave Armament Sect.

Yi Yuan chuckled before putting his attention back on the spirit pattern pillars. His brows were creased as though he was thinking hard on some matter.

“He’s been in Armament Sect for a few days, but he hasn’t even sat under the spirit pattern pillars to look at them yet? Does he not feel the desire to? Doesn’t he want to test out his talent?”

“No one can be ambivalent. If they can understand one of the spirit pattern pillars and get the sprit pattern pillar to react, they can instantly enter the inner sect and receive the favor of Sect Leader and all the elders. They will receive all kinds of special benefits. What method is faster than this or more direct? And to go truly into the core of Armament Sect?”

“Then why hasn’t this guy come here yet?”

“Because Senior Sister Tang has detained him, and he has been given difficult missions. He does not have the time to come and attempt to comprehend the pillars.”

“Don’t pay attention to him. He clearly came for Senior Sister Tang. He probably doesn’t have much interest in forging. This guy… has high skills though. I still admire him greatly.”

“Mn, he really has high skills. Other people pursue Senior Sister Tang in hopes of getting Senior Sister’s affections to make Senior

Sister Tang happy!. This guy goes in the opposite direction and always makes Senior Sister Tang unhappy or makes her hate him... I hadn't expected that it would be pretty effective. Senior Sister Tang really is paying attention to him. I heard that Senior Sister Tang is furious with him and she seems to be at odds with him?"

"So strong! He really has moves!"

Under the spirit pattern pillars the inner and outer sect disciples chatted after Qin Lie had left.

Liang Shaoyang and Dark Asura Hall's Tian Jianhao were under two separate spirit pattern pillars. Hearing the discussion, their expressions became extremely dark and ugly.

.....

Under the Arctic Mountain Range.

Qin Lie was sitting at the peak of a glacier. Among this cruel and cold world of ice, he was holding a spirit tablet. The spirit energy grew and shrank out of his fingertip as he focused on inscribing something.

Inside the world of the spirit tablet, a spirit line was moving like a snake and depicted a cold scene.

—He was drawing the frost picture scroll inside the Soul Suppressing Orb.

“Cra-ack!”

The rock spirit tablet suddenly cracked into many pieces. The cold picture scroll inside crumbled along with it.

“The thirty-fifth tablet!”

Qin Lie shouted lowly. He didn’t look dispirited though as he took out a new spirit tablet and continued to sketch.

With his experiences of having failed hundreds of times when inscribing spirit diagrams, he learned long ago to accept failure. He knew that learning anything was a slow and difficult process. One needed to fail again and again until comprehension was finally achieved. Then one would gradually discover the path to success.

“Bam!” Another spirit tablet shattered.

“Seventy-third tablet!” Qin Lie shouted. He took a deep breath. Then, he temporarily stopped his inscription of the frost picture scroll and looked at the mountains of ice in front of him with furrowed brows. “Where is the problem? Why are the spirit tablets turning to powder while I inscribe the frost picture scroll? Is it because I have not grasped the thickness and density of each spirit line? Or is it that a certain spirit line is incorrect?”

Learning a spirit diagram was like learning a technique. One didn’t just have to understand the construction of the spirit

diagram, one had to also know how much spirit energy to use when inscribing each spirit line.

The same spirit line, if drawn with a certain level of spirit energy, could successfully merge into the entire spirit diagram.

But if one used too much power when inscribing and used even an extra tenth or twentieth of the spirit energy required, the same spirit line would turn out incorrect and cause the entire spirit diagram to suddenly collapse.

This was why Qin Lie did not worry that people would learn the two diagrams after he inscribed the Spirit Gathering and Spirit Storage diagrams onto the Spirit Gathering and Spirit Storage Boards.

Being able to see the spirit diagrams inside the Spirit Gathering Board was one matter, learning it was another.

It was similar to powerful arts. If one only knew the moves but did not understand the corresponding inner techniques, they would forever be unable to display the full power of the art.

Being able to see the Spirit Gathering diagram but unable to know how much power and spirit energy to use when inscribing the spirit lines, that person would never be able to truly grasp the inscription of the Spirit Gathering diagram.

“It doesn’t seem easy to realize the drawing using spirit tablets…”

Qin Lie said as he thought hard of solutions.

Spirit sea! Drawing in the spirit sea!

He suddenly recalled how he had drawn out the Spirit Gathering diagram using spirit energy in his spirit sea when he had made his breakthrough to the ninth level of Refinement. That had caused a spirit energy whirlpool to form in his spirit sea.

“Is there a way that I can use spirit energy to inscribe the frost picture scroll inside my spirit sea?” When this idea came out, he couldn’t control himself and immediately started to act.

Closing his eyes, he adjusted his state of mind. He channeled the spirit energy in his dantian’s spirit sea and first formed a spirit line.

With this spirit line as the beginning, he comprehended the frost picture scroll in his Soul Suppressing Orb as he tried to move the spirit line in the spirit sea. The line slowly started to move.

Seconds later, an enormous pain came from his spirit sea. That flash of pain passed through his entire body. Qin Lie’s expression changed dramatically as cold sweat covered his body.

At this time, he had just sketched out a tiny ice statue with the spirit lines!

“No, this is not the right path!” Qin Lie instantly stopped his

nonsensical actions. His face was white. “I finally understand. The reason the spirit tablets would crumble is that it cannot withstand that... terrifying frost concept! The frost concept might have become a picture, but it still exists. If I use my mind to sketch and feel it, that will cause the frost concept to be pulled in!”

Inside my body, which place can completely withstand the iciness of the frost concept without being injured?” he murmured to himself.

“Natal palace! The two natal palaces that have formed as ice balls!” Qin Lie’s eyes lit up again.

Chapter 138: A Foot In The Door

Qin Lie prepared to keep trying.

Gathering his mind, he calmed his heart. His emotions gradually steadied, and he entered his dantian's spirit sea through his soul consciousness.

Within his spirit sea that was like a sea of clouds, the three Natal Palaces were like heavenly paradises floating above the spirit sea.

The Natal Palace condensed from thunder and lightning was like a ball of lightning. Lightning arced across it, and thunder boomed loudly inside it. The Natal Palaces made from the power of frost were like two crystal balls that gave off a glowing light. Coldness flowed through them.

A wisp of consciousness divided into three slender threads that entered the three separate Natal Palaces.

His soul seemed to have suddenly entered three completely different worlds. One was full of rampaging lightning and thunder, bolts of lightning tangled together as they flashed and thunder boomed in waves.

Inside the thunder and lightning Natal Palace, great vibrations came from explosions that occurred everywhere. If the thought that entered there did not come from him, it would have been blown apart immediately.

The two other threads of thought landed in the two ice crystal spheres that were his two Natal Palaces. It was akin to stepping into a world of freezing ice and frost.

“Frost concept, the picture scroll drawn with cold power from the Natal Palace. Comprehending frost concept, grasp the method of using the frost power…”

He kept in mind the reason why he was going deep into the ice balls. Qin Lie’s two strands of thought moved through the two ice balls. He tried to manipulate a thread of frost power and use his soul consciousness to form it into a spirit line. He wanted to draw the lines of the frost picture scroll in this icy land.

Strangely, as this thought of his arose, he was able to easily manipulate the cold power filling the two, ice-sphere Natal Palaces!

Up until now, he had been unable to draw out the true frost power from the Natal Palaces and could not merge it into his spirit energy to perform powerful spirit arts.

As of recent, when he fought, the cold energy released from his body came from inside his body. It was from the cold energy his corporeal body had recently absorbed.

It was also because he could not control the cold energy and merge it into his Natal Palaces that he gave people the feeling of aloofness and coldness.

If he could channel the cold power and comprehend the essence of the frost concept, he could change all of this.

Threads of glowing ice formed from cold power were manipulated by his soul consciousness and slowly moved in the world of crystal ice...

He had drawn out the general shape of the frost picture in his mind. As his soul consciousness moved in his icy Natal Palace, he gradually grasped the wonders of the two ice-sphere Natal Palaces. He could clearly feel threads of cold energy gather through his muscles, veins, limbs, and even from his pores.

The thick-white, cold mist came from all directions and shrouded the area around him.

Under the Arctic Mountain Range, in that cruel, cold land covered in glaciers on top of a crystal peak, the extreme cold energy that never dissipated slowly flowed as though it was alive and gathered atop Qin Lie's head.

Qin Lie seemed to be situated at the top of white clouds. The icy energy around him was so thick a desolate and freezing essence was released.

Time flowed by.

An unknown amount of time later, Qin Lie was startled awake.

His eyes opened suddenly.

The thick-white, cold energy, that had gathered in an instant, cleanly disappeared. At the same time, the frost picture scroll that he had drawn in the two ice-sphere Natal Palaces also shattered into fragments of light and turned to pure frost power that merged into the ice balls.

“Frost concept, so it needs to be coordinated with the mind, needs the mind to be as cold as frost, as hard as steel...” he murmured. His eyes suddenly became emotionless and frighteningly cold. “I finally found the solution and know how to comprehend the true frost concept. If I continue, I will completely grasp the cold power of the two Natal Palaces sometime in the near future.”

When he had been immersed in the frost picture scroll and adjusted his mind and emotions to become icy and emotionless, he found that he became extremely sensitive to the cold power and could finally get it to respond.

To channel the frost power, it needed the mind and soul as one, needed his entire mind and body to be fully immersed, and needed his body to be as hard as ice!

His eyes gradually lit up.

A long time later, he stood. He took out the Eye of Frost and activated it.

……

Outer sect of Armament Sect.

“Three Poison Scale Scorpions, you are to take off the entire skin in tact, I want to use it to make spirit armor. One skin will be thirty contribution points. You have nine days to complete the mission. Remember, each skin cannot have flaws. Otherwise, you won’t get any contribution points.”

“Got it.”

Nine days later.

“Three hundred Sunshine Stones. You are to extract flame energy from them. Let’s put it at three hundred contribution points. I’ll give you fifteen days.”

“Oh.”

Fifteen days later.

“Six Dragonhorn Rhinoceros horns. You are to sand them into the shape of spear. I want to forge them as the core for long spears. You have ten days. I’ll give you one hundred and fifty contribution points.”

“Got it.”

“Twelve Dragon Bone Jade, you are to…”

“Got it.”

In the following three months, Qin Lie and Tang Siqi would have a conversation like this once in a while.

Every time, Tang Siqi would get Kan Yang and others to come with spirit materials and arrange for Qin Lie to work on processing or sanding.

Qin Lie would coldly accept the task each time and then prepare the materials by the deadline. Kan Yang and his group would then deliver them to Tang Siqi.

Kan Yang and the others never dared to attempt any tricks in secret.

After a mission was completed, he would have three days of rest. Using those three days, he would go to the little compound outside the sect and use the Eye of Frost to enter the underground area of the Arctic Mountain Range to cultivate.

As his knowledge of frost power increased, he gradually grasped how to focus his mind and body to cooperate to channel the power of frost.

During the days when thunder and lightning were prevalent, he would find a remote place devoid of people and continue his cultivation of Heavenly Thunder Eradication...

His progress on the martial way was extremely quick. He felt that if he truly grasped the power of frost, he would smoothly break into the middle stage of the Natal Opening Realm.

On the other side, as he continued to work and prepare all kinds of spirit materials, his understanding of the attributes of different spirit materials deepened.

The mission that Tang Siqi gave each time were guaranteed to not be relaxing and would challenge his limits every time. He had to expend great mental thought and effort to reach Tang Siqi's demands so she did not have the chance to nitpick.

Next time, Tang Siqi would arrange for an even more difficult mission which he would use all of his strength to finish by the appointed time...

The two started to try to one-up each other like this.

In a cave on Flame Volcano.

"Hiss-wooosh!"

A crimson snake of fire jumped on a dragon-shaped longblade. It was extremely lively as though it was continuously tempering the

blade's impurities.

Tang Siqi was wearing a thin, red dress with sweat flowing down her forehead. Her eyes flashed with a heart-shaking and beautiful light and her hands continuously moved irregularly while executing a mysterious spiritual art.

That crimson-red snake of fire would turn thick and coil around the longblade and then shrink down to a line of fire to burrow inside the blade.

On the dragon-shaped longblade, a beautiful snake-shaped pattern slowly formed. It caused the longblade to appear grand and extraordinary, like it was filled with a moving intelligence that made one want to grab it and rush into the world.

"Whoosh!"

The crimson-red snake of flames turned into a burning line of fire that suddenly disappeared in Tang Siqi's palm. Her beautiful face became even redder and moving. She looked with satisfaction at the dragon-shaped longblade, smiling and nodding her head.

"Siqi, how has it been recently?" Lian Rou had been standing by the cave entrance for a while. Seeing her finish, Lian Rou walked in. "Have you tamed that Qin Bing?"

"No," replied Tang Siqi as she wiped away the sweat on her forehead. "That guy is a piece of ice. He's like that all the time, and

I find it irritating when I see it. I want to beat him up!”

“But you… seem to frequently go to his place?” Lian Rou teased.

“His work is good.” Tang Siqi walked over to the cave entrance. Under the red light of the sunset, she looked at the stone towers at the base of Flame Volcano and then looked specifically at Qin Lie’s tower. An odd look came into her eyes. “I’ve never seen someone as concentrated as he is. Not just the outer sect disciples, even the senior brothers of the inner sect… are not as good as him in some areas.”

“What do you mean?” Lian Rou stood shoulder-to-shoulder with her, and her gaze landed on Yi Yuan’s tower. “He’s good at his work?”

“Look at this Dragonhorn Rhinoceros horn…” Tang Siqi picked up a rhinoceros horn the length of her arm and handed it to Lian Rou.

Lian Rou felt it with her fingers and picked up on the smoothness of the dragonhorn’s surface, feeling the elegant curve, and then touched the sharpness of the horn’s tip. “Very good. Even if I’m was the one sanding it, I may not be able to do it in such a beautiful fashion.”

Tang Siqi nodded and then said, “Six Dragonhorn Rhinoceros horns, ten days. He can sand it to this quality. I don’t even need to prepare it a second time and can immediately use it as the primary material for the ‘Soul Breaking Spear.’ It has saved me a great

amount of effort.”

“Six horns, ten days, all of them are of this quality?” asked Lian Rou in shock.

“Yes, all of them like this.” A strange expression came into Tang Siqi’s eyes as she looked down at the stone tower—one of admiration.

“You really picked up a treasure. This Qin Bing really has been of great help to you.” Lian Rou was moved and then she grit her teeth and said in frustration, “Yi Yuan is an idiot. What he produces is not so detailed. When I get it, I need to redo it.”

“Yi Yuan is the same as Pang Feng, he doesn’t have any interest in forging. He is here solely for the position of outer sect elder.” Tang Siqi thought and then said, “That Qin Bing isn’t the same. He really came here to learn forging. I increasingly feel… that he has not come for me. Maybe we have misunderstood him.”

“Siqi, are you wavering?” Lian Rou stilled and then shouted, “If you have this kind of thought, then you really have fallen for the trap! I admit that this guy might truly like artifact forging and is very focused on his work, but this should just be another one of his tactics! He first got you to dislike him so you would choose him. Then, he would use his great performance to get you to slowly change your opinion and have you treat him differently.”

Lian Rou felt it was more likely the more she thought about it. When she got to the end, her expression suddenly became grave.

“This Qin Bing is really a powerful person. Compared to him, your past suitors aren’t even on the same level! Siqi, you have to be careful. Do not get enchanted, otherwise, he will entrap you!”

“Is it really like this?”

After Lian Rou said this, Tang Siqi wavered as well. She felt that the words were reasonable and could not figure out if her feelings were right or if Lian Rou’s judgment was correct.

Chapter 139: Eclipse Insect

“Shaoyang, this is what you’re looking for.”

When the night had fallen, Yin Hao sneakily visited Liang Shaoyang’s stone tower. He carefully took out a jade box before placing it at a table inside.

A thin, silver light appeared in Liang Shaoyang’s eyes. He extended a hand to lift the jade box, bowed his head, and looked at it once before nodding, “Thank you, senior brother.”

“You’re welcome. Hehe, I am in debt to the Tower Lord, and the reason I was able to enter Armament Sect and become an inner sect disciple… was all arranged by the Tower Lord a long time ago.” Yin Hao’s smile was one of flattery. “I simply hope that Shaoyang can accomplish the Tower Lord’s exhortation and become a powerful ally for Dark Shadow Tower so Dark Shadow Tower can increase its strength many times over.”

“I will do my best,” replied Liang Shaoyang.

Yin Hao smiled and did not say anything else. After bidding farewell, he avoided every area that might have human activity and took a small route back to the cave at Flame Volcano.

“Qin Bing…”

Holding the jade box, the corner of Liang Shaoyang’s lips curled

gruesomely as he sneered twice in a low voice.

At the beginning he did not want to come to Armament Sect and was very much against his father's arrangements.

However, for the sake of the greater good and Dark Shadow Tower's future, he still came over.

When he saw Tang Siqi for the first time, was approached by her, and when she whispered softly from behind him, suddenly, he was no longer against his father's arrangements.

—He had truly fallen for Tang Siqi.

Once he was moved, Liang Shaoyang became incredibly serious. In his mind, he had believed that Tang Siqi would definitely choose him as his assistant, and naturally, he would have the chance to interact with her in the future. He would slowly impress her with his own charisma, win her heart, and smoothly complete his father's instructions.

But his well thought-out plan was cruelly destroyed by Qin Lie...

Qin Lie had suddenly come out, ignited Tang Siqi's clothes, and caused her to grow angry with embarrassment. Therefore, she had chosen Qin Lie out of spite and destroyed his plans.

Naturally, he thought that Qin Lie's many methods were all to attract Tang Siqi's attention... and they were very successful too.

“No matter what kind of background you have, you are just deluding yourself if you think to challenge me over a woman.” Liang Shaoyang looked to the night sky, and after waiting for a while, he fleeted out like a the shadow of a night’s ghost and flashed a couple of times before vanishing without a trace.

Inside Qin Lie’s stone tower, there were “crack, crack” sounds coming out from inside.

Qin Lie was grinding Dragon Bone Jades in the small workshop inside the tower, focusing on polishing their rough stone surfaces until they were smooth. He was completely indifferent about the noises on the outside world.

He seemed to hear some soft footsteps passing by the front of his tower, but he did not think much of it and continued to place all of his focus on the Dragon Bone Jade in his hands.

He knew that there were many new outer sect disciples who could not stop looking at the twelve spirit pattern pillar, and there were also some who thought that the spirit pillars might cause something magical under the moonlight, thus making it easier to cause a reaction.

Therefore, there were often people staying under the spirit pattern pillar during the middle of the night. They would spend the entire night without sleep, attempting to learn the wonders of the spirit patterns They hoped that, one day, they would rise to the heavens and enter the inner sect, becoming a genius in the eyes of

all the important leaders of the sects and be cultivated as a potential candidate for the position sect master.

That was why there were always noise outside, even during the middle of the night.

He had gotten used to it long ago.

Time passed quietly, and gradually, Qin Lie felt that his legs were a bit tingly and stiff...

He had thought that he sat for too long without paying much attention to it. He was still polishing the Dragon Bone Jade.

Around midnight, that tingly feeling spread out and caused his arms to become more and more uncomfortable.

Even his head seemed to be murky, and it was hard to even think of a problem. His entire person turned dazed as sleepiness rushed over him like sea waves.

Before his consciousness had blurred, he saw a few worms about the size soybeans on his arms and legs. He didn't know when they had gotten on him.

He felt that his body was growing stiffer and stiffer and felt tingly all over without the slightest bit of strength. He couldn't even move a finger.

His eyelids were also growing heavier and heavier. He wanted nothing more than to lie down and sleep to his heart's content.

"Qin Bing, it's time for you to deliver the goods again. How is it?" It was still early in the morning, but Tang Siqi was already crying out in front of Qin Lie's stone tower.

Today, she had changed to a dark-red, tight suit with her long hair tied into a ponytail. She appeared heroic and valiant; it was yet another taste of her youthful charm.

"Good morning Senior Sister Tang!"

"Senior Sister Tang, you came down from the mountains this early today?"

"Have you eaten already, Senior Sister Tang?"

There were a lot of outer sect disciples on the way to the dining hall, and seeing that she was standing in front of Qin Lie's stone tower, they all greeted her with flattering looks.

"Move aside." Seeing that some of them had gathered over, Tang Siqi waved her hands impatiently, "Qin Bing, are you in there or not?"

Hearing no voice from the inside, Tang Siqi did not care for

pleasantries as she pushed open the stone door without reserve and openly barged inside.

—She usually did this on a regular basis.

Because it was now morning, she was afraid that Qin Lie would not be clothed properly and would thus humiliate her eyes. That was why she yelled out a few times before to test the waters.

When she pushed open the door, she saw Qin Lie collapsed on a floor covered in jade scraps. His left hand was still holding Dragon Bone Jade.

“Ah!” Tang Siqi cried out in surprise and quickly rushed over. She then discovered that Qin Lie’s entire body was dark green in color, and his eyes were narrowed into slits. It was as if he was trying his best to open them but could not do so no matter what.

“Eclipse Insects!”

Gazing around carefully, she finally saw the few small beetles sucking on Qin Lie’s arms and thighs. Then, a trace of horror appeared on her beautiful face.

“Lian Rou!” Her expression was extremely serious as she cried out in the direction of the front yard.

Lian Rou, who had gone down the mountain with her was ready to go to ask about something at Tong Jihua’s place, but when she

heard Tang Siqi's cries, she quickly turned around and rushed over like the wind. "Siqi, what are you yelling for?"

"Qin Bing has been bitten by Eclipse Insects!" Tang Siqi cried out with urgency in her eyes, "Why would there suddenly be Eclipse Insects inside his house?"

"Eclipse Insects?!" Lian Rou's expression had also immediately turned as she closed in and stared at Qin Lie's face and chest for a while. Her gaze grew sterner and sterner. "This is very bad! The poison has seeped into his heart and face, his brain should have been affected as well."

"What should we do?" Tang Siqi panicked, "I don't even have knowledge about poisonous insects or detoxification and I know the Eclipse Insect is incredibly scary. The moment someone contracts the Eclipse Insect's poison, it will become very troublesome. Am I right?"

"The poison of the Eclipse Insects can paralyze the flesh, nerves, and thoughts, causing all of them to lose mobility one bit at a time. The person's entire body would turn stiff and weak before they finally fall into a deep coma and die. This is a very slow process. If it isn't detected early, when the poison has seeped into their heart and face... then it will be incredibly hard to treat them."

Lian Rou looked to Qin Lie and suddenly let out a quiet sigh. She shook her head and said, "He is probably a goner already."

"I-isn't your family from the southern region, aren't you very

good at detoxification? Can't you think of a way?" Tang Siqi urgently asked.

"If this was discovered during the night then I could still treat him. But now... it's too late." Lian Rou looked a little helpless. "Eclipse Insects will not appear out of nowhere. This poisonous insect only lives in a few specific poisonous swamps in the southern region, and once they leave those places they would die shortly after unless they were raised inside a special container."

While she was speaking, many outer sect disciples had gathered over and poked their heads into the house.

Lian Rou paused for a moment, suddenly looked towards those people outside the house and said softly, "Someone was planning to harm him and wanted him dead. That was why they had used the Eclipse Insect to poison him."

"Out of the way!" Yi Yuan's yell suddenly could be heard from the front.

He had just finished eating in the dining hall. When he had heard the commotion here, he frowned and pushed away the people blocking the front of the door and rushed into the stone tower. He even shut the stone door immediately upon entering.

"What are you doing, Yi Yuan?" Tang Siqi glared at him angrily. "Seek out Elder Tong immediately and tell him about this matter. Get him to figure out a way, now!"

“None of the elders of the outer sect have any achievements in detoxification. They are only good at fighting, and that includes elder Tong and all other outer sect elders.” Once Yi Yuan had entered the room he stared directly at Lian Rou. “There are only three people who have studied poison and poisonous insects. The sect master, elder Mo Hai from the inner sect, and you.”

“But right now, the sect master has secluded himself for artifact forging, and elder Mo Hai is outside the sect and probably cannot return on such short notice. Therefore, you are the only one who can help Qin Bing. No one else will be of any use.” His expression was serious as he continued, “According to my knowledge, the sect master and elder Mo Hai have taught you many things regarding poison and poisonous insects.”

“How do you know me so well?” Lian Rou was incredibly surprised.

Gentleness appeared inside Yi Yuan’s eyes as he softly said, “Since five years ago, when you left Purple Mist Sea, I have spent money to learn everything about you such as your hobbies, your cultivation realm…”

“You are a madman!” Lian Rou spat out in a curse.

Yi Yuan smiled slightly. “It doesn’t matter. I have made up my mind that you are the one for me, so matter where you go, I will follow you until the end.”

“You two!” Tang Siqi stomped her feet and cried out urgently.

“Siqi, I told you, we’ve come too late. The Eclipse Insect’s poison has already seeped into his heart and brain. Even if I want to treat him, it will be very, very difficult.” Lian Rou returned to the topic and said with an expression of helplessness, “If I am to treat him, I will need to refine a special poison liquid, but that takes time, and by the time I make it, the Eclipse Insect’s poison would’ve already killed him. It’s not possible.”

“Then there is no choice.” Yi Yuan let out a sigh after listening to Lian Rou’s explanation. He walked beside Qin Lie, crouched, and said, “Brother Qin, your eyes aren’t completely closed yet, so I know you can still hear me. Hmm, I really want to help you, but unfortunately, I really can’t do anything. I will try and look for the culprit who used the Eclipse Insects, and if he is easy to deal with ,then I’ll kill him for you. But if he is as strong as Pang Feng, then I won’t stake my life for you either. I hope you understand.”

He only had some admiration for Qin Lie, and their friendship was nowhere close to the point where he would be willing to die for him. He didn’t mind helping him a little here and there, but it really wasn’t too… realistic to expect him to put his life on the line for Qin Lie.

—This was because their relationship wasn’t deep enough yet.

“If you have any last words, then say them to him before he completely closes his eyes.” Lian Rou looked at Tang Siqi.

“Is there really no other way?” Tang Siqi asked again.

Lian Rou shook her head.

Therefore, Tang Siqi walked to Qin Lie's side and pursed her lips in thought before quietly whispering, "It doesn't matter whether if you've purposely used a despicable method to attract my attention, or whether if you've come to Armament Sect for me. I want to tell you that you have both the potential and talent to become a true artificer. For the past few months, the spirit materials that you've grinded is the best I've ever used. Some of them were even better than the ones I made myself."

"Senior Sister Tang, he's about to pass away. Can't you say something nicer?" Yi Yuan suddenly interrupted.

"What, nicer?" Tang Siqi turned her head with confusion in her eyes. "Is what I'm saying now not nice enough? I'm telling him that he's actually a pretty competent man and that he can actually become an extraordinary artificer. If this isn't nice enough, then what is?"

"Brother Qin had done everything for your sake, and his death... is probably for your sake as well." Yi Yuan narrowed his eyes. "The one who killed him was worried that he could truly touch your heart which is why they wanted him dead in the first place. He came to Armament Sect for you and grinded spirit materials with his heart for you, and now, he has even died for you. Are you telling me that you are not touched at all?"

"Touched? Now that you mention it..." Tang Siqi was stunned.

She prettily frowned, then thought for a moment before finally nodding slightly. She herself was not certain as she whispered in a low tone, “Maybe... maybe I am a little touched by him. I don’t know, I don’t know myself...”

While she was speaking, a bone chilling coldness suddenly spread out from Qin Lie’s body in the form of frost mist, tightly covering his entire body!

From the moment he saw the Eclipse Insect, Qin Lie had been summoning the frost energy inside his frost ball Natal Palaces, and now, he had finally summoned them it in its entirety!

Under Lian Rou and Yi Yuan’s surprised gazes and while Tang Siqi was still muttering, Qin Lie’s body was swiftly frozen and quickly sealed inside an ice crystal, turning into a crystalline ice sculpture.

The poison of the Eclipse Insects was also frozen, and it could no longer spread even a single millimeter!

“This frost...” Yi Yuan suddenly touched Qin Lie’s chest and immediately discovered that frost had appeared on his fingers. He shivered once before yelling in a low tone, “There’s still hope! Brother Qin can still be saved! This frost can definitely stop the poison from spreading! Before he unfreezes, Brother Qin can definitely preserve his current condition!”

“Then I can save him!” Lian Rou’s expression shook.

Chapter 140: Whispers

Using the frost energy and freezing himself inside solid ice, Qin Lie stopped the Eclipse Insect's poison from invading him.

From the moment he saw the Eclipse Insects and felt his head grow heavier and heavier, he already noticed that it wasn't good. But still he was one step too slow and could not immediately stop the poison from spreading.

When he had stopped grinding the Dragon Bone Jade and used all his power to resist the poison's invasion, it was already too late.

His legs, his nerves, his bones, and even the flow of his blood had become slow and weak due to the spreading poison. He quickly lost all control of his body.

Luckily, his countless attempts to incite the frost energy in his Natal Palace had finally succeeded at the most critical moment, and they instantly spilled out of his two ice ball Natal Palaces.

At this moment he had withdrawn his soul consciousness, little by little, into the Soul Suppressing Orb and was in the state of Thoughtless Tranquility. He had let the Soul Suppressing Orb wrap around his soul while listening to the trio, Tang Siqi, Yi Yuan and Lian Rou, speak.

"I'll go and refine the concoction first." Seeing that Qin Lie had frozen himself, Lian Rou instantly calmed down. "As long as his current condition can be preserved, once I refine the concoction

and splash it all over his body, allowing it to seep slowly into his body... then the Eclipse Insect's poison will be neutralized."

Yi Yuan suddenly extended a head and picked up the Eclipse Insects on Qin Lie's body one after another. He brought them close to his eyes and closely examined them. "So this is how an Eclipse Insect looks? I heard that these poisonous insects are quite impressive, but I've never actually seen one before."

"Don't get yourself poisoned." Just as Tang Siqi relaxed, she saw Yi Yuan pick up the Eclipse Insects and couldn't help but retreat a few steps in fear, putting some distance between Yi Yuan and herself.

"There's no need to be afraid Senior Sister Tang. I may have not seen Eclipse Insects before, but I do have some level of understanding regarding these poisonous insects." Yi Yuan smiled coolly. "An Eclipse Insect's poison is its essence, its brain, its life. Once they spit out their poison, then their life is gone, so there's no way they can survive."

Seeing that Tang Siqi had calmed down, Yi Yuan continued, "Plus, Brother Qin had frozen himself with extreme cold. That coldness is so terrifying that even I... find it a little unbearable. How do you think these few poisonous bugs will fare? Even if they aren't dead, they would've frozen to death now. How can they possibly still harm anyone?"

"Is that how it is?" Tang Siqi did not believe Yi Yuan. She was only looking at Lian Rou.

Lian Rou also nodded. “This Yi Yuan is crazy, but he isn’t stupid. Everything he said is the truth. The Eclipse Insect’s poison is their essence, Once it has been spat out, they will die.”

Hearing her praise, Yi Yuan’s face was filled with a smile and a triumphant look.

“I need to go back to the cave at Flame Volcano to refine the concoction. I’ll leave this place to you two.” Lian Rou herself knew that every second counted. “Whoever wants to kill Qin Bing must be watching still. It will be best if at least one of you can stay here and prevent whoever that is from hurting Qin Bing while he is still frozen.”

Tang Siqi’s eyes shone with a brilliant sparkle, and after she calmed down, she recovered her usual cunning. “Let’s say that Qin Bing is dead!”

She looked at Lian Rou and snorted coldly. “We’ll go out together and leave Yi Yuan to take care of Qin Bing. Whoever wants him dead must be watching from the crowd outside to confirm that Qin Bing is truly dead. I’ll go and talk with Elder Tong and have him investigate a little to see who has asked about Eclipse Insects or who just returned from the south…”

“Good idea,” Yi Yuan praised. “If we say Qin Bing is dead, then maybe that certain someone will let his guard down and reveal himself.”

After the trio summed up their plans softly inside the stone tower, Yi Yuan continued to stay beside Qin Lie and leaving Tang Siqi and Lian Rou to open the door and proceed with the plan.

There were many heads outside the stone door. Many outer and inner sect disciples had heard of the news and arrived, and they were all gathered at the entrance stretching their necks to look over.

Pang Feng, Tian Jianhao, Liang Shaoyang, and Yin Hao were also among the crowd. Even Ouyang Jingjing, who was cultivating quietly beneath the spirit pattern pillars had paid attention to the commotion.

“Siqi, it’s too late to save him. The poison has entered his head and no one can treat him now.” Once she walked out, Lian Rou softly sighed, her eyes filled with helplessness.

An expression of regret also appeared on Tang Siqi’s beautiful face. “Never mind then. We can only do our best. If we really can’t save him, then that is his fate.”

While speaking, Lian Rou and Tang Siqi looked at the crowd and observed the outer and inner sect disciples that had gathered.

“I’ll go back first.” After watching for a while, Lian Rou asked the onlookers to split up so she could head on her own to Flame Volcano.

Tang Siqi closed the stone door behind her back and frowned. “He’s gone, so let him enjoy some peace and quiet. Go back and do your own things. I will explain the matter to Elder Tong and have him drag out the bastard who dared to use Eclipse Insects to harm the people of his own sect!” Her eyes were fierce as she glanced severely towards Liang Shaoyang, Tian Jianhao, and the others.

Tian Jianhao and Liang Shaoyang’s expressions remained the same. There was nothing odd to be found, nor did they let slip anything through their body language.

Then, she too left the stone tower and went to the front yard to look for Tong Jihua. “Uncle Tong, that Qin Bing had been bitten by Eclipse Insects. Someone is trying to kill him.”

At the front yard, inside an Armament Sect outer sect cultivation room, Tang Siqi briefly explained the situation.

“Qin Bing sealed himself with frost energy so the Eclipse Insect’s poison could not continue to spread. Lian Rou said that she can treat him, so I left Yi Yuan back there just in case.” Tang Siqi did not hide anything from Tong Jihua. “Lian Rou and I have told the people outside that Qin Bing has passed away, hoping that the culprit would let his guard down and slip up.”

Tong Jihua listened with a dark face. “It has only been a few months and something like that has already happened. To kill the people of his own sect with Eclipse Insects, the murderer must not be someone ordinary to act in such a ruthless and diabolical manner.”

“Lian Rou deduced that... the murderer may be worried that I was too close with Qin Bing which was why they killed him,” said Tang Siqi as she bowed her head.

“Mn, I know. You don’t need to think about it.” Tong Jihua nodded and consoled her a little before continuing, “Since the matter happened at outer sect, naturally, I am responsible. I will begin an investigation on the Eclipse Insect’s origin, and I hope to find out who has asked looking for information about the Eclipse Insects and who just returned from the south as of late.”

“Thank you for your trouble, Uncle Tong.”

“You don’t have to thank me, this is my duty after all. I’ll contact you when I have more information.”

“Okay. I’ll be leaving then.”

……

“Shaoyang, what are you frowning about? Isn’t that Qin Bing dead already?” Yin Hao asked in surprise.

Inside Liang Shaoyang’s stone tower. The man scowled, and the brutal light in his eyes did not disappear. “Not necessarily. I have grown up in Dark Shadow Tower, and there is one thing that my father told me that I will always remember in my heart—without seeing the body with my own eyes and checking it myself, I must

never assume that my target is dead!”

“Although the Eclipse Insect’s poison spreads slowly, it is extremely terrifying. If he was poisoned at midnight, then it will have spread throughout his entire body by morning, and once it enters the brain, it basically becomes a hopeless situation.” Yin Hao estimated inside his heart, “According to the time, there is no doubt the poison must have entered his brain. And now, yet another hour has passed, so he is guaranteed to be dead.”

“Theoretically, that is true, but there is always a chance.” Liang Shaoyang’s eyebrows were tightly locked as he tapped the table repeatedly with his finger. Suddenly, he asked, “How did you acquire the Eclipse Insect?”

“I bought it from an outer sect foreign delegate. He had previously visited the southern swamps to look for medicine. He caught these Eclipse Insects on his way back.” Yin Hao had realized Liang Shaoyang’s carefulness as his own face turned serious. “An outer sect foreign delegate normally would not operate inside the sect. My dealings with him was also outside the city, so it shouldn’t be discovered by anyone.”

“There is always a chance, and this ‘chance’ is what I hate the most!” A ruthless light shone out of Liang Shaoyang’s eyes as he said in a low tone, “Scrub it clean.”

Watching him, Yin Hao felt chilled at the bottom of his heart as he nodded lightly, “I’ll get it done right away.” With an expression of fearful respect, he retreated. Once he exited the stone tower, he felt that his own back was drenched in sweat.

He knew Shaoyang. He knew that if he didn't deal with the matter appropriately and allowed people to connect the matter of Eclipse Insect with him, then in order to prevent suspicion from falling onto himself, Liang Shaoyang would definitely act beforehand—he would kill him as well.

Therefore, in order to avoid Liang Shaoyang's murderous intent to fall on himself, he had no choice but to take care of that outer sect foreign delegate as soon as possible.

……

Brother Qin, the target you're chasing is far too bright which is why your path is filled with danger. Heh, I have my work cut out for me since Lian Rou is pretty average in most people's eyes, and since she is always together with Senior Sister Tang, she appears even less obvious, so my competitors are truly far and few."

Yi Yuan moved a chair over and sat right beside Qin Lie, talking randomly.

"But this incident changed my impression about Senior Sister Tang too. I didn't expect that she actually has a good heart. I thought that when she found out that you were poisoned she would gloat about it and feel relieved on the inside. She has quarreled with you so many times, and every time she came over, she would walk in with a cold mask before exiting with burning rage. Heh! I even thought that she couldn't wait for you to die…"

“Brother Qin, I can see that your cultivation is at the early stage of the Natal Opening Realm. But that icy aura that you released from your body... is truly extraordinary. I’ve only seen you fight against Tian Jianhao once and nothing else after that, but I can feel that your true strength isn’t weak. Plus, I have no idea about your background either, so I’m slightly curious about you, you know?”

While Qin Lie was in the state of Thoughtless Tranquility—perhaps he was bored—Yi Yuan spoke rather casually and talked to himself.

Qin Lie could neither move nor talk. His soul consciousness was shrunk inside the Soul Suppressing Orb, and he could only listen passively to Yi Yuan’s nonsense.

Sometime in the afternoon, Tang Siqi walked in. “Yi Yuan, go get something to eat. I’ve eaten already, so I came here to switch shifts with you.”

“What did Elder Tong say?” Yi Yuan asked.

“He said that he will do his best to investigate the matter,” replied Tang Siqi .

Yi Yuan nodded, “I do believe in Elder Tong’s abilities. Alright, I’ll go out to eat and will be back in an hour.” Once he finished, he exited the stone tower and shut the stone door tightly.

At this time, the fact that Qin Lie had died from the Eclipse Insect had already been spread outside. Many outer and inner sect disciples had already heard about it.

It was also why no one continued to gather and obstruct the door to watch. They had all gone back to busying themselves.

Tang Siqi sat on the chair Yi Yuan had left behind and turned her head to look at the frozen Qin Lie. This was the first time she looked at him seriously. “When you don’t speak and don’t put on an ugly face, you actually look quite good. Just like how you’re still acceptable when you can’t move right now and your consciousness is frozen…”

She had assumed that Qin Lie had lost consciousness and sealed off everything. Suddenly, she walked beside Qin Lie, leaned down, and stared at Qin Lie’s face. She even carefully stroked his face before withdrawing her jade-like finger with a shiver, muttering to herself, “This guy, I wonder what kind of spirit art he’s cultivating. So cold…”

After a while, her beautiful eyes began to lose focus as she stared at Qin Lie and all of a sudden whispered, “Did you really come for me? Have you done everything to get me to notice you? To make me pay attention to you? Just who are you? I don’t know you, and I’ve also never seen you before…”

Chapter 141: Concept

“Women sure like spouting nonsense to themselves,” Qin Lie quietly thought in his heart.

He still could hear Tang Siqi’s mutterings after withdrawing his soul consciousness into the Soul Suppressing Orb.

Hearing her soliloquy, Qin Lie wasn’t sure if he should be crying or laughing. He didn’t know what to say about this.

Back at Ling Town, when Ling Yushi had assumed that he was stupid and thus did not understand what she said, muttering to herself and recounting her inner troubles before him was her most favorite activity.

Now that Tang Siqi thought that he had lost his consciousness, she had actually begun to mutter to herself as well.

“Do all women like to do this?” Qin Lie was speechless.

When he heard that Tang Siqi had also assumed that the reason he came to Armament Sect was for her, that everything he had done was to attract her attention, that he was chasing her using some unique methods… Qin Lie grew more and more dumbstruck.

“I cannot possibly accept you.” Tang Siqi shook her head. Her bright eyes were focused onto his body. “Sect Master and Elder Mo Hai have placed high expectations on me, hoping that I can become

Armament Sect's future sect master and take over Armament Sect in their place. I promised them that I would treat this matter seriously, that I will put my life's effort into forging artifacts!"

"A man will disrupt my heart and focus. I made up my mind a long time ago that I would not involve myself with any man!"

She was speaking towards Qin Lie, and apparently herself as well. "Setting you aside, I will not be shaken even if there was someone ten times better than you!"

She lowered her head and looked at Qin Lie again. "Besides, you're not really special. Your looks are only handsome at best, and your realm is also pretty low, far weaker even when compared to me. You do work seriously though, that is your one virtue only..."

"I hope that you can give up your pointless dreams once you wake up. I hope you can truly pour your heart into artifact forging and proficiently assist me in grinding spirit materials. In that case, I can recommend you into the inner sect and let you become my junior. At least it'll be better than you spending every day worrying about those despicable ploys."

"....."

Qin Lie felt incredibly wronged. He wanted to explain himself, but unfortunately, he could not open his mouth. He could only listen to Tang Siqi's misunderstanding about him.

He finally understood that Tang Siqi was just like the others, assuming that he had spent all his efforts to chase after her. That was why she had taken precautions and was always careful of him.

“It looks like I really have to correct this misunderstanding.”

Qin Lie made up his mind to explain everything to Tang Siqi first thing after the Eclipse Insect’s poison was neutralized to stop this woman from suspecting everything and believing that everything he did was for her sake and the sake of attracting her attention.

“What a vain woman! Did she seriously believe that every man in the world who comes to Armament Sect comes just for her? Just how conceited can this woman be?!” exclaimed Qin Lie on the inside.

An hour later, Yi Yuan arrived on time and switched shifts with Tang Siqi. Now it was Yi Yuan’s turn to nag and spout his nonsense.

Qin Lie got annoyed of listening to them, so he focused his mind energy onto the frost picture scroll inside the Soul Suppressing Orb.

Slipping his soul consciousness into the frost picture, he meticulously felt every vein of power on the picture and the wonders of the frost concept.

His soul floated about as if he had entered the world inside the

frost picture. It was as if he had placed himself inside the heart of frost and felt that even his soul was shuddering.

It was as if he could hear the cold wind blowing, the world freezing, the icicles flying, and the icy rocks exploding...

He was completely sunk within.

“Eh?!”

Yi Yuan suddenly stopped his nonsense and abruptly looked to Qin Lie with bright light shining from his eyes.

“A concept! A kind of absolute zero concept! It’s as if this concept would freeze everything and turn the entire world into a world of ice!” Yi Yuan felt it for a moment and felt as if his teeth was going to shatter from the frost. Surprised on the inside, he had no choice but to stop it and even moved his chair away to put some distance between himself and Qin Lie.

“Just what kind of background does he have?” Yi Yuan frowned. “He could freeze himself and seal himself in a frozen state, and it seems that his soul is active as well? How can he comprehend soul power at just the early stage of the Natal Opening Realm? This is strange, much too strange. You can just see the anomalies everywhere. This Qin Bing... is probably no ordinary person.”

A concept was something that was incredibly miraculous, and most average martial practitioners would find it really extremely

difficult to capture and understand exactly what a concept was.

Only someone like Yi Yuan, who had grown up at Purple Mist Sea and had come into contact with a wider range of things, would understand a little of the magic that was concept.

He had heard that when one was executing spirit arts and spirit techniques, their powers could be enhanced several times if they could be matched with a complementary concept!

He himself had not understood the true wonders of concepts due to his realm, but he had seen a person who had completely learned a concept at Purple Mist Sea unleashing his concept of fire.

When that concept had spread out, the surrounding people had felt hot all over. It was as if their hearts had been ignited and their blood was burning...

He was also there, and to this day, he could neither forget the burning sensation in his body nor his fear—at the time, he thought that his innards were literally burning alive!

This frost concept is very, very weak, but the will to seal the world inside and the tendency to freeze everything in ice is extremely terrifying!" Yi Yuan sucked in a deep breath as his expression turned serious. "Qin Bing must not have learned much of it yet, or this concept would be far more than just this."

The concept arising from Qin Lie's body made Yi Yuan feel the

illusion that he was in a world of ice and snow, as if the world he was in right now was frozen solid, and that there were glaciers and icy currents everywhere.

Yi Yuan's gaze towards Qin Lie grew more and more amazed. He made up his mind on the inside to pay more attention to Qin Lie and find out more about the wonders happening to him.

Just before the sky darkened.

Lian Rou and Tang Siqi arrived together. The moment the enter the room they both shivered.

"A concept!" Tang Siqi sensed her surroundings a bit before suddenly exclaiming, "I'm not mistaken, am I? Is this truly a concept?"

Lian Rou subconsciously pulled in her clothes tighter and put some distance between her and Qin Lie. Then, she closed in again and, carefully sensed her surroundings for a moment before suddenly confirming, "This is a concept alright! This feeling where our bodies aren't chilled, but our minds are... this is definitely a concept."

Yi Yuan agreed, "The so-called concept is to have your opponent feel its terror from the bottom of his heart and soul before they even begin to unleash their power. We are at the front door and a bit further away from Qin Bing. Our bodies don't feel too uncomfortable, but our hearts and souls feel as if they're in a world of ice. If this is not a concept, then what is?"

“Is the area of a concept only as big as a room?” There was a strange light in Tang Siqi’s eyes. “Rumors say that when those who learned a concept unleash their concepts, it would cover a huge area. The powerful ones could even cover an entire city with their concept alone.”

“That is how the rumor goes.” Yi Yuan’s voice was deep as he said, “I heard that someone had enveloped an entire city with a death concept in the past, and in an hour, every living being inside the city, be it human or beast, had committed suicide. In just an hour, the entire city had become a dead city. Not even a single dog survived.”

Lian Rou and Tang Siqi shivered again. There was no telling if it was because they were frightened by Yi Yuan’s tale or because of the will of frost inside the stone tower.

“Qin Bing’s concept is still too weak and can only affect a room, so his understanding of this concept is still at a beginner’s level.” Yi Yuan continued, “But no matter how weak it is, it is still a concept! As his recognition of this concept deepens, it will grow scarier and more formidable! In the future, when the concept, his spirit art, and body have merged together, then… the destructive power Qin Bing can unleash will practically be unimaginable!”

Lian Rou and Tang Siqi grew more and more amazed. Their watchful gaze on Qin Lie also grew fearful on the inside.

“You can detox him now,” reminded Yi Yuan.

“Oh. Oh, got it.” Lian Rou’s expression was a bit unnatural. After a moment, she took out a porcelain bowl from the spatial ring. The bowl was filled with sticky, black juice, and she passed it to Yi Yuan instructing, “Splash the juice inside this bowl on Qin Lie’s body. Make sure it’s balanced. The head and the face are key, so you must be careful.”

“At your service,” gently smiled Yi Yuan as he took over the porcelain bowl and arrived next to Qin Lie. He splashed the sticky juice onto Qin Lie’s body in accordance with Lian Rou’s instructions.

When a drop of the black and sticky juice fell onto Qin Lie’s body, a sliver of black water then seeped through the thick icy crystals and sank directly into Qin Lie’s skin.

Amazingly, the patch of dark green skin had immediately returned to its normal color once the black juice had seeped in.

“Sister Rou, you really are amazing!” Tang Siqi praised.

“But of course.” Lian Rou lifted her head up high. “The poisonous swamps at the southern area is where I operated before I came to Armament Sect. Our family has dealt with poison and poisonous insects for generations. How can the mere poison of Eclipse Insect possibly put me down?”

“I knew my Lian Rou would be able to do it.” Yi Yuan’s face was also filled with praise.

“Yo-your Lian Rou? What did you say? Bastard, I dare you to say that again!” After freezing for a moment, Lian Rou suddenly and angrily glared at Yi Yuan while scolding him, “You madman! How dare you take advantage of me. I-I’ll make it so that you won’t be able to get out for the latter half of the month!”

Yi Yuan laughed. He did not reply her and simply looked at her affectionately. It was as if he would melt her heart through his gaze alone.

Lian Rou felt goosebumps all over as she was being stared at like that. It was just incredibly uncomfortable. She quickly ran behind Tang Siqi while scolding him, “I’m so unlucky to run into a madman like him. Compared to him, Qin Bing is still okay, at least he’s not this crazy!”

“Yeah, now that I look at it, although Qin Bing has been a little despicable and shameless, he was slightly more pleasing to the eye than Yi Yuan in every other aspect,” Tang Siqi smiled cheerfully.

“Who’s despicable and shameless?” Qin Bing interrupted with a weak voice. He opened his eyes and looked at Tang Siqi, exerting a lot of effort, “You were the one disrupting me from the very beginning. The reason I caused those sparks is to shoo you away, but to think that…”

“More sophistry?” Tang Siqi put both hands on her hips and glared. “You almost shamed me to death, and I even had to hug you to extinguish the fire. You dare say you’re not purposely

setting me up?”

Seeing that the dark green color on his body was fading and that his ability to move was gradually improving, after a moment of silence, he suddenly said, “Brother Yi Yuan, Senior Sister Rou, I must thank you first. Also, can you please leave for a moment, there’s something I need to talk with Senior Sister Tang about alone.”

“No problem,” coolly smiled Yi Yuan as he walked out without needing to be told to do so. When he arrived by Lian Rou he said again, “Let’s leave first.”

Although Lian Rou was uncomfortable with him, hearing Qin Lie’s words, she could only nod and leave with Yi Yuan, exiting the stone tower side by side and leaving Qin Lie and Tang Siqi alone inside.

Chapter 142: Creating A Spirit Skill!

“What do you want to say?” Tang Siqi’s brow creased.

Qin Lie did not immediately respond and murmured to himself for a while. Just as Tang Siqi was running out of patience, he started, “Senior Sister Tang, we might have a misunderstanding between us.”

“Misunderstanding?” Tang Siqi returned her head to look at him, then sat down on a chair in the room. Her beautiful eyes were glimmering as she asked, “What misunderstanding are you talking about?”

“During the exam, I did not know you came before me to pick an assistant and was testing me on my composure.” Qin Lie phrased it carefully. “I thought you were purposefully disrupting me, so I wanted to focus on the purification of the artifact. That is why I threw sparks at you. I assumed you would dodge and then you would stop bothering me…”

Pausing for a moment, Qin Lie then continued, “I hadn’t expected for you to not dodge. I didn’t pay attention to the path of sparks and caused your clothes to catch fire.”

“So you didn’t do it on purpose?” Tang Siqi had an enchanting smile on her face. “You didn’t know that the newly admitted outer sect disciples would be chosen by inner sect disciples as assistants? You really know nothing about the customs of Armament Sect?”

“I’m truly completely ignorant,” Qin Lie nodded. “More accurately, I had no knowledge of Armament Sect before I came to Armament City. I’ve only heard of Armament Pavilion before…”

What he said was the truth.

At Icestone City, he only knew of a single Armament Pavilion and didn’t know that Armament Sect existed behind Armament Pavilion.

Only when Li Mu took him to Armament City and told him the connection between Armament Sect, Armament City, and Armament Pavilion did he understand that Armament Sect was a faction that was composed of artificer masters. It was similar to Dark Asura Hall and Seven Fiends Valley, a Black Iron power.

“You assume that I will believe you?” Tang Siqi raised her eyebrows. “Every person that comes to Armament Sect to participate in the exam would start preparing a year or two ahead of time. If you are truly ignorant of Armament Sect, how could you pass the exam?”

Qin Lie was silent. He had listened to Li Mu’s suggestion and had studied under Yao Tai’s for more than a year to get an understanding of the basics of forging. Then he had made it successfully through the exam.

But at the time, Li Mu had not spoken of Armament Sect and hadn’t told Qin Lie his thoughts.

He had cultivated beneath the Arctic Mountain Range for three months. After awakening, Li Mu took him directly to Armament Sect, said a few words, and then left with the Icestone Snow Wolf King soon after.

Everything happened too quickly. Qin Lie had reached Armament City almost instantaneously and truly did not come from Armament Sect.

“Where did you really come from?” Tang Siqi’s expression became focused. “I had people investigate you. Dark Asura Hall, Seven Fiends Valley, Dark Shadow Tower, and other factions nearby. Even their subordinate Limestone forces do not have a person named Qin Bing who cultivates frost power and understands artifact forging!

Qin Lie was shocked inside. He found that Tang Siqi’s presence was completely overpowering his and he was in a reactive state.

“Just now, when you were talking to yourself, my body was sealed in ice, but my mind was still there.” Qin Lie abruptly changed the topic of conversation. “I heard everything you said clearly. You think I have come to Armament Sect for you and have used all kinds of tactics to attract your attention in order to pursue you…”

A strange look appeared in Tang Siqi’s beautiful eyes. “You heard all of that?”

“I heard it.” Qin Lie inhaled deeply and calmly said, “Senior

Sister Tang, you have overthought. I have come to Armament Sect because I am interested in artifact forging. I'm here to learn artifact forging, not for someone. Also, I have someone in my heart already. I once promised her that I will go find her one day."

He looked at Tang Siqi and asserted with certainty, "Senior Sister Tang, please do not worry. I have not come to Armament Sect for you! So you do not need to be on your guard all the time with me or work against me! If Senior Sister Tang is still dissatisfied with me, you can tell Elder Tong and change assistants. You can even fire me, I will not object."

While he was speaking, Tang Siqi did not interrupt him and listened very attentively. When he finished, Tang Siqi was silent.

A long while later, she nodded at Qin Lie and said, "I understand."

Finished, she turned and pushed the stone door open .

Qin Lie was stunned. He didn't know what decision Tang Siqi had made and did not know what she meant when she said she understood..

"Sister Rou, let's go." Tang Siqi went to Lian Rou's side. Her expression was not well.

"What did he say?" Lian Rou instantly inquired.

“Nothing.” Tang Siqi’s brow creased. Before Lian Rou started to move, she started to proceed to Flame Volcano.

Lian Rou could only follow behind.

Yi Yuan looked in shock as the two females returned to the mountain. He scratched his head, his heart filled with curiosity—he turned and went to find Qin Lie.

“Brother Qin, how do you feel?” A short time later, Yi Yuan walked in and inquired with a smile, “What did you say to Senior Sister Tang? Her expression wasn’t too well just now, as though you had harassed her…”

“I didn’t say anything,” coldly responded Qin Lie.

……

A day later.

In Armament Sect’s outer sect, in Tong Jihua’s personal cultivation room, an Armament Sect martial practitioner came in and reported in a heavy voice, “Long He has died.”

Tong Jihua had been sitting with his eyes closed. Hearing this, he instantly opened his eyes and shouted, “How did he die?”

“Someone pierced his throat with a sword. He didn’t seem to

have resisted before someone killed him." The person bowed as he continued, "The one that killed Long He should have been someone he was familiar with, or he was talking with Long He and stabbed his throat when Long He had his guard down.

"In the last half year, only Long He came from the south. We have finished investigating. Long He did come back with some Eclipse Insects." Tong Jihua's brow creased. "We have just started investigating and Long He was already killed. So it must have been Long He who brought the Eclipse Insects. Keep investigating along this trail and find out who Long He recently interacted with, especially the disciples in the outer sect. Investigate them."

"This subordinate understands." This person nodded and retreated with a bow.

……

At night, the moon was round like a plate.

Qin Lie was like a piece of ice standing in the little cultivation room inside his tower. He was looking at the plaza from the window.

On the plaza, the twelve spirit pattern pillars gave off a slightly silver light under the moon. There were inner sect and outer sect disciples quietly sitting under each pillar.

Some were holding spirit tablets as they drew out the pictures on

the spirit pattern pillars. There were also some who only gazed at the pictures and were in deep thought.

Ouyang Jingjing, Tian Jianhao and Liang Shaoyang were all under the spirit pattern pillars. They still had hopes for the pillars. They were trying to comprehend the wonders of the spirit pattern pillars, hoping to enter the inner sect in one fell swoop and receive the favor of the sect leader and all the elders to become a candidate for the next sect leader.

Yi Yuan had given up already.

“Who would want to get rid of me?”

Qin Lie’s face was cold as his eyes gleamed icily. Gazing at the disciples on the plaza, murderous intent gathered in his head.

If he hadn’t comprehend the essence of the frost concept and could manipulate the cold energy of the ice ball Natal Palaces to seal himself completely in ice at that critical moment, he would’ve already been dead now.

Someone was hiding in the darkness, ready to kill him at any moment, Qin Lie was unable to eat or sleep soundly.

He kept on feeling that someone was looking at him coldly from the shadows, waiting to attack again at a moment’s notice to deal a fatal blow!

This feeling was extremely discomforting to him.

“No matter who you are, if I find you, I will end this calamity!” Qin Lie watched for a while and did not find anything unusual. He took his gaze back and sat down inside the cultivation room.

The next moment, his eyes became icy and indifferent, devoid of any emotion.

Almost in an instant, he entered a wondrous state as though he was completely frozen and became a mountain of ice under the Arctic Mountain Range...

A bone-chilling coldness emanated from his body. After his frost concept formed, the frosty-white, cold mist gradually spread.

“Cra-cra-crack!”

In the cultivation room, the hard stone flood and walls were gradually frozen. The coldness inside the room increased.

Qin Lie experienced the wonders of the frost concept. He channelled the cold power of his Natal Palaces. The pores on his body opened and cold mist poured out.

“Ice Crystal Shield!”

The cold mist at his two hands quickly condensed and formed a

crystal shield made from ice in front of him.

The ice crystal shield was about one meter wide and one finger thick. It glowed like crystal and its inside was filled with dazzling light.

“Frost Blade!”

As he mentally shouted and his cold energy shifted, the Ice Crystal Shield suddenly changed. It first scattered back into cold mist and then quickly condensed to form a blade more than a meter long.

The blade was formed from cold ice and appeared unusually sharp. The handle of the blade was connected to his arm as though they were one being.

The Ice Crystal Shield and Frost Blade were, respectively, the defensive and offensive moves he had slowly created after learning to channel the power of frost.

As his understanding of the frost concept deepened, his control of the cold power inside his Natal Palaces increased, so he started to form offensive spirit skills that used cold energy as its core to increase his combat capabilities.

Spirit arts of different attributes should be used in conjunction with corresponding spirit skills. Some spirit skills had to be specially purchased.

Yet if one had a very deep understanding of some kind of spirit art and they were creative, they could use their spirit art as the base to create unique spirit skills.

Many spirit skills were similar. As long as one was familiar with using the spirit art, they could easily perform the spirit skills they had seen before.

For example, the fireball skill was a spirit skill that anyone that cultivated fire spirit arts could easily master. As long as they had a deep understanding of the fire and flame spirit arts and used some effort, they could easily gather fire spirit energy into fireballs to attack their enemies.

In the stone woods before, it was the same case when Qin Lie gathered thunder and lightning into a Thunder Lightning Ball.

Spirit arts were the core and basis of a martial practitioner's combat capabilities. Spirit skills were just side branches of the tree. If one had a deep understanding of spirit arts, spirit skills could be created based on one's understanding and preferences.

Frost Blade and Ice Crystal Shield were formed based on his understanding of the frost concept and his control of the cold power.

"Tang Siqi has not come for three days. She must have understood and ended the relationship with me." After cultivating for a while, Qin Lie stopped and said in a low voice as he looked

outside.

Yet the next morning before he had completely woken up, Tang Siqi's voice sounded at the door again. "Qin Bing, from today, you are my artifact forging assistant! Get up now and come to the artifact forging room with me. I need to smelt an artifact, and you are responsible for assisting me!"

Chapter 143: Mutual Understanding

In the cavern where fires flickered, seven smelting furnaces of different sizes were positioned in a strange setup. There was a channel under each smelting furnace. The flame liquid in the channels released astonishing amounts of flame power.

This was the power of earthfire!

Other than the seven furnaces, there were also many shelves in the vast cavern. Each storage shelf had many rare spirit materials on it. The great majority of spirit materials were profound level!

At the ceiling of the cavern, a bright spirit stone was hung. The light of the spirit stone was bright as it illuminated the interior of the cavern.

At this time, Tang Siqi was like a fire butterfly that flickered between the seven smelting furnaces and put spirit materials into different furnaces.

“Six Thick Earth Topaz! Help me by putting it into furnace number three!”

“Five ounces of Stellar Iron, put it in furnace number six!”

“Profound Iron, three pieces! Furnace number one!”

As Tang Siqi moved, she shouted.

Following her shouts, Qin Lie walked around, picking up the spirit materials that had been prepared beforehand and put them into the different furnaces at the right times.

One of them was within the circle of furnaces, the other outside, both of them moving rapidly with solemn expressions.

“Pwwft, pwwft!”

Thick smoke rose from the furnaces as shocking amounts of heat spread throughout the entire cavern. Qin Lie, who had been primarily cultivating frost power was very unused to it.

He had to channel frost power to use cold energy to resist the high heat inside the cavern so he could help Tang Siqi finish this with a clear mind.

“Next, I need to use a spirit art in conjunction with the smelting furnaces. Help me by adding spirit materials.” Tang Siqi suddenly stopped moving.

She sat down on the mat between the seven smelting furnaces and wiped away the sweat on her forehead. Her face was red as she instructed, “You need to be on time and instantly do what I say when I say it. You cannot lag behind!”

Qin Lie nodded.

Tang Siqi suddenly closed her eyes. Under Qin Lie's astounded gaze, the bracelets she was wearing on her wrists suddenly gave off shocking waves of flame power.

Her clean and white arms became purely red under the light of the flames. Her hands danced and created many wondrous spirit arts.

"Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh!"

There were many cryptic seal characters and amazing lines that created blooms of fire, balls of fire, and balls flaming light that contained certain wonders. They all landed in the seven smelting furnaces.

Those spirit arts seemed to have special meaning within them. Once they entered the furnace, they immediately created powerful reactions with the spirit materials inside the furnace.

"Bang bang bang!"

A ball of fire landed in furnace number three. A shocking vibration suddenly occurred as though the furnace was about to explode.

"Mystical Cold Jade! Quick, put in three Mystical Cold Jades!" Tang Siqi shouted with her eyes closed.

Qin Lie's expression shifted. There was no time to think. He flashed to the storage shelf by his side, grabbed three Mystical Cold Jades and immediately threw them into furnace number three.

"Sst, sst!'

As the Mystical Cold Jade entered, the explosive sounds inside furnace number three instantly stopped. The shocking vibrations slowly calmed.

Qin Lie released a breath.

He gathered his attention and looked at Tang Siqi. He would wait for Tang Siqi to give another order and then complete it as fast as possible.

He was extremely precise with every spirit material Tang Siqi requested. If she said two ounces, it would be two ounces, there wouldn't be a speck more.

He also was extremely attentive to time. He wouldn't hesitate to put in the spirit material whenever Tang Siqi told him to.

As Tang Siqi's spirit arts changed, more wondrous vibrations came from between her hands and landed in the seven smelting furnaces.

Tang Siqi's orders were given out at an increasingly rapid rate.

Qin Lie was like a bolt of lightning as he quickly moved between the shelves. Under the firelight, his moving figure was red.

An unknown time later, Tang Siqi slowly stopped the fluctuation of her spirit arts and did not give out any more orders. She sat on the mediation mat and rested.

Qin Lie was so exhausted; he was almost at his limit. When he was sure that Tang Siqi wouldn't have any more orders, he also sat down on.

He looked at the seven smelting furnaces in the enormous cavern and thought back to Tang Siqi's rapid movements and the wondrous spirit arts she had displayed...

"Yao Tai... really was only a low-ranking artificer," Qin Lie sighed.

When he had been at Nebula Pavilion, Qin Lie had assisted Yao Tai in forging a few times. He secretly compared Yao Tai to Tang Siqi and instantly realized that Yao Tai's skill was extremely lacking in comparison to Tang Siqi's skill in artifact forging.

Yao Tai clearly struggled with one furnace when forging, and he mostly used Common grade spirit materials.

Tang Siqi used seven smelting furnaces at once, and she mostly used Profound grade spirit materials. She cultivated fire spirit arts,

and her own cultivation... seemed to have reached the Manifestation Realm. She could use her spirit arts in conjunction with her artifact forging. Her familiarity with spirit materials reached a level that was pleasing to the eye.

Watching Tang Siqi cast spirit arts would make people feel pleasure as though Tang Siqi's artifact forging was a kind of art!

"This is true artifact forging!" Qin Lie inwardly murmured. He suddenly felt gratitude towards Li Mu for arranging for him to come to Armament Sect so he could come see true artificers forge artifacts.

"Extinguish the fire!"

A long time later, Tang Siqi recovered some energy and suddenly but lightly called out.

Her hands once again moved with her spirit arts. Streaks of fire shot to the seven smelting furnaces. Each furnace was hit by the light and rang out.

The earthfire, in lava form, suddenly reversed the direction it was flowing in inside the channels and flooded towards the core of the volcano.

The light inside the cavern quickly extinguished. The dizzying heat also weakened as the earthfire retreated.

“Use your frost power to help the furnace cool down and the artifacts to take form faster,” Tang Siqi ordered.

Qin Lie stood up again. After taking a deep breath, he channelled frost power. Cold mist flew out of his pores. He seemed to be shrouded in frosty-white mist as he walked closer to the burning-red furnaces and directed the mist towards their mouths.

After each furnace was surrounded by the mist, it would give off thick smoke. The heat of the smoke and the cold air of the mist mixed and caused a great fog to form inside the cavern which affected visibility.

One furnace after the next, Qin Lie used the cold mist to cool the artifacts within the furnaces. When the last one was complete, he slowly moved back.

“Hm?” He suddenly felt a soft and voluptuous body against his back.

“You’re touching me!” Tang Siqi complained in a low voice.

Qin Lie hurriedly walked forward a step. “The cold power and heat power will form a fog when they mix. Right now, the cavern is full of fog. It will be a while until it dissipates.”

“I know, I don’t need you to explain,” Tang Siqi responded in a cold tone.

Qin Lie was shut down so he closed his mouth and didn't say a word.

Within the fog, Tang Siqi was also silent as though she was having a contest with Qin Lie.

With the two of them silent in the quiet cavern, they could almost hear the breathing of the other and feel the other's position. However, they could not see each other's expression nor know what they were thinking.

"You can become an inner sect disciple." After a while, Tang Siqi was first to break the silence. "You are very serious about forging. Even though I do not know if you will be talented with spirit diagrams in the future, I'm sure that as long as you can maintain this attitude and if the elders of the inner sect are not blind, they will definitely admit you as an inner sect disciple."

Qin Lie was still silent.

"Outer sect disciples can grind spirit materials, go to the cultivation rooms at the base of the mountain to practice forging, and use the furnaces to learn forging," Tang Siqi continued to talk, "The difference between inner and outer sect disciples is that outer sect disciples are not taught how to inscribe spirit diagrams. The spirit diagrams of the sect are top secret. Only true inner sect disciples can learn them. You can only learn how to inscribe spirit diagrams by becoming an inner sect disciple. Spirit diagrams are the soul of artifacts and the core to finalizing the rank of the artifact..."

Qin Lie also knew this. He nodded to show his understanding.

At this time, the fog inside the cavern had slowly dissipated. The two gradually became able to see each other.

“This is it for today. I will send a new mission to you in a few days. Rent a forging room at the base of the mountain and help me forge some little things at that time.” Tang Siqi suddenly sent an order to leave when the fog completely dissipated and the two could clearly see each other.

Qin Lie nodded without making a sound and left the cavern.

“Senior Sister Lian Rou,” greeted Qin lie when he came out and coincidentally saw Lian Rou.

Lian Rou looked strangely at him and said, “Siqi actually allowed you to come to her forging room! In these years, other than Sect Leader and Elder Mo Hai, there hasn’t been another male that could step into these grounds. You... are really skilled!” As she spoke, Lian Rou’s face turned cold.

Qin Lie’s brow creased. He did not explain and walked down the mountain.

Lian Rou instantly proceeded into the cavern and saw Tang Siqi between the seven furnaces. She said worriedly, “Siqi, how could you allow him in here? He is the first guy to have stepped into this

place in these years. Do you really like him?”

“I wanted to see his abilities.” Tang Siqi stood up and walked with Lian Rou to the mouth of the cavern. Looking at Qin Lie walking alone on the mountain path, she said, “He really does have the ability. He can finish my orders perfectly. When my orders are sent, he can precisely carry them out in an instant.”

Pausing for a while, Tang Siqi’s eyes were strange. She divulged in a low tone, “When I was forging, he seemed to be able to know what I was thinking. He, he seems to have a bit of mutual understanding with me…”

“Siqi, did you forget my reminder?” Lian Rou was shocked.

“No, I just feel he is a very good assistant. He can carry my orders out and work with me. Just that.” Tang Siqi shook her head, then smiled and assured her, “You are thinking too much. How can I like him?”

“Hm, this guy is too much of a schemer. I’m afraid you will lose.” After Lian Rou reminded her again, she said, “I just visited Elder Tong. Elder Tong said that it might have been Senior Brother Yin Hao who killed Long He. He had someone investigate, and that person said that Yin Hao had gotten into contact with Long He a while ago.”

“Senior Brother Yin Hao?” Tang Siqi was shocked. “He wants to kill Qin Bing? Impossible! He has no reason to kill Qin Bing. He’s a greedy person but not lustful. His eyes when he looks at me are…

calm. He definitely will not kill Qin Bing because of me, I'm sure of that."

"Yin Hao is very close to Liang Shaoyang," informed Lian Rou.

"Liang Shaoyang?" Tang Siqi stilled. "Yin Hao is an inner sect disciple. He chose Liang Shaoyang as his assistant so Liang Shaoyang should be listening to him because he has a higher position. How could he kill someone for Liang Shaoyang?"

"Don't forget, Senior Brother Yin Hao came from Dark Shadow Tower in the past," Lian Rou said.

"Ah?" Tang Siqi was slightly shocked.

At this time, a frightened yell came from a cavern under them, "Senior Brother Yin Hao! Senior Brother Yin Hao is dead!"

The voice came from Pang Shishi.

Lian Rou and Tang Siqi changed expressions as they hurriedly moved down. Qin Lie, who had been descending down the mountain was near the location of the shout. He also stopped in his steps and looked in shock at a nearby cavern.

Chapter 144: Uncalled Disaster

Every inner sect disciple in Armament Sect was assigned a personal cave at Flame Volcano. Not only was the cave provided with a furnace used for artifact forging, it even had a guided earthfire source and was supplied with various artifact forging spirit materials.

Naturally Yin Hao was not an exception.

In Yin Hao's cave, Pang Shishi hurriedly explained with a panic-stricken face, "I am lacking Flowing Cloud Stones which is why I have come to borrow a few from Senior Brother Yin Hao. I had shouted a few times in front of your cave, but Senior Brother Yin Hao had not replied. So I tried pushing the door a little and it opened straight away. After I came in, Senior Brother Yin Hao was already like this."

Inside the cave, Yin Hao's entire body was covered in a dark-green as his body fell stiffly beside a furnace.

"Eclipse Insects!"

Lian Rou and Tang Siqi could not help but cry out after taking only one glance.

There were several soybean sized beetles on Yin Hao's body. His body was also dark green in color which was the same symptoms Qin Lie had a few days before.

“What happened to Yin Hao?” There was a cry of exclamation from outside the cave as the green garbed, tall and thin Pan Xuan walked in.

“Senior Brother.” The moment he appeared, Lian Rou, Tang Siqi, and Pang Shishi saluted in unison and greeted him.

Pan Xuan looked about thirty years old and was the disciple of the current sect master. He had some prestige among the inner sect disciples. He walked right next to Yin Hao’s body, looked down, and felt his expression turn heavy. “Eclipse Insects!”

He turned around, looked at Lian Rou and Tang Siqi before frowning, “I heard that an outer sect disciple had been bitten by Eclipse Insects previously and was saved by Junior Sister Lian Rou. Now Yin Hao has also been bitten by Eclipse Insects. Is there a connection between the two?”

“Senior Brother, Elder Tong has been investigating where Eclipse Insects came from lately, and according to him, they were brought back from the south by Long He.” Lian Rou’s heart was heavy. “Long He also died. Someone had pierced his throat with a sword. According to Elder Tong’s investigations, Senior Brother Yin Hao and Long He have been interacting more frequently as of late.”

“Elder Tong suspects that Yin Hao is the one who killed Long He? Who killed Yin Hao then?” Pan Xuan was shocked on the inside.

Lian Rou shook her head. “I’m not sure either.”

While speaking, more nearby inner sect disciples had gradually gathered and arrived at the cave. They all stared solemnly at Yin Hao's corpse.

Qin Lie stopped his footsteps and listened intently. When he heard the two words "Eclipse Insect" his eyes shone with a cold light.

Although he wasn't originally looking for trouble, he too headed to Yin Hao's cave and tentatively poked his head into the cave. He hoped to clearly examine Yin Hao's condition to find some leads.

"Who are you?" Beside Yin Hao's body, Pan Xuan's expression abruptly darkened as he yelled when seeing someone strange walk in.

"Qin Bing, outer sect disciple." Qin Lie bowed slightly.

"Outer sect disciple?" Pan Xuan's expression turned cold as he waved his hand impatiently. "Get out! There's no place for you here!"

Qin Lie's expression was indifferent, but his pupils shrunk a little.

"Senior Brother, Qin Bing is the assistant that I've chosen. Previously, he was helping me carrying a new batch of spirit materials up here." Tang Siqi hurriedly explained, "The outer sect

disciple who was bitten by Eclipse Insects is him."

"Yin Hao's death is strange. He was also killed by Eclipse Insects, so the outer sect disciples on the mountains currently are very suspicious." Pan Xuan asked Lian Rou with a darkened face, "According to your understanding of Eclipse Insects, do you know approximately when Yin Hao was bitten?"

"It must have been last night." After checking for a while, Lian Rou said, "He should have died to the poison this morning."

Pan Xuan looked at Tang Siqi again and questioned, "Did this outer sect disciple called Qin Bing come to the mountain yesterday?"

"No, he only arrived this morning." Tang Siqi looked a little angry. "Senior Brother, are you actually suspecting Qin Bing? He was also bitten by Eclipse Insects. The murderer must be someone else. Exactly what kind of reason do you have to suspect Qin Bing?"

"Revenge." Pan Xuan responded with a dark face. "According to Elder Tong's assumption, Only Yin Hao had close ties with Long He, and Long He's Eclipse Insects were taken away by Yin Hao. In that case... it is possible that Eclipse Insect that bit Qin Bing was Yin Hao's work. Now that he was bitten to death himself, who is to say that it isn't possible that someone wanted to give him a taste of his own medicine?"

Once finished he harshly stared at Qin Lie and snapped, "Are you the one who killed him?"

“You have such rich imagination, senior brother,” Qin Lie coldly mocked him.

Qin Bing discovered that this inner sect senior brother seemed to be going against him at every step since the moment they met. It confused him; he didn’t know where he might have offended this person.

“Qin Bing, you can go down the mountain first. Naturally, there will be people who will take care of this.” Tang Siqi gave him eye contact.

“He cannot go yet!” Pan Xuan said coldly with a dark face, “If it truly was him, once he gets down the mountain, there’s no telling if he’ll escape out of guilt right away. Tan Fuzhou, go down and inform Elder Tong of this matter and have him come swiftly.”

An inner sect disciple nodded and headed out of the cave.

“Detain this Qin Bing for now and pass him onto Elder Tong later. Let Elder Tong investigate him closely,” Pan Xuan continued to instruct.

The two Armament Sect inner sect disciples immediately walked forward and arrived at Qin Lie’s left and right side. One of them took out shackles and was ready to put it right on top of Qin Lie’s head.

“You have neither evidence nor justification. On what basis are you detaining him?!” Tang Siqi’s beautiful eyes were practically about to spit fire.

“Siqi, will you just stop talking,” Lian Rou exclaimed softly before hurriedly grabbing the shackles from them “Let me do it. I’ll detain Qin Bing so as not to trouble you two junior brothers.”

Those two people were greatly troubled being stuck between Pan Xuan and Tang Siqi. Seeing that Lian Rou had proactively accepted the responsibility, they quickly passed over the shackles to her.

Accepting the shackles, Lian Rou walked near to Qin Lie, lowered her voice, and said, “Please endure it for the moment. Elder Tong knows and will not make things difficult for you…”

Qin Lie, who was looking harsh earlier quieted down once he heard her words. He cooperatively allowed her to put the shackles on him.

He understood now that the more Tang Siqi defended him, the more would Pan Xuan go against him, preferably to his death.

Wasn’t this obvious enough?

Pan Xuan obviously held an eye for Tang Siqi. The moment he heard that he had carried spirit materials into Tang Siqi’s cave, this person began to create trouble out of nowhere and intentionally put them on him. Ironically, Tang Siqi had

unintentionally cooperated by continuously arguing with him, so naturally, this incited his jealousy and caused Pan Xuan to go against him like crazy.

Qin Lie's heart was full with bitterness. He wasn't sure if he should thank Tang Siqi or get her to shut up as soon as possible.

"Senior Brother, you are not an inner sect elder. You have no authority to do such a thing, do you?" yelled Tang Siqi as she angrily glared at Pan Xuan.

"Siqi, enough!" Lian Rou cried out.

"The inner sect elders are all forging artifacts in seclusion and very rarely ask about the unimportant stuff in the sect. As the eldest among the inner sect disciples and before an elder arrives, logic dictates me to handle this matter," Pan Xuan answered arrogantly.

"Isn't that just entering the sect ten years earlier? What is there to be proud of? You just watch out in the future!" Tang Siqi yelled hatefully.

"Hmph!" Pan Xuan also snorted coldly.

Qin Lie felt a bellyful of bad luck listening to the both of them converse. He would never have come out of curiosity if he knew this would happen. Now it's just great. He was struck by an uncalled disaster out of nowhere and became this Pan Xuan's

outlet.

Before long, outer sect Tong Jihua arrived with a scowl and glanced at Yin Hao's body. After confirming the situation he nodded and said, "The outer sect will take care of the random matters in the sect. You all only need to do your best in forging artifacts and live up to the sect master's expectations."

He made a grabbing motion from afar, and the shackles on Qin Lie's body were unlocked. He glanced once at Qin Lie and ordered, "Follow me down."

Qin Lie did not say anything and swept a cold glance at Pan Xuan. Then, he followed Tong Jihua down the mountain.

Lian Rou winked at Tang Siqi as they both also sneakily left Yin Hao's cave. They quietly descended down Flame Volcano and went to the outer sect at the foot of the mountain.

Inside Tong Jihua's exclusive cultivation room, Qin Lie, Tang Siqi, and Lian Rou were all present. The trio turned to look at Tong Jihua.

"Wait." Tong Jihua narrowed his eyes, said this one word, and had the three of them keep silent.

After a full four hours—even the sky had turned dark—only then did a figure wald in, kneel on one knee, and say with his head lowered, "Liang Shaoyang was not at his stone tower last night."

Tong Jihua waved his hands to let this person leave. Only then did he say, “The person who used the Eclipse Insects both times is Liang Shaoyang. But the one who killed Long He should be Yin Hao.”

“Before Yin Hao came to Armament Sect, he had been cultivating at a subordinate Limestone force under Dark Shadow Tower. The tower lord of Dark Shadow Tower saw his potential in artifact forging, which is why he had sent people to allow Yin Hao into Dark Shadow Tower and have the artificer of Dark Shadow Tower teach him the art of artifact forging.”

“Three years later, Yin Hao came to Armament Sect to participate in the exam and successfully entered the sect. Because he really was somewhat talented, he was quickly noticed by an inner sect elder and smoothly entered the inner sect. All of Yin Hao’s luck was all thanks to a word from Dark Shadow Tower’s tower lord, which was why he was very grateful to the tower lord.”

After a pause, Tong Jihua continued, “Liang Shaoyang happens to be the younger son of the tower lord of Dark Shadow Tower.”

Neither Qin Lie, Tang Siqi, nor Lian Rou, who were in the room, were stupid. Since Tong Jihua had explained up to this point, naturally they understood what it meant.

“Liang Shaoyang had grown up in Dark Shadow Tower since he was young. It was said that before he was even ten years old, he had already carried out missions for Dark Shadow Tower on the

outside and learned how to kill people." Tong Jihua said with a scowl, "To accept missions and assassinate people is the way martial practitioners in Dark Shadow Tower grow up. Every Dark Shadow Tower martial practitioners views murder as the easiest way to solve a problem. As someone who grew up in Dark Shadow Tower since he was young, he must be all too familiar with this method."

"Liang Shaoyang!" Qin Lie exclaimed coldly in a low tone.

"Elder Tong, this Liang Shaoyang is the youngest son of the tower lord of Dark Shadow Tower. How are you going to deal with this matter?" Lian Rou suddenly asked.

"Naturally, we will act according to the rules of our sect!" Tong Jihua's expression turned cold as he said without a hint of politeness, "Let's not say that he is the son of Dark Shadow Tower's tower lord. Even if it was the tower lord himself who dared to break the rules of Armament Sect, we will deal with them exactly as how they would deal with us! The reason Armament Sect can stand foot on this land and acquire the acknowledgement of Dark Asura Hall, Seven Fiends Valley, Dark Shadow Tower, Purple Mist Sea, Cloud Sky Mountain, and many other forces was not simply because we can forge artifacts!"

Proudness appeared on his face. "On what basis is it that no one dared to touch the spirit artifacts traveling between Armament Sect and every Armament Pavilion for the past few years? It is all because of our outer sect, 'Blood Spear'! As long as 'Blood Spear' remains unbroken, anyone who dares to go against us Armament Sect will have to consider whether they will be pierced by 'Blood

Spear' first!"

Blood Spear was a private team of Armament Sect's outer sect. It was built through the sweat and blood of Armament Sect.

Every martial practitioner in Blood Spear had amazing combat capabilities, and they were equipped with the highest ranking spirit weapons forged by the artificers of Armament Sect. It could be said that they were the most luxuriously equipped men of all surrounding forces.

Blood Spear was also Armament Sect's true trump card and why they were not afraid the other forces would rob them.

Chapter 145: A Grand Occasion In The Sect

Normally, Tong Jihua appeared to be kind and easygoing. It was rare to find any kind of sharpness in his aura.

However, when he mentioned the Blood Spear, at this very moment, it was as if he had become a sharp sword that struck fear in people's hearts.

"Netherpassage Realm!"

Qin Lie cried out on the inside as he stared at the current Tong Jihua. There was fearful respect within his eyes.

Jiu Liuye, who had suddenly shown up at Ling Town and took away Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan sisters, was also at the Netherpassage Realm. She was the valley master of Seven Fiends Valley's Dark Fiend Valley and was someone who was on par with a person such as Dark Asura Hall's hall master, Yuan Tianya.

Among Black Iron forces, a martial practitioner within the Netherpassage Realm could be counted as a top rank fighter.

Tong Jihua didn't normally bare his fangs, but the moment he unleashed his aura, he actually revealed himself to be in Netherpassage Realm. This caused Qin Lie to have a clear recognition of Armament Sect—they truly were a Black Iron force!

Tong Jihua's actions had caused Qin Lie to respect him a little

more after knowing that he would not fear Dark Shadow Tower's tower master and would take down Liang Shaoyang according to Armament Sect's rules.

"Elder Tong!" The martial practitioner who left earlier abruptly appeared once more with utmost shock brimming in his eyes. He hurriedly yelled, "The plaza! The plaza..."

"What?" Tong Jihua frowned.

"The spirit pattern pillars have changed!" The person's voice had even shivered slightly. "Liang Shaoyang is right beneath a spirit inscription pilar. It seems that he... he has caused a reaction in a spirit pattern pillar! Elder Tong, I believe you should have a look yourself!"

The moment the words were said, everyone's expression changed. They rushed out of the cultivation room and towards the plaza almost in unison.

Qin Lie was also extremely shocked.

The twelve spirit pattern pillars in the plaza was the core of the foundation of Armament Sect. It was also the greatest proof of the talent of an Armament Sect disciple.

Any outer sect disciple who could cause a change in the spirit pattern pillars and understand the wonders of the designs of a spirit pattern pillar would immediately step foot into the inner sect

and be treated with the utmost care by all sect masters and elders. They would be seen and raised as Armament Sect's future and could waste Armament Sect's spirit materials all they want.

For nine hundred years, since Armament Sect was founded, there were only twenty seven people who could cause a change in the spirit pattern pillars and understood the wonders of those designs.

Every one of these twenty seven people were Armament Sect's pride and the darling of that era!

They were the true cornerstone of Armament Sect!

For the past tens of years, Tang Siqi and Mo Hai were the only ones to have learned the wonders of the spirit pattern pillars' diagrams, and Mo Hai was now the number one elder in the inner sect and was a publically acknowledged Artificer Master. Tang Siqi had also shown incredible talent in artifact forging, and her future was limitless.

Would Liang Shaoyang possibly be the third?

With this question in mind, Qin Lie, Tang Siqi, and Lian Rou followed elder Tong Jihua's footsteps and swiftly rushed to the plaza at the foot of the hill.

Tong Jihua was extremely anxious and had disappeared in a flash. He did not wait for them.

When the trio had arrived at the plaza, they realized that the entire plaza was bright under the dark night, and many lamps had been hung high in the air. Many inner and outer sect disciples had rushed over when they heard the news and stared, with utmost shock, at that one spirit pattern pillar.

Beneath that spirit pattern pillar, Liang Shaoyang sat straight with his eyes closed as if he was learning something.

Above the spirit pattern pillars, those diagrams etched with demons and monsters came alive. They either had wings behind their backs, had three heads and six arms, or dragged a long tail behind them. Their skins were all greenish purple, and they screamed noiselessly on the spirit pattern pillar as if they would break free of their restraints and escape.

Countless tight webs were entangled on the demons and monsters' bodies, tightening constantly and preventing them from escaping the shackles of the huge webs no matter how they struggled.

Liang Shaoyang sat right beneath that spirit pattern pillar.

The wondrous and huge complex webs above the spirit pattern pillars shone with many colors onto Liang Shaoyang's body. It was as if it had built a faint connection with Liang Shaoyang and he had completely figured out the miraculous wonders of the picture where demons and monsters were bound.

"So, so he did figure out its wonders. That is how he managed to

cause a bizarre change in the spirit pattern pillar so suddenly." After Tong Jihua arrived, his expression was filled with shock.

"Dong!" The melodious sound of a bell ringing came from above Flame Volcano.

"It's the sect master. The sect master has come out of seclusion!"

Many inner and outer Armament Sect disciples cried out after hearing the ringing sound.

It was midnight, and there were countless people who were either asleep, cultivating, or practicing inscribing spirit diagrams. When they heard the bell, every Armament Sect elder, disciple, and reverend's expressions changed as they realized that a change had happened in Armament Sect. They could not help but walk out to have a look.

Very soon, they realized the plaza beneath Flame Volcano had many sect disciples present.

Therefore the six great elders of inner sect, the three reverends, the sixteen disciples, the three outer sect elders, more than ninety disciples, and the numerous foreign delegates from outside the city...

Anyone who was a part of Armament Sect had gathered beside the plaza the moment they heard the bell.

Just because Liang Shaoyang had caused a change in a single spirit pattern pillar, the entire Armament Sect had come alive in the middle of the night. Every elder or disciple, be it secluding, forging, or cultivating, had come out and joined the fray.

Qin Lie lifted his head and saw many figures flying down from above Flame Volcano under the moonlight. He could not help but be rattled on the inside.

There were a total of seven great elders in the inner sect, and other than Mo Hai, who had gone out and not returned yet, all six elders of the sect had come down from the mountain!

The three elderly inner sect reverends were so old that every hair on their body was white. Under the six elders' care and accompaniment, they too trembled on their way from the top of the mountain.

The reverends of the inner sect were all elders from a generation earlier. Because they were older and that they had run into a problem with their realms, they could not continue to forge artifacts. That was why they cultivated their bodies and minds for years on top of the mountain with the status of a Reverend. Every one of them was older than the sect master himself, and the Chief Reverend was even the master of the current sect master.

It was only when a huge change had happened to the sect that the three reverends would appear and assist the sect master in making a decision.

Tonight, the three reverends who had not gone down the mountain for a few years appeared together with the sect master, Ying Xingran, on the plaza as they stood together beside Liang Shaoyang.

“Greetings, Sect Master!”

“Greetings, Reverends!”

“Greetings, Elders!”

The inner and outer sect disciples hurriedly bowed and saluted.

Ying Xingran’s eyes were shining as he swept his gaze across the crowd, nodded to Tong Jihua, and smiled lightly at Tang Siqi before looking to Liang Shaoyang with an excited expression. “Good, very good! To think that yet another genius has appeared in our sect! Very good!”

While speaking, the demons and monsters on the spirit pattern pillar above Liang Shaoyang slowly stopped struggling and turned into an inanimate object once more.

The huge webs that trapped the demons and monsters continued to shine with multiple colors. It took a while before it slowly stopped, finally faded into the spirit pattern pillar and lost its wonders completely.

Ying Xingran glowed red at his cheeks as he raised his hands for

everyone to keep silent while patiently waiting to the side.

When the outer sect disciples had entered, he did not exit seclusion. When Cloud Sky Mountain's Mountain Master passed by Armament City, he did not come out to meet him either.

But when he heard that someone had caused a change in the spirit pattern pillars, he came out of seclusion in the middle of the night even though he had arrived at a critical juncture in the process of artifact forging. Hence, one could see exactly how much importance he had attached to this matter.

The sect master, the three great reverends, and every outer and inner sect elder had gathered as one in the middle of the night. This was yet another grand occasion in Armament Sect!

Everyone's eyes were focused on Liang Shaoyang. The envy in their eyes could not be hidden at all. At this very moment, Liang Shaoyang was without a doubt the focus of everyone's eyes, and from now onwards, his path in Armament Sect would be a straight gallop across the plains.

No one would be able to stop Liang Shaoyang's footsteps.

Countless envious gazes fell upon Liang Shaoyang. After a long while, Liang Shaoyang slowly opened his eyes. At first he was still a little dazed. Then, he came to shocked realization. He was surprised by the scene of the surging crowd all around him and that the sect master, the three great reverends, and every elder in the sect had gathered as one.

“Quickly, greet the sect master, the three reverends, and every elder!” An outer sect elder, Cheng Ping, reminded him in a soft tone.

“Greetings, elders. Greetings...” Liang Shaoyang said respectfully.

“You may forego the formalities. Ying Xinran waved a hand before walking over with kindness in his eyes and high spirits. He smiled and asked, “What have you learned from the spirit pattern pillar?”

“A diagram, the Celestial Sealing Demon Diagram. But my understanding is not that deep yet...” After recalling for a moment, Liang Shaoyang answered respectfully.

“The Celestial Sealing Demon Diagram!” Ying Xingran’s eyes brightened as he laughed cheerfully and looked towards Liang Shaoyang with satisfaction. He nodded and said, “From today onwards, you are an inner sect disciple of Armament Sect. I have heard that Yin Hao had died recently. Hmm, you may borrow Yin Hao’s cave for the moment while I arrange a new cave to be prepared for you.”

Once finished, he smiled towards the three great reverends and all inner and outer sect elders while laughing aloud, “The heavens bless our Armament Sect! In just ten years, two geniuses have appeared in Armament Sect in a row! This is a sign that our sect is about to thrive! Inform every force and tell them that a genius has

appeared again in Armament Sect, haha!”

The three great reverends and every outer and inner sect elder was filled with smiles and looks of excitement.

“Follow me up the mountain immediately. We would like to clear up some things and help you analyze your learnings,” Ying Xingran said again.

Liang Shaoyang nodded, “I shall follow Sect Master’s orders. I thank Sect Master for the guidance.”

“You deserve this, haha, this is what you deserve.” Ying Xingran’s smile never faltered as he looked towards every disciples and said loudly, “Any disciple who can learn the wonders of any one of the twelve spirit pattern pillars shall be appointed as an inner sect disciple immediately! The sect shall do everything in its power to raise them!”

Many outer sect disciples’ gazes turned hot when they heard him as they looked yet again at the spirit pattern pillars.

Not even Qin Lie was an exception as he looked towards the twelve spirit pattern pillars with actual seriousness this time. A thought was also faintly forming in his heart.

Today’s grand parade had given him a true recognition of Armament Sect’s attitude towards those who could understand the miracles of the spirit pattern pillar. The sect master had came out

of seclusion in advance, the great reverends who were gone for several years descended the mountains in unison, and every elder of the sect had arrived together!

This treatment was practically better than even the arrival of Cloud Sky Mountain's Mountain Master, Dark Asura Hall's Grand Hall Master, and Seven Fiends Valley's Valley Master to the sect!

Sect Master Ying Xingran and the three great reverends had personally led Liang Shaoyang up the mountains to help him comb through his learnings. Everyone in the plaza was heatedly discussing Liang Shaoyang's treatment. They were all envious.

"Qin Bing, Tang Siqi, Lian Rou, come with me," Tong Jihua suddenly said in a low tone.

Chapter 146: Improving Rapidly

“Forget what I’ve told you before. Just assume that I never said anything.”

Inside the cultivation room, Tong Jihua instructed Qin Lie, Tang Siqi, and Lian Rou with a dark face. His gaze was complicated, as if he too had not expected that such an unbelievable incident could happen just as he was ready to take down Liang Shaoyang.

Lian Rou’s heart was still in turmoil.

Liang Shaoyang had actually completely learned the wonders of that spirit pattern pillar?

The sect master had ended his seclusion early. The three great reverends had descended the mountain together. Every elder in the sect had appeared at once. This commotion caused her to recall the grand occasion that happened back when Tang Siqi incited a spirit pattern pillar.

Qin Lie frowned. He was also caught off guard by this incident and didn’t look too good as well.

Judging from Ying Xingran’s actions, he had thought of Liang Shaoyang as a new gem and had declared that he would spend all the spirit materials in their possession to cultivate him. He had regarded him as an important seed for their future...

The three, decrepit great reverends also glowed with a ruddy look as if they had turned a few years younger.

What could they do now even if they did know that Liang Shaoyang had committed murder? If they really attempted to attack Liang Shaoyang, the sect master, Ying Xingran, and the three great reverends might be the first to stop them. The appearance of this diamond in the rough had caused those highly respected people to be so happy they could go mad. Who would dare cross Liang Shaoyang now?

As for the murder of Yin Hao and his prejudice towards Qin Lie, even if the sect master and the others did know about it, they would most likely turn a blind eye to it.

“I am the one who had underestimated that Liang Shaoyang.” Tong Jihua appeared somewhat regretful. “This kid is truly extraordinary. Not only does he have a devious mind, his methods are truly amazing as well. If I am not mistaken, he must have had a certain level of assurance to learn the wonders of the spirit pattern pillar before he decisively killed Yin Hao, keeping him from spilling any secrets.”

“Is there truly nothing we can do to him?” Lian Rou sighed softly.

“What can we do?” Tong Jihua looked helpless. “You’ve all seen the sect master and the three great reverends’ attitude towards him. Forget that he had only murdered Yin Hao and failed to truly murder Qin Bing, even if he did kill Qin Bing and a few more outer sect disciples, Sect Master would still pretend nothing happened

just for the sake of his incredible talent alone."

"Mn. Sect Master views the future inheritance of the sect as more important than anything else in the world. According to my understanding of his character, even if he did know that Liang Shaoyang had killed Yin Hao, he would not continue to pursue the matter either." Tang Siqi's pretty eyebrows were tightly locked against each other. She turned her head to look at Qin Lie before dejectedly saying, "Just pretend that you didn't know Liang Shaoyang is out for your blood and be more careful in the future. Also, make sure not to come into any conflict with him as much as possible in the future. If any disputes are to happen, then no matter who caused it, you will definitely be the one to shoulder the blame."

Qin Lie's expression was dark and cold. "Armament Sect's rules are useless just like that?"

"Let's not mention that you're just an outer sect disciple. Even if you were an inner sect disciple just like Yin Hao, you would have to avoid him just the same." Lian Rou also consoled him, "Out of all the disciples in Armament Sect, only Siqi can pressure Liang Shaoyang. Sect Master and the three great reverends will not blame him too much unless he desires to act against Siqi."

"No matter who he is, I will give quarter to no one who dares to provoke me." Qin Lie snorted coldly and went straight out of the cultivation room.

"This kid is arrogant alright. If he, a mere outer sect disciple dares to clash with Liang Shaoyang at this point of time, he will

definitely be the one to suffer the consequences." Tong Jihua shook his head and told Lian Rou and Tang Siqi, "The two of you had better persuade him. A person needs to bear it especially in such a time. He should just assume that he didn't know that Liang Shaoyang had plotted against him from the shadow and that he minimize contact with Liang Shaoyang as much as possible in the future. This is the wisest way for him."

"I'll do my best," Lian Rou replied.

Tang Siqi nodded. Without saying anything further, she left together with Lian Rou.

When the trio had disappeared, the martial practitioner who had came in and out earlier quietly appeared again before Tong Jihua and consulted him, "Elder Tong, should we inform Sect Master about Liang Shaoyang's murder of Yin Hao and the fact that he was plotting against Qin Bing?"

"There's no need for that any longer." Tong Jihua shook his head. "These are trivial matters of the sect. Sect Master will know the truth if he decides to investigate a little. Even if we don't say anything, he should know what Liang Shaoyang has done by tomorrow evening at the latest. But this will not change anything. To him, a person's character can still be carved in the future, but a person's talent can not be cultivated later on. He will definitely not punish Liang Shaoyang at all for the prosperity of the sect."

"This subordinate understands. This subordinate will assume that he is completely unaware of the matter," this person said respectfully.

Tong Jihua sighed once before waving a hand for his subordinate to fall back. He was sunk in deep thought on his own, and his expression grew heavier and heavier.

“It would have been a small matter, but the reason Liang Shaoyang killed was because of Siqi. The reason he came to Armament Sect was probably also for Siqi, and Siqi is the other most talented person Sect Master and Elder Mo has placed their hopes on and the original default sect master candidate. Now that Liang Shaoyang has appeared, there is now one more sect master candidate. Moreover, he admires Siqi, while Siqi is somewhat disgusted by him…”

The more Tong Jihua thought about it, the more troubled he felt. He could not wipe away the premonition that there would be a huge conflict between Tang Siqi and Liang Shaoyang in the future, and from there onwards, cause a huge change within the sect.

……

When Qin Lie had exited Tong Jihua’s place and returned to the stone tower, he saw that the plaza was filled with people. A large majority of Armament Sect disciples were all standing beneath the spirit pattern pillars.

Yi Yuan, Ouyang Jingjing, Tian Jianhao, and the others were also among them. Not even Pang Feng and Pang Shishi were an exception.

They had not retreated from the plaza after Sect Master Ying Xingran and the three great reverends had left. On the contrary, they were all in high spirit as they focused their minds and looked at the spirit pattern pillars.

Their passion towards the spirit pattern pillars had suddenly skyrocketed by a few hundred times!

“Qin Bing, there’s still a spot here. Do you want to come and try to comprehend them?” Yi Yuan waved from afar after noticing him. “Who knows, maybe this is the day the spirit pattern pillars have come to life. Perchance we are able to share some of the glory and figure out some wonders from the spirit pattern pillars as well. What do you say? Come, come over and have a look. At first, I thought that inciting the spirit pattern pillars’ wonder was just one of Armament Sect’s lies, I didn’t think that it was actually real.”

“Forget it.” Originally, Qin Lie had planned to give it serious research as well. However, he had given up right away after giving it a glance.

It was just way too crowded.

There were people everywhere beneath the spirit pattern pillars. Those people were all lifting their heads with hopeful gazes, and some were even pushing each other and arguing loudly, approaching and fighting against each other.

How could he possibly learn the miracles of the spirit pattern pillars like this?

After declining Yi Yuan's invitation, he squeezed through the crowded plaza with difficulty before returning to his own stone tower.

He arrived at the window on the second floor. Looking at the excited disciples who were staring at the spirit pattern pillars as if they had been injected with chicken blood, his expression turned cold.

"Liang Shaoyang!" he exclaimed in a low tone as a cold chill slowly spread inside the house, causing the entire room to become icy cold.

A few days later.

The news that Liang Shaoyang had triggered a wonder from the spirit pattern pillars continued to be a hot topic within the sect. Every disciple was discussing the matter.

The plaza was still overcrowded. There were many people who had not rested for an entire night and were still sitting right under the spirit pattern pillars, hoping that they too could learn the wonders of the inscriptions on the pillar.

The news that a genius had appeared in Armament Sect spread with astounding speed throughout all the surrounding forces. Dark Asura Hall, Seven Fiends Valley, Purple Mist Sea, and Cloud Sky Mountain had all sent characters of importance from their sect to congratulate Armament Sect.

The Shadow Tower Lord of Dark Shadow Tower was even more overjoyed when he heard about it, and it was said that he had already departed from Dark Shadow Tower to personally congratulate Armament Sect.

Liang Shaoyang had long since moved away from the outer sector. Recently, he was taught by the sect master and the three great reverends. They gave him guidance on his artifact forging skills and helped him widen his horizons.

Even Elder Mo Hai, who was abroad was alerted that a genius had appeared again in the sect. He would return to the sect earlier than planned as well.

During this period, Qin Lie had rented an artifact forging room with contribution points under Tang Siqi's instructions and began to help her forge some random stuff.

Stuff such as the Five Element Crystal Bead, the sheath of a knife or sword, or the iron pole of a short spear.

These random materials were all components of a particular spirit artifact. They weren't exactly critical components of the entire spirit artifact, but there was a certain degree of necessity as well.

Five Element Crystal Beads were beads formed by the spirit materials of metal, wood, water, fire, and earth. Their function was to be embedded on the spirit artifact. On one hand, it made it

look prettier, and on the other, it could enhance a particular characteristic of the spirit artifact and better unleash the might of the spirit artifact.

The artifact forging room that cost ten contribution points a day had an artifact forging furnace, a few cupboards, and a few fire crystals to serve as a fire source.

Compared to the inner sect disciples' caves at Flame Volcano, the artifact forging room at the foot of the hill were far cruder. He could not use earthfire as a fire source, and there was only one furnace that could be used.

But for Qin Lie this was already sufficient. It was enough for him to use his knowledge towards artifact forging.

Tang Siqi would have someone bring over the spirit materials needed to forge those random items. He only needed to smelt them according to the instructions, and he did not need to make additional purchases.

He would diligently temper those artifact components inside his rented artifact forging room. While free, he would use contribution points to attend the inner sect elders' lectures and absorb knowledge of artifact forging.

Other than spirit diagrams, the inner sect elders would explain in fine detail various facts and methods on forging artifacts.

Qin Lie attended the lectures occasionally. Most of his time was spent forging artifacts inside his rented artifact forging room. He was growing more and more familiar with the attributes of various spirit materials and more and more adept at smelting a specific kind of spirit artifact.

He was improving rapidly…

After some more time, Tang Siqi began to have him forge some real artifacts. She would let him forge swords, knives and forks, long spears, hammers, feather fans, and other basic artifacts.

With the experience he had accumulated during the early phase, Qin Lie had not encountered too much trouble when forging complete artifacts.

Although he would often fail during the early stage, as he accumulated even more experience, his success rate was gradually increasing.

Half a year later, when Qin Lie had arrived at Tang Siqi's cave with a sword, a silver spear, and a bronze hammer and passed the items to her, Tang Siqi's eyes lit up as she said, "Your skill in tempering spirit artifacts has almost reached the level of many inner sect disciples. However, this is far from enough. If you do not know how to inscribe spirit diagrams, then you will never be considered a true artificer."

Qin Lie nodded.

“Come with me and bring your forged artifacts. I’ll bring you to see Elder Mo Hai.” Tang Siqi got up and headed outside, saying, “As long as Elder Mo Hai acknowledges you, then you will be able to move from the foot to above the hill. You will become an inner sect disciple just like me and will learn the true art of spirit diagram inscription.”

Qin Lie’s eyes lit up.

Chapter 147: Step Aside!

Mo Hai's name was so influential that even an ignorant person like Qin Lie had heard about him before.

"The most creative artificer in Armament Sect!"

"The most powerful refinement master!"

"The next Armament Sect sect master!"

There were countless titles that were added onto Mo Hai's head, and while not many people were familiar with Armament Sect's sect master, Ying Xingran, they had all heard of Mo Hai.

Mo Hai was a lowborn. His parents were just common people, and none of his clansmen cultivated the martial way.

According to them, Mo Hai's father was a blacksmith, and he had learned how to smith from his father since he was young.

One of the three great reverends of Armament Sect, Fang Qi, was looking for spirit materials in the outside world when he just happened to stop by the small town Mo Hai's family was in. He accidentally saw Mo Hai smithing and was immediately shocked down to his core and thereby brought Mo Hai into Armament Sect.

From the moment Mo Hai entered Armament Sect, he had

expressed a terrifying amount of talent in artifact forging. Not only was his way of forging artifacts unique, he had even triggered a change in all twelve spirit pattern pillars and learned the wonders of the spirit diagrams within.

During the years after that, Mo Hai grew up with tremendous speed, and he was always able to forge spirit artifacts that were praised worldwide.

Every spirit artifact he forged was priceless and would rile people up, causing them to fight over them.

The Blue Leaf Sword Nebula Pavilion's Du Haitian used was a spirit artifact forged by Mo Hai while he was just starting out, and Du Haitian had spent a tremendous amount of spirit stones before he had finally bought it from Pan Jueming's hands. He had always treated it like his own life and would always show off with it, saying that the Blue Leaf Sword was forged by Mo Hai himself.

For the past few years Mo Hai had rarely forged artifacts on his own accord. It would be people like the great hall masters of Dark Asura Hall, the top dogs of Dark Shadow Tower, Purple Mist Sea and Cloud Sky Mountain carrying all sorts of rare spirit materials and spending large sums just to request him to forge artifacts for them.

But even then, Mo Hai might not necessarily agree. It depended on his state of mind, whether it fit his taste, whether he was interested in forging that particular artifact himself...

One could say that Mo Hai was the person every powerful man and woman of the surrounding forces was trying to please, that he was the most honored artificer.

Naturally, Qin Lie held awe and reverence towards such an astounding artificer as well. Even his movements had turned prudent as well.

Tang Siqi also advised him again and again, “Elder Mo Hai’s skills in artifact forging, perhaps are even more brilliant than the sect master. Ever since that one time when sect master failed his artifact forging and injured his psyche, it has already been a long time since he last forged an artifact that dazzled one’s eyes. But Elder Mo Hai is different. For the past ten years, every spirit artifact that he made was at least Profound Grade Six!”

Qin Lie was secretly shocked on the inside.

“And today, Elder Mo Hai is a Profound Seventh Rank artificer! Recently, he was shoot for the Earth Rank, and his outing this time was also to gather specific spirit materials in the attempt to forge a spirit artifact that would reach the Earth Grade.” Tang Siqi’s beautiful face was also flowing with admiration. “I am only a Profound Second Rank artificer, and I’m five ranks away from Elder Mo Hai. It is extremely difficult for an artificer to achieve their next rank. I wonder how long I will take before I can reach Elder Mo Hai’s rank.”

Yao Tai was only a Common Fourth Rank artificer. Even Great Master Lu from Dark Asura Hall was only a Profound Second Rank artificer.

Great Master Lu was an artificer Dark Asura Hall had spent endless amounts of sweat and blood to raise. He could use any spirit material within Dark Asura Hall and was deeply respected by every hall master in Dark Asura Hall. His status was extraordinary in Dark Asura Hall.

But even he was only a Profound Second Rank artificer.

In Armament Sect, the inner sect disciple, Tang Siqi, was already a Profound Second Rank artificer. Even better, Mo Hai was a Profound Seventh Rank, and the moment he ascended he, would step into the level of Earth Rank artificers!

What was an Earth Rank artificer?

An Earth Grade spirit artifact was specifically created for Fulfillment and Fragmentation Realm martial practitioners. Hence an artificer who could forge Earth Grade spirit artifacts would be highly regarded by martial practitioners in the Fulfillment and Fragmentation Realm!

Fulfillment and Fragmentation Realm practitioners only exist among Copper forces!

There were only two Copper forces in the entire Scarlet Tide Continent. They were also the true monsters of this continent!

The other Black Iron forces like Dark Asura Hall, Seven Fiends

Valley, Dark Shadow Tower, Purple Mist Sea, and Cloud Sky Mountain were only the vassals of these two humongous Copper forces. Out of all five Black Iron forces, even the strongest warrior was only at the latter stage of the Netherpassage Realm. No one had been able to step into the Fulfillment Realm.

Those who could step into the Fulfillment Realm had long been pocketed by the two great Copper rank forces, and they have long since went to the true Copper rank forces to cultivate.

“The sect master had planned to retire a long time ago and let Elder Mo Hai become the new sect master.” Tang Siqi explained softly, “But Elder Mo Hai’s ambition does not lie here. He has expressed a long time ago that if he did forge an Earth Grade spirit artifact, then he would leave Armament Sect and journey abroad.”

“He refuses even the position of sect master?” Qin Lie was shocked.

“Yeah. Since he does not want to inherit the position of sect master, left with no choice, the sect master came to discuss the matter with me and hoped that I would be able to take over in the future.” Tang Siqi nodded and continued saying, “Originally, I was the only candidate, but now there is another, Liang Shaoyang, and he’s a male as well. If his talent is truly great, then he may be an even more suitable candidate than me.”

When she said this, Tang Siqi’s eyes were filled with mixed emotions. She didn’t know whether to feel lucky or worried about this.

While the duo talked as they walked along, they soon arrived at the back of Flame Volcano. The back of the mountain had beautiful scenery, craggy rocks, and cliffs like swords.

A few elegant bamboo buildings were located beside a gushing waterfall at the back of the mountain. There were a number of herb gardens at the front of the bamboo buildings, and there were many spirit herbs grown inside.

An average-looking, but quiet and elegant matron was gathering herbs inside the herb garden.

The matron looked about forty years old and appeared kind and benign. The corner of her lips were curled into a thin smile, and when she saw Tang Siqi and Qin Lie walking over, she asked smilingly, “Oh, it’s Siqi. Are you here for A’Hai?”

“Yeah.” Tang Siqi smiled sweetly, “Auntie, is the Great Elder free right now?”

“A’Hai is helping Shaoyang by explaining the path of artifact forging. He left me here to stop visitors.” The matron smiled lightly and pointed at a few bamboo chairs. “Go there and rest for a bit. It’ll be done in two to four hours.”

“Okay.” Tang Siqi nodded obediently before bringing Qin Lie to the bamboo chair beside an herb garden and sat down.

“Liang Shaoyang…”

Qin Lie’s eyebrows were locked with each other. He coldly gazed at the bamboo building and thought that enemies do meet on a narrow road.

“Don’t clash with him. Right now, he has the high regard of the sect master and three great reverends. Forget that you’re an outer sect disciple, even if you were an inner sect disciple, you would still be the one to run out of luck if you have a dispute with him,” Tang Siqi reminded with a soft voice.

Qin Lie kept his cold expression and stayed quiet.

It was only after a full four hours that Liang Shaoyang finally walked out of the bamboo building. After greeting the matron, he walked outside the herb garden and saw Qin Lie and Tang Siqi at first glance.

Liang Shaoyang was wearing a luxurious artificer robe. There were a lot of gold patterns sewn into it, and the arrogance in his eyes was even stronger than before. When he saw Qin Lie, his expression had darkened and his gaze became chilly, but when he saw Tang Siqi beside him, he then withdrew his arrogance and said respectfully, “Greetings, Senior Sister Tang.”

Tang Siqi only nodded slightly, barely a sign that she had returned the courtesy.

Since she learned of this man's character, knowing that he had plotted against Qin Lie from the shadow and murdered Yin Hao, Tang Siqi had lost all traces of good will towards him. When she saw him Tang Siqi could only feel disgust.

That was why nodding her head in return was her limit already.

"Senior Sister Tang, both Sect Master and Elder Mo Hai have said that your talents are extraordinary and that I should learn more from you in the future." Staring directly into Tang Siqi's eyes, he said very impudently, "May Senior Sister Tang not hesitate to enlighten me in the future!"

"I can't teach you anything." Tang Siqi frowned and impatiently said, "With Sect Master and Great Elder assisting you, there is no need at all for you to learn from anyone else. Alright, please step aside, I have business with Great Elder."

The small path leading towards the bamboo building was not wide. With Liang Shaoyang blocking the way, it would not be easy for either Qin Lie or Tang Siqi to pass through.

—Unless they stepped on the spirit herbs of course.

That matron had called Mo Hai "A'Hai." She obviously shared an extraordinary relationship with Mo Hai. Qin Lie knew this, and he also knew that the spirit herbs were planted by her, so naturally, he wouldn't be stupid enough to irk her.

“Senior Sister Tang, my entrance was slightly late and I am not too familiar with the sect rules of the inner sect. May you please guide me!” He stared straight into Tang Siqi’s eyes.

“I’m busy.” Tang Siqi grew angry on the inside and said again, “Step aside!”

“You have time to help an outer sect disciple but not me?” Liang Shaoyang glanced once at Qin Lie before saying lightly, “Is it really worth it for Senior Sister Tang to bother with a talentless outer sect disciple? In my opinion, Senior Sister Tang is merely wasting time on him. You may as well spend some time on me. I will not disappoint you, Senior Sister Tang.”

“Step aside!”

Qin Lie took one step forward, leaned his shoulder, and abruptly rammed it into Liang Shaoyang’s right side.

Liang Shaoyang laughed instead of getting angry. “Reckless fool!”

He channeled his strength internally as layers of gray, curtain-like spirit energy waves gushed out from the right side of his body.

“Illusory Shroud Seven Layered Force!” Liang Shaoyang yelled coldly.

Seven overlapping spirit energy waves, that were like the sky, pushed against each other to increase their strength before they

abruptly burst out of Liang Shaoyang's shoulder.

Qin Lie remained unmoved. Thin layers of ice suddenly formed on his shoulder, whereas the inner section of his bones roared with thunder and tightly intersecting lightning.

"Qin Bing! Don't be reckless!" Tang Siqi cried out.

Liang Shaoyang was at the latter stage of the Natal Opening Realm with nine Natal Palaces that were full of energy. Qin Lie was only at the early stage and yet he was about to forcefully clash Liang Shaoyang. Was he not staring at his own death?

"Boom!"

The moment the two men's shoulders clashed, a dull and turbulent wave exploded out. Shockwaves of spirit energy shot out and caused the surrounding spirit herbs in the herb garden to splinter.

Amazingly, Liang Shaoyang actually backed off a few steps all the sudden and retreated all the way back to the little square in front of the bamboo building.

Qin Lie's body actually stood firm and still like a steel mountain. After Liang Shaoyang had retreated, he passed through the small path with a cold expression and stood at the little square in front of the bamboo building as well.

Tang Siqi covered her mouth with shock written all over her beautiful face.

The middle-aged matron in the herb garden beside them also appeared to be very shocked. She looked at Qin Lie with sudden amazement, staring at his shoulder and praised him on the inside, “What a powerful physique!”

The hard clash earlier was too quick and sudden, and Liang Shaoyang had stepped out to withstand it in a hurry. He had no way to channel the energies of all nine of his Natal Palaces in such a short period of time.

On the other hand, Qin Lie had come prepared, and when he took a step forward the frost, thunder, and lightning energy had activated all at once from the three Natal Palaces inside his body!

His thoroughly tempered physique was also far stronger than Liang Shaoyang’s. He didn’t need to summon his energy at all as they would come forth at any time he wanted. He could instantly unleash his explosive power!

Liang Shaoyang could not unleash all of the energy of his Natal Palaces in time, and his physique was nothing amazing either. So he had suffered a huge loss instead after a forced clash. At this time, the bones of the right side of body felt like they had fallen apart, and the frost energy spread out like a bone eroding poison causing his right arm to gradually turn stiff.

“You can come over now, Senior Sister Tang.” Qin Lie turned his

head.

Tang Siqi finally reacted. She looked a little confounded, and after a quick “Oh,” she hurriedly passed through the small path at the center of the herb garden and arrived beside Qin Lie in a panic.

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alyschu: Yes, A’Hai is Mo Hai. A’ is also a Chinese endearment.

Chapter 148: You Are Mistaken!

Liang Shaoyang's face was dark. He tried to move his right arm and found that his bones were frozen as the frost concept that was gathered did not dissipate.

Nodding his head, he did not speak and passed by Tang Siqi. He quickly left this place and disappeared.

—He was in a hurry to expel the cold energy inside his body.

"You managed to force him back?" Tang Siqi's bright eyes flashed as her lips curved elegantly. "He has created all nine of his Natal Palaces, and you should only have created just three. How were you able to defeat him?" She was extremely interested.

"He had the advantage of attacking first. Also, his body... is far stronger than Shaoyang's," the elegant matron said with a faint smile.

Tang Siqi looked with even more shock at Qin Lie. She paused and then spoke, "You were too rash to start a conflict with Liang Shaoyang now. He is not that easy-going."

Qin Lie did not respond. He looked at Liang Shaoyang's figure as Liang Shaoyang left with a cold expression.

He knew that Liang Shaoyang would not rest. The reason that he had used everything in his arsenal and used the power of frost and

Heavenly Thunder Eradication together against Liang Shaoyang was in order to force him to use something powerful to fight back.

He hadn't expected Liang Shaoyang to only sustain a small loss and retreat after discovering that half of his body was paralyzed.

Qin Lie became even more wary, and his opinion of Liang Shaoyang rose. He realized that Liang Shaoyang was different than opponents like Wei Li and Du Heng. He definitely was not stupid.

He clearly had the advantage of cultivation, and all nine of his Natal Palaces were filled with power. This Liang Shaoyang had not attacked because half of his body had been permeated by frost concept, so he chose to retreat... this person was not rash.

Qin Lie instantly decided to treat Liang Shaoyang as his strongest opponent.

"Let's go, A'Hai is inside," the matron said with a smile in the herb garden.

So Tang Siqi and Qin Lie walked into the bamboo tower.

Inside the bamboo tower, there was a tall and thin, middle-aged man, wearing loose white robes with his hair pinned up. He was sitting in a bamboo chair and reading a book as though he did not care about the conflict between Qin Lie and Liang Shaoyang.

Seeing Tang Siqi come in, he put down the book in his hand and

raised his head. He then started talking in a peaceful manner, “It has been a while since you have come.”

“Greetings, Great Elder.” Tang Siqi respectfully bowed.

“Greetings, Great Elder.” Qin Lie also bowed and examined Mo Hai secretly.

Mo Ha’s facial features were long and thin, and his movements were methodical. He was like an old scholar that gave people an old-fashioned and inflexible feeling.

“Did you encounter a wall recently in your artifact forging?” Mo Hai’s brow creased. He glanced at Tang Siqi’s hands and nodded slightly. “You have been relatively diligent as of late and did not slack off. Did you finish what I assigned you?”

Tang Siqi gave a bright smile. “I finished it and did not slack off at all. Great Elder can inspect it at any time.”

Mo Hai’s brow finally smoothed out. His gaze landed on Qin Lie. “Speak, why have you brought this boy to find me.”

“Qin Bing!” Tang Siqi called lowly.

Qin Lie’s expression straightened. With both hands, he handed a sword, a silver spear, and a copper hammer he forged to Mo Hai. “These are artifacts that this disciple has forged recently. Great Elder, please take a look.”

Mo Hai did not reach out to take them. He only looked at them with narrow eyes and then motioned for Qin Lie to put them down.

Qin Lie obeyed and put down the three objects.

“Objects that do not have spirit diagrams will never be considered spirit artifacts. The object is dead, only the spirit diagrams are alive, it is the spirit diagrams that gives an object its soul.” Mo Hai looked at Qin Lie and coldly said, “The objects you have forged are relatively good and barely reach the level of inner sect disciples. But this is not enough to become an inner sect disciple.”

“Great Elder, please instruct me,” Qin Lie requested in a deep voice.

Mo Hai nodded. He picked up the book on the table and tore a random page off, handing it to Qin Lie. “This is a small part of the Materialization spirit diagram. Take it now and study it. I will give you six hours. Six hours later, try to inscribe it on the spirit tablet for me.”

“Yes.” Qin Lie took the paper and instantly focused on it. There wasn’t any thread of doubt or a wasted word.

Tang Siqi’s eyes were shocked. She opened her mouth as though she wanted to say something, but in the end, she didn’t speak a word.

Mo Hai stood up and started walking outside of the bamboo tower. “Siqi, come with me. I will test your forging progress and see if you truly finished the task I assigned you.”

Tang Siqi followed with her head bowed.

Once they were outside, Tang Siqi inquired in a low voice, “Great Elder, um, he shouldn’t know how to inscribe spirit diagrams. The lectures of the elders do not talk about spirit diagrams, and I did not say anything about spirit diagrams. Wouldn’t it be too difficult for him if you get him to inscribe a diagram right away?”

Mo Hai did not respond. He walked until he was a distance from the bamboo tower and was next to the matron before he stopped

“Siqi, you are mistaken. Not only does he understand spirit diagrams, he also knows to inscribe them,” Mo Hai suddenly answer.

Tang Siqi was shocked and couldn’t help but shout, “How is it possible?” She hurriedly covered her mouth in fear that she would disturb Qin Lie inside the tower.

“Don’t worry, he cannot hear our conversation.” the matron smiled.

Tang Siqi looked around and found that, at an unknown time, circles with faint, orange-red light surrounded her, Mo Hai, and

the matron.

The orange-red light had the effect of preventing sound from leaking. When she spoke, she was able to see the light ripple and the sound was blocked off.

“He has calluses on his left index and middle fingers. Calluses like those could only form if one frequently inscribes spirit diagrams and their fingers have come into contact with spirit tablets and objects tens of thousands of times.” Mo Hai’s expression was calm. “You do not have calluses on your hands because you use the special juice of Armament Sect on your fingers after you inscribe spirit diagrams. The disciples of the sect are all given this kind of juice and you are all used to soaking your hands in this juice after inscribing spirit diagrams.”

He gazed at the bamboo tower. “Not all places have conditions like this, and not all artificers take this much care. The great majority of outside artificers will not take special care for their fingers. Over long periods of time, they will have calluses on their hands. Those form naturally after touching spirit tablets and handling objects.

He paused and then said, “That boy has carved spirit diagrams at least ten thousand times. Otherwise, the old calluses on his fingers would not be so thick.”

Tang Siqi was shocked at the conclusion. “Great Elder, you are saying that he, he is an artificer?”

“I’m not sure if he is an artificer but he definitely understands how to inscribe spirit diagrams. This cannot be denied.” Mo Hai’s eyes narrowed. “This is why I gave him a part of the Materialization spirit diagram as a test. This Materialization spirit diagram is not something artificers usually have seen before, and he should not have learned it. It is easiest to see a person’s artifact forging talent from how they learn to inscribe a completely new sprit diagram.”

“A’Hai, this child’s body is very strong. He has definitely put great effort in the martial way,” the matron said lightly.

Mo Hai stilled and looked at the matron with a warm expression. He said, “Rong’er, you are saying that he has spent great effort on his martial cultivation as well?”

“In terms of body strength, none of the inner and outer sect disciples are stronger than him.” Feng Rong’s tone was certain, “Even Cloud Sky Mountain’s Pang Feng. If he doesn’t use the power in his Natal Palaces, he would definitely lose even though he cultivates the Golden Stone Art.”

Mo Hai and Tang Siqi both trembled. They looked at Feng Rong in disbelief and found it hard to comprehend what she had just said.

“The Golden Stone Art is a spirit at that greatly emphasizes tempering the body. Pang Feng is also the top of the youths in Cloud Sky Mountains, and he has cultivated the Golden Stone Art for many years. His body is as hard as stone. How could he not be as strong as Qin Bing?” Tang Siqi was extremely shocked.

Mo Ha's brow furrowed tightly.

"You two are proficient in artifact forging, but your prowess of the martial way is lacking compared to me." Feng Rong was not modest. "You know that I have been cultivating in Blood Spear. I've seen all kinds of rare spirit arts, and you should naturally know that I definitely do not speak without basis."

Tang Siqi nodded and said respectfully, "I know of Auntie's skills."

"Believe me," Feng Rong smiled slightly. "His body is very strong. I'm a hundred percent sure about this, and he doesn't just cultivate frost power. This guy... is not simple. If his talent in artifact forging is also extraordinary, then it is even more interesting."

"Right, where does he come from?" Feng Rong inquired of Tang Siqi.

"I, I don't know. He never talked about his origins," Tang Siqi answered timidly.

Mo Hai's expression suddenly darkened. "Liang Shaoyang's personality is dark and poisonous, I've seen this long ago. Sect Master has also seen it. The deaths of Long He and Yin Hao are connected to Liang Shaoyang. Sect Master has told me this. Maliciousness that can be seen is easy to control and can be slowly taught and guided back to the proper path..."

He gazed at the bamboo tower with a complex expression, and then said in a low voice, “But this boy that has many suspicious qualities, is of unknown origins, and has a personality that is a bit hard to deal with.”

The trio suddenly became silent.

Tang Siqi looked at the bamboo tower. There was deep worry on her face, and her mind was a mess.

“Who are you? Where did you come from? With what goals did you come to Armament Sect?”

The questions floated up. She suddenly found that Qin Lie was covered in riddles, and she could not see him clearly. She didn’t know what intentions Qin Lie had in coming to Armament sect.

With those questions hanging, yet unanswered, the trio waited in silence.

Six hours later.

Qin Lie came out of the bamboo tower with a jade spirit tablet. He respectfully walked before Mo Hai and presented the spirit tablet, saying, “Great Elder, please inspect.”

Mo Hai had recovered his calm. He took the spirit tablet and put

in a thread of mind consciousness into the spirit tablet.

His body visibly shook, and a light flashed in his eyes. Gripping the spirit tablet, he looked deeply at Qin Lie, asking, “Before this, have you ever learned the Materialization spirit diagram?

“Never.” Qin Lie shook his head.

Mo Hai was silent for a while and then nodded. He declared, “Starting tomorrow, move from the outer sect, and you will formally become an inner sect disciple. Siqi, go with him down the mountain later and mention this to Tong Jihua. Say that this is my order.”

“Okay,” Tang Siqi replied, full of puzzlement.

“Thank you, Great Elder,” Qin Lie expressed his thanks.

Chapter 149: Stepping Into The Inner Sect

“A’Hai, what is it?” After Qin Lie and Tang Siqi left, Feng Rong instantly asked in puzzlement.

Mo Hai held the jade spirit tablet that Qin Lie had inscribed the Materialization spirit diagram on. He narrowed his eyes as he used his mind to feel it and inspect the diagram created from the spirit lines inside it.

After a while, Mo Hai stopped and responded in a deep voice, “This boy called Qin Bing, if he really has not learned the Materialization spirit diagram before, then his talent is astounding.”

Feng Rong’s expression shifted.

She knew just how proud Mo Hai was in the field of forging.

In these years, she didn’t know how many artificers had come to visit Mo Hai, but he rarely spoke of someone as having astounding talent. The most recent time was when he had judged Tang Siqi. He said that she had talent in artifact forging and would be able to take up great duties in the future.

He hadn’t even said how much talent Liang Shaoyang who had come this time had. All he had said was that he was acceptable...

Yet Liang Shaoyang had caused a change in the spirit pattern

pillars and also disturbed the sect master and the three great reverends. Mo Hai had just said that he was acceptable, but he then said that Qin Bing's talent was astounding?

How could Feng Rong not be shocked?

"I am going to see Sect Master to discuss this Qin Bing with him," said Mo Hai after he thought on it for a while.

Feng Rong was even more astounded. "He is worth you going out on a trip?"

"You cannot understand." Mo Hai did not explain. After saying this, he left hurriedly and walked towards the top of Flame Volcano.

An hour later.

Mo Hai appeared at the top of Flame Volcano. There was a crowd of beautifully constructed buildings here. Many stone towers formed strange furnace and stove shapes.

"Greetings, Great Elder."

"Greetings, Great Elder."

At the top of the mountain, many Armament Sect martial practitioners nodded their heads, their eyes filled with respect.

Mo Hai's expression was calm as he walked to the Sect Master Hall at the top of the mountain. At the doorway, he stated, "I want to see Sect Master."

"Great Elder, please come this way." Someone ushered him.

Mo Hai quickly came to a hidden room, and inside of it, Ying Xingran's complexion was ashen. He was coughing heavily as he spat out thick phlegm mixed with blood into a container.

Seeing Mo Hai come in, Ying Xingran drank a mouthful of grayish-brown, medicinal fluid. He seemed to recover some energy and uttered with a grimace, "My body is worsening. You really are going to be so cruel to the sect that you will not take the position of sect master?"

More than a decade ago, he had been too stubborn during the forging of an artifact and an accident occurred. His heart and lungs had been injured by the earthfire of Flame Volcano.

Before the spirit diagram had suddenly collapsed, it caused his psyche to also be damaged, and even now he was unable to heal it.

Only the three reverends and Mo Hai knew that he was heavily wounded. He usually used the reason of secluding himself to forge in order to disguise it and would have to force himself to look normal whenever he came out.

—He used this to stabilize morale so the elders and disciples of the sect could focus on artifact forging.

“Sect Master, please do not force me. I had made the decision long ago. Once I forge an Earth Grade spirit artifact, I will leave with Rong’er to visit even wider skies,” Mo Hai affirmed.

Ying Xingran coughed loudly. “A’Hai, with my present situation, I most likely cannot sustain for very long. There is Tang Siqi in the inner sect, and now there is Liang Shaoyang. Both of them are very talented, and in the future, they can definitely get the sect to prosper. I will not request anything else, I just hope that you can teach them well before they grow up. When they can truly stand on their own two feet, it would not be late for you to leave.”

“Sect Master, look at this spirit tablet.” Mo Hai did not accept or reject but handed the jade spirit tablet that Qin Lie worked on to Ying Xingran.

Ying Xingran took the spirt tablet. His soul entered it and made a close inspection of the spirit diagram inside.

“This is a portion of the Materialization spirit diagram. It is inscribed in great detail and there is no inaccuracy in the thickness and length of the spirit lines. However, the other’s control of spirit energy is not up to par, he probably has not found a suitable spirit art. He only knows how much spirit energy is needed in every spirit line during inscription which is how he managed to inscribe this spirit diagram.”

Ying Xingran raised his head and looked at Mo Hai, questioning,

“Was it Liang Shaoyang that inscribed this? He has stayed for a month at your place. I’m not surprised at all that he managed to inscribe the Materialization spirit diagram so accurately. He definitely has the ability.”

“It is not Liang Shaoyang but an outer sect disciple called Qin Bing.” Mo Hai took a deep breath and shouted lightly, “He has not learned for a day under me. I only tore a piece out of the Materialization spirit diagram and told him to study and inscribe it. I only gave him six hours!”

“Six hours?!” Ying Xingran shouted.

“Yes, only six hours!” Mo Hai shouted.

“How is that possible?” Ying Xingran shook his head and exclaimed in disbelief, “Unless he learned the Materialization spirit diagram before, he cannot inscribe the Materialization spirit diagram in such detail in under six hours. I see this very clearly. Other than not knowing the technique of controlling spirit energy in the spirit lines, there are not any inaccuracies. It is impossible to reach this level after studying for six hours!”

Usually, one would need several months to learn a new spirit diagram.

Qin Lie had also used more than half a year when he first started learning the Spirit Gathering diagram. After many failures, he finally created a Spirit Gathering Board just before Ling Yushi left Ling Town.

In Armament Sect, inner sect disciples would need to spend three months to half a year to learn a new spirit diagram. Even Tang Siqi, who was very talented, would need half a month to be able to master and inscribe a spirit diagram.

“Unless I saw it with my own eyes, I would not believe it either.” Mo Hai understood Ying Xingran’s shock. He divulged, “I didn’t quite believe it myself, so I arranged for him to become an inner sect disciple in order to confirm it. It seems that he has not learned the Materialization spirit diagram before. If he really has not learned it before and reached such a level after only six hours…”

Mo Hai raised his head, his eyes bright. “Then he will become the most talented person in the history of Armament Sect!”

Ying Xingran’s body shook.

……

Tang Siqi lead Qin Lie down the mountain with a dark face in complete silence.

Qin Lie did not know where he had offended her and was puzzled. He did not ask about it, however, and the two maintained the silence until they reached the base of Flame Volcano.

“Pack your things, I will go see Elder Tong first.” Tang Siqi’s face was cold as she left Qin Lie alone.

Qin Lie was puzzled. He walked to the stone towers, and when he passed the plaza, he turned to look and found there were still many martial practitioners standing under the spirit pattern pillars in the plaza.

Half a year had passed, but there were still a group of people that did not give up and felt they would be the lucky one.

“Qin Bing, you have been frequently going to the mountain recently.” Yi Yuan was in his stone tower as he waved his hand at Qin Lie. “Come in and chat?”

“Okay.” Qin Lie entered.

“I communicated with Elder Tang and also cleared it with Lian Rou. In the future, I will not waste any more time on artifact forging.” After Qin Lie entered, Yi Yuan seemed to have been released of a great burden as he said relaxedly.

“You are preparing to enter Blood Spear?” Qin Lie inquired indifferently.

Yi Yuan’s pupils contracted. He looked with shock at Qin Lie and asked, “You know of Blood Spear?”

“I’ve heard a bit.” Qin Lie nodded his head.

Yi Yuan looked deeply at Qin Lie. A moment later, he smiled and then honestly admitted, “Yes, I’m preparing to participate the Blood Spear entrance exam. It should be soon. The lowest cultivation that Blood Spear accepts of its followers is the late Natal Opening Realm. I just met the requirements, and my true goal in coming to Armament Sect is to enter Blood Spear.”

“I congratulate you beforehand for passing the exam.”

“Thanks, I think there won’t be a problem. Oh, right, Pang Feng should also be attending the exam. This guy is very powerful. Make sure you do not come into conflict with him in the future.”

“Mn.”

“After passing the Blood Spear Exam, my status would be equal to inner sect disciples. We get first crack at the high level spirit artifacts and armor that inner sect disciples forge. We can use as much spirit materials, spirit pills and spirit medicine as we want to increase our combat abilities.”

“I will be packing soon. I’m also going to move up the mountain,” Qin Lie smiled slightly with a lowered head.

Yi Yuan was slightly shocked. He saw the smile on Qin Lie’s face and concluded, “You are not the same as you were before.”

Qin Lie nodded, “In the past, I could not control the cold power inside my body, but now I can use it to my will and hide the cold

energy so that it does not show."

"So that's how it is." Yi Yuan understood. "It seems that your understanding of the concept has deepened. Oh right, what do you mean you are moving up the mountain?"

"Elder Mo has accepted me, I am now an inner sect disciple," Qin Lie responded.

"Inner sect disciple?" Yi Yuan was astounded and then he hit Qin Lie. "Good boy! You actually went a step ahead of me without making any noise!"

……

"In the future, this will be your cavern." Tang Siqi lead Qin Lie to a cave that used to be Yin Hao's.

After Yin Hao died, Liang Shaoyang had lived in it for a month until the cave that the sect was constructing for Liang Shaoyang was finished. Liang Shaoyang moved away, and so, this cave became empty again.

As Qin Lie was admitted into the inner sect, this cavern was to be used again.

"In the future, forge your artifacts here. You do not need to assist me any longer. The sect will send down a certain ration of spirit materials for you to use to learn artifact forging every month.

When you truly have the ability to forge by yourself, the sect will give you forging duties for you to forge all kinds of spirit artifacts which will be transported to the large Armament Pavilions to be sold…”

Tang Siqi’s face was stern as she recited the rules of the inner sect disciple and matters of concern.

Qin Lie listened attentively. When she finished speaking and was preparing to leave the cavern, Qin Lie finally could not suppress it and questioned, “Tang Siqi, where did I offend you? Ever since we left Elder Mo’s place, you seem very impatient with me. I don’t understand, how did I offend you again?”

Ever since he and Tang Siqi had that private conversation, their relationship had eased greatly. Over half a year, as they had more contact and as he assisted Tang Siqi in artifact forging, the two learned more about each other. He was able to feel the admiration Tang Siqi felt towards him.

But right now, Tang Siqi’s attitude changed again. This confused him, and he was ignorant where the problem was.

“You want to know?” Tang Siqi’s face was cold.

Qin Lie nodded, “Of course.”

“Alright, I also really want to know why you never mentioned to me that you understood how to inscribe spirit diagrams? You are

an artificer to start with, but you let me order you about without a word, allowed me to have you do this and that, why? You kept me in the dark and fooled me like I'm an idiot. Do you feel accomplished?" Tang Siqi angrily demanded .

Chapter 150: Middle Stage Of The Natal Opening Realm!

Tang Siqi's eyes were filled with fury and a cold expression as she demanded Qin Lie to give an explanation.

Qin Lie was silent for a while before he explained, "I do know how to inscribe spirit diagrams, but I cannot be called a true artificer. Before coming to Armament Sect, I've only used the smelting furnaces a few times and my experience in forging is pitifully little. The things you arranged for me to do were exactly what I desired to learn the most. That was why I didn't make a sound, because I was willing and happy to do it.

"Inscribing spirit diagrams is much harder than forging. How were you able to learn spirit diagram inscription first? Tang Siqi did not believe it.

"I can't explain this." Qin Lie's brow creased. "Regardless of whether you believe me or not, I came here to learn artifact forging. Having me prepare spirit materials for you and being your assistant, as well as helping you forge small items, were the things I had to learn the most."

Usually, artificers would first learn how to recognize spirit materials, prepare spirit materials, and then slowly work up to forging small parts. After they were well practiced, they would finally learn how to smelt complete spirit artifacts.

The last step was to learn how to inscribe spirit diagrams and

bestow a soul onto the artifact through the spirit diagram.

Tang Siqi and all the disciples and elders of Armament Sect had progressed in this manner, one step at a time. They had all been admitted to the inner sect and received attention from the sect before they were qualified to study spirit diagrams.

So she found it hard to understand Qin Lie's artifact forging experience.

However, Qin Lie's serious attitude did not seem as though he was lying. She was confused. "You really learned spirit diagrams first?"

Qin Lie nodded.

"Who did you learn from?" Tang Siqi asked.

Qin Lie did not make a sound.

Tang Siqi knew that her inquiry was too intrusive and changed the topic, "Have you learned the Materialization spirit diagram in the past?"

"No," Qin Lie replied honestly.

"Then why was Elder Mo Hai so shocked after inspecting the spirit tablet that he directly admitted you into the inner sect?"

Tang Siqi's face was full of disbelief.

"I don't know this either." Qin Lie shook his head.

"Fine, fine, you're not willing to say anything so there's no meaning to keep asking." Tang Siqi was helpless. She didn't want to keep nagging and said a few more things before she left.

Qin Lie put his possessions away and inspected this cavern. He found that the cavern was large and multiple times larger than his stone tower at the base of the mountain.

The cavern was divided into several caves, and each stone cave was about half an acre in size. The artifact forging room used specifically for forging was the largest, five times as large as the forging rooms he rented at the base of the mountain.

There were three smelting furnaces of different sizes at the center of the artifact forging room. Channels criss-crossed under the furnaces in order to guide the earth fire to be the source of flame.

Qin Lie came between the three furnaces, and as he reached out and rubbed the furnace, his eyes filled with excitement.

He finally had a forging space that belonged to him, smelting furnaces that belonged to him!

In here, he could use a portion of the spirit material rations he

received every month to practice inscribing spirit diagrams and learn how to smelt spirit artifacts.

In here, he could focus on artifact forging without being disturbed. When he encountered walls in his understanding of spirit diagrams and spirit artifacts, he could ask the elders inside the sect...

There was only one stone door to the entire cavern. If he sealed it from the inside, the people outside would not know what was happening inside unless they forced their way in.

—This was specifically made to stop the owner of the cavern from being disturbed by others.

This meant he could go to the underground area of the Arctic Mountain Range with ease!

After Tang Siqi left, Qin Lie cleaned the cavern and then sealed the door from the inside. This way, unless the people outside were powerful and disregarded the protocols of Armament Sect to break through the door, they definitely could not enter.

Taking out the Eye of Frost, he activated the crux inside and suddenly arrived at the underground area of the Arctic Mountain Range.

Sitting on the peak of the glacier, he slowly calmed down. As he comprehended the frost picture scroll’s concept, he channeled the

cold power inside his Natal Palaces.

In the cruel, cold glacial world, the harsh cold mist gradually gathered and entered his Natal Palaces through the pores on his body.

When the frost power in his Natal Palaces was completely full, his aura suddenly changed. Rumbling thunder came from his bones, and electricity arced across his entire body.

“Heavenly Thunder Eradication! Thunder Lightning Ball!”

Qin Lie’s palms faced each other as he suddenly channelled thunder and lightning. Amidst the thunder claps, blue lightning gathered in his palms and formed into a flashy blue ball.

“Boom!”

The Thunder Lightning Ball flew out and struck the glacier in front of him. However, the thick glacier did not move, nor did the explosion of the Thunder Lightning Ball leave a large mark on the ice. It didn’t have any effect on the spirit beasts that had been frozen for so many years inside the glacier.

“Frost concept, frost energy, so… I’ll call this Frost Arts. It has to have a name.” Qin Lie’s mind moved, and then, the energy suddenly changed into frost energy. The cold energy inside his Natal Palaces was released and streamed out through the pores in his body.

As Heavenly Thunder Eradication circulated, the thunder and lightning energy came out of the acupoints on his body. Next, when his Frost Arts was cast, the cold energy sprouted from the pores in his body. The circulation method of these two spirit arts was not normal, and Qin Lie didn't know if he should be happy or worried.

In this extreme land of cold that seemed eternally desolate, he switched between Heavenly Thunder Eradication and Frost Arts to allow both kinds of power to appear repeatedly on his body.

Multiple days later, during a night where lightning and thunder roared, he walked out of Armament Sect.

He returned to the little yard that Li Mu had left him and stood there. Looking at the lightning flashing blindingly in the darkness, there was electricity flowing through his eyes.

"Clap clap clap!"

The lightning dragons and snakes rampaged within the black night. After a while, several bolts of lightning cut across the darkness and suddenly headed for the courtyard.

They struck him, who was within the courtyard!

The powerful and ferocious thunder energy flooded in through his head and arms, and reached every part of him in an instant. It

filled his organs, and like a flood, it charged towards his spirit sea's dantian!

At this time, the thunder and lightning Natal Palace inside his spirit sea was full—ite could not accept any more thunder and lightning energy.

"Zzt zzt zzt!"

Lightning and thunder gathered and scattered through his dantian. Just as his body was in piercing pain, the spirit energy in his body suddenly went crazy and gathered together with that thunder and lightning energy.

"It's creating a new Natal Palace!"

Qin Lie grinned. He had a feeling that he would be breaking through to the middle stage of the Natal Opening Realm which was why he had left Armament Sect and came to this place to take advantage of the terribly weather of lightning and thunder so he could cultivate Heavenly Thunder Eradication.

When the thunderbolts came down, he immediately channeled Heavenly Thunder Eradication and absorbed the savage power that descended from the sky.

He sat down in the yard and continued to gather thunder power to create a new Natal Palace in his spirit sea.

“Miss, the lightning over there is so dense it is strange,” pointed out Liang Zhong after looking at it while he was in a corner of Armament Sect.

Xie Jingxuan was dressed in white and was giving orders to the fighters of Dark Asura Hall. Hearing this, she raised her head in curiosity and glanced at the lightning in that area.

“I’m going out for a moment.” Her expression shifted, and then, she disappeared like dissipating smoke.

Chapter 151: Meeting Without Knowing

It was a dark night. The storm rumbled, and the lightning zigzagged across the sky, tearing the night sky apart while intimidating the land.

While the thunderstorm raged, a heavy rainpour fell. It was as if the river of heavens had poured downwards as raindrops formed into strings and dropped down from the void.

Amidst the thunderstorm, Xie Jingxuan was like a white spirit. The tips of her feet lightly pressed against the wet ground before her figure flew as lithely as willow leaves. After streaking tens of meters across the sky, only then would she drop back to the ground before flying up once more.

The weather was terrible, and it was deep into the night. People were scarce in all the major districts of Armament City, and there were nearly no pedestrians to be seen on the streets.

Even the Armament Sect outer sect martial practitioners that were in charge of patrols had grown lazy and relaxed under this terrible rain. They had all hid themselves in their respective strongholds away from the rain.

It was also why Xie Jingxuan streaking across the streets like a ghost had not attracted any attention.

From time to time, she would lift her head to look at the thunder and lightning shooting across the sky. While checking the

direction she was heading in, she was also quietly closing on where Qin Lie was.

"The way the thunder was falling is somewhat similar to the time he fought against the Soul Devouring Beast inside the stone forest valley. But he has disappeared for almost a year, so logically he should not appear in Armament City..."

Doubt leaked out of Xie Jingxuan's clear cold eyes. She also thought that her suspicion was a little baseless.

Dark Asura Hall had wanted to escort a batch of valuable spirit materials to Armament City and pass them on to Armament Sect. Because the amount was slightly larger than norm, in order to prevent any accidents along the way, plus the fact that she had business in Armament City anyway, she had accepted the mission on her own and took over the escort of these spirit materials.

It had been almost a year from when Qin Lie and Li Mu left Icestone City. During this one year period, Xie Jingxuan had used Dark Asura Hall's information network to search for Qin Lie and Li Mu's tracks, but unfortunately, there hadn't been any results.

Dark Asura Hall's Yuan Tianya had also arranged for people to look into Li Mu's background and find any information on him that they could non-stop, but again there was no progress whatsoever.

It was as if Qin Lie and Li Mu had both vanished into thin air. Not a trace of them could be found.

She had just arrived at Armament City yesterday and was ready to rest for a moment before personally entering Armament Sect's inner sect in two days. While she was instructing her subordinate generals about other matters, she suddenly saw that the thunder and lightning in a particular area in this city was acting strangely. Therefore, the gears in her head started turning, and she came alone to search.

"Can it be him?" Xie Jingxuan frowned.

……

"Prak prak!"

Inside the courtyard, bolts of lightning shot down from the sky as blinding as whips of lightning. They harshly whipped Qin Lie's body.

Qin Lie's entire body was glowing with electricity like a sparkling gem or diamond. He was as radiant as the sun and moon under the dark night.

Sitting straight on top of the stone floor with a serious expression, he focused every bit of his mind and consciousness to channel Heavenly Thunder Eradication. He had absorbed all of the thunder and lightning energy beating down on him into his body and then into his spirit sea.

Inside his spirit sea, there was a lustrous and brilliant ball of lightning that grew tougher and tougher as if kneaded and crushed by the hands of heaven.

The Thunder Lightning Natal Palace!

Watching the changes inside his spirit sea with his mind, Qin Lie siphoned the thunder and lightning energy from his limbs and bones and entangled them onto the lightning ball like silk again and again.

“Rrrrrm!”

The violent sounds of thunder abruptly roared out from within the lightning ball. Qin Lie’s expression shook suddenly as he instantly opened his eyes.

“Success!” Qin Lie’s eyes were blindingly bright. There were many mini-streaks of lightning shooting from inside his eyes.

He was completely drenched from the heavy downpour, but his eyes were filled with pleasant surprise. And with that, he stared excitedly at the night sky while feeling the formation of his Natal Palace.

He was staring at the bolts of lightning streaking through the night sky!

Channeling Heavenly Thunder Eradication, his body was like a

magnet as he attracted even more lightning to shoot down on him. He used his own mortal body to contain the thunder and lightning energy.

After an uncertain amount of time had passed, the thunder and lightning slowly faded into the nine heavens. However, the rain had grown even stronger and more terrifying than before. It was falling as if it would flood the entire world.

“Hmm?”

Just as he stopped and was ready to change clothes because of the rain, his now acute senses suddenly detected a powerful life force heading his way.

His expression changed slightly, and he immediately conjured his spirit art to gather energy with Frost Arts.

In just an instant, his aura had undergone a complete turnaround. It was as if his entire being had changed in its entirety.

When he was channeling Heavenly Thunder Eradication, his aura was staunch and violent just like thunder and lightning. It was as if it could explode at any moment and destroy all his enemies with peerless madness.

But now, when he channeled Frost Arts, it was as if he had changed into many thick layers of ice.

Cold, dark, cruel. His aura, containing these qualities, was unleashed from his body and swiftly freoze the raindrops inside the yard.

Even the raindrops falling from the sky had been frozen into tiny ice crystals just when they were about to land on top of his head. When it struck his body, there came many crispy “pak pak” sounds.

—A thin layer of ice was also formed on the surface of his body.

He, whose disposition had changed abruptly, stood in the yard with not a single trace of emotion in his cold eyes while staring at a roof in front of him

His pupils abruptly shrunk!

“Xie Jingxuan!” he cried out in his heart.

Amidst the heavy rain on the roof in front of him, Xie Jingxuan stood proudly while garbed in white clothing with a bright, silver halo surrounding her body. Her clear and cold eyes gazed over just like that and fell onto Qin Lie’s body.

It had been almost a year. The two people had met once more at Armament City under this rainy night.

Qin Lie's mind swiftly calmed down. He kept quiet and did not speak either, simply maintaining his frost concept as he coldly met her eyes.

"No, the aura on his body is completely different. The face is different as well..."

Xie Jingxuan stared for a while and realized that the young man below was different from the Qin Lie she knew. That icy cold chilliness that ran bone deep was almost completely different from the old Qin Lie's aura.

The two people stayed quiet and stared at each other for a moment. Xie Jingxuan suddenly nodded before leaving in a bolt of white light.

Qin Lie dared not to relax and continued to quietly maintain his Frost Arts. After a very long time, waiting until he could finally confirm that Xie Jingxuan had definitely gone far, far away, only then did he return back to the house and change his clothes.

"She didn't recognize me?" Qin Lie wasn't sure.

"His aura is different, his looks are different as well. It's obvious they're not the same person." While streaking across the streets in the rainy night, a single doubt appeared in her eyes. "But why does he feel like the same person then? How strange..."

An hour later, she returned to her current lodgings.

Liang Zhong and tens of other Dark Asura Hall generals had all returned to hide from the rain at this time. After seeing her return, the group of people appeared to be very confused. They didn't know where Xie Jingxuan had gone to during such a huge rainstorm.

"That's it for today. Go take your rest. If the rain stops tomorrow, then we'll send the batch of spirit materials to Armament Sect." Xie Jingxuan's mind wasn't calm, so she did not plan to speak any further. The conversation had ended the moment she walked over.

Her Dark Asura Hall general subordinates bowed and withdrew.

Liang Zhong was the only one left inside the house as he asked, "Miss, why did you suddenly leave? Have you noticed something amiss from that area where the lightning was irregularly concentrated?"

"It's not him." Xie Jingxuan knew what Liang Zhong was asking about. "It was a young man about his age. His cultivation is a kind of absolute frost energy and not a thunder spirit art. Maybe the concentrated lightning was just naturally twisted. There shouldn't be any connection with that man."

Liang Zhong also thought that it was impossible and nodded. He said, "Qin Lie has disappeared for almost a year. We and Yuan Tianya have been searching for his tracks and have found nothing so far. It is not very likely that he will appear in Armament City."

The spatial ring on Xie Jingxuan's hand lit up, and an Amplified Spirit Gathering Board flashed into her jade-like palm. Clipping the Amplified Spirit Gathering Board between two fingers, she said, "We'll go to Flame Volcano tomorrow and ask an inner sect Artificer Master about this. Let's see if they recognize the spirit diagram in it."

"After Great Master Lu had seen this, he said that the two spirit diagrams inside are only the basic Spirit Gathering spirit diagram and Amplification spirit diagram. However, it was far more complex than his own recognition of the two kinds of spirit diagrams. He was extremely shocked, but he could not learn anything from it, so there was no way to confirm the creator's identity or background."

When Liang Zhong recalled the expression of Dark Asura Hall's Great Master Lu, he was also quietly surprised. "The artificers of Armament Sect are far greater than Great Master Lu. Their insight and knowledge must also be significantly superior. Maybe they can identify the creator's identity from the two spirit diagrams."

"I hope so," Xie Jingxuan said indifferently.

"There is also that Liang Shaoyang." Liang Zhong's expression darkened. "Finally, after a long period of time, our investigations revealed that he is the true mastermind behind that matter five years ago! Five years ago, he was only fifteen years old, and yet he was already this ruthless and cost us such terrible losses!"

“I have personally come to Armament Sect to escort the spirit materials and have the inner sect Artificer Masters to identify this Spirit Gathering Board, but my most important objective is still to kill this Liang Shaoyang!” Xie Jingxuan exclaimed coldly.

“The three great Shadow Guards of Shadow Tower—Grey Shadow, Black Shadow, and Blood Shadow. With exception of Blood Shadow, who never leaves the Shadow Tower tower lord’s side, Grey Shadow and Black Shadow should already be in Armament City. They were both protecting Liang Shaoyang from the shows and obeying his orders.” Liang Zhong frowned. “It is already very troublesome to deal with Grey Shadow and Black Shadow, and we must consider Armament Sect’s reactions as well if we are to kill Liang Shaoyang. He is not an outer sect disciple right now, but Armament sect’s next genius. He has the high regard of the sect master and three great reverends and is seen as the sect master’s successor just like Tang Siqi…”

Liang Zhong sighed, “If we allow Armament Sect to know that we have killed Liang Shaoyang, that not only you and I would have to endure Blood Spear’s endless chase, Dark Asura Hall may also face Armament Sect’s bloody revenge. Miss, please carefully reconsider this.”

“Naturally, we will not let Armament Sect realize that we are the ones who did it.” Xie Jingxuan’s expression had also changed slightly when she heard Liang Zhong bringing up Blood Spear. She was obviously very fearful of Armament Sect’s Blood Spear as well.

“If we cannot guarantee the plan to be foolproof, then it will be best if we don’t act recklessly. Otherwise, it will be incredibly

troublesome if the news slips out," Liang Zhong advised again, seemingly not too agreeable to the matter.

"I know!" Xie Jingxuan said coldly.

Liang Zhong sighed on the inside. Seeing that her mind was firm, he did not say anything further, just nodding and retreating with a bow.

The next day, the rain had stopped; the skies were bright and clear.

Qin Lie returned to Armament Sect first thing in the morning. When he arrived at the sect's entrance, his expression shuddered slightly. The first thing he saw was Liang Zhong instructing Dark Asura Hall's generals and moving many huge boxes into the outer sect.

Tong Jihua was smiling at the entrance and talking sporadically with Liang Zhong. It appeared that they were very familiar with each other.

Chapter 152: Relentless

“Good day, Elder Tong.”

Qin Lie arrived at the entrance and nodded in respect towards Tong Jihua with a cool expression.

“Mn.” Tong Jihua also nodded and continued to speak with Liang Zhong. He did not say anything to him.

Qin Lie’s body was surrounded by cold air. He passed through between Liang Zhong and Tong Jihua and headed inside Armament Sect. He purposely avoided looking at Liang Zhong.

Liang Zhong also did not think much of him and simply smiled, continuing to speak with Tong Jihua. When he had entered inside the sect and was instructing the Dark Asura Hall generals to be more careful, he accidentally glanced at Qin Lie’s back.

He was stunned for a second. Suddenly, he stared at Qin Lie’s back even more intently as his expression turned somewhat strange. “This back is really familiar. It’s like I’ve seen it before somewhere…”

“Mister Liang, Mister Liang!” Tong Jihua called out softly.

Liang Zhong recovered, frowned slightly before all of a sudden asking, “Who is that cold young man who passed by just now?”

“He’s Qin Bing, an inner sect disciple. He has just recently ascended up the mountains.” Tong Jihua explained carelessly, “Elder Mo Hai is the one who noticed him and gave word for him to enter the inner sect. He is a newly promoted entree and had passed the same exam as Liang Shaoyang. He was also the second disciple to go up the mountains other than Liang Shaoyang.”

“Qin Bing... Qin Bing. I’ve never heard this name before. It shouldn’t be the same person, but why are their backs so similar.” Liang Zhong whispered and asked again, “Where did he come from?”

“I don’t know.” Tong Jihua was a little surprised. He didn’t understand why Liang Zhong was interested in Qin Lie. “You know Armament Sect’s rules. We normally wouldn’t go too deep into a newly joined disciple’s background. We only judge them by their talent, and as long as they have it, even if they’re just a commoner, Armament Sect will still accept them. Without talent, no matter how good their background is we will not accept them into the sect.”

Liang Zhong nodded and did not continue asking. He simply kept it at the back of his mind.

.....

“Qin Bing!” At the foot of Flame Volcano, Pan Xuan scolded him with a cold expression, “Where did you go last night?”

“I went out of the sect to buy some stuff. I’ve only returned this

morning.” Qin Lie said.

“As an inner sect disciple, you are not allowed to go in and out of Armament Sect as you please like an outer sect disciple. Every inner sect disciple must inform me before they leave the sect. Did no one teach you about this?” Pan Xuan blocked the stone path together with three other inner sect disciples who were wearing critical looks.

He was obviously going downhill and just happened to run into Qin Lie in between, so he purposely looked for trouble.

Inner sect disciples could go up and down the mountains and the outer sect freely, but if they were to exit the sect entirely, then they would have to inform Pan Xuan according to the rules.

But Tang Siqi was a bit special. She was the most talented person for the past ten years, and was highly regarded by Mo Hai and the sect master. There were a lot of inner sect rules that did not apply to her.

When she went in and out of the sect, she had never informed Pan Xuan. Pan Xuan dared not trouble her either.

Since she never needed to obey this rule, she neglected to mention it when explaining the rules of the sect to Qin Lie.

So Qin Lie really didn’t know that such a rule existed.

“I’ve only just entered the inner sect and am not familiar with many of the rules of inner sect. I will remember it in the future.” Qin Lie’s expression was cold and his tone was stiff. Once he replied he immediately walked forwards.

“From what I can see you have no intentions of admitting your fault at all!” Pan Xuan snorted once.

Qin Lie frowned and lifted his head to look at him, “Then, what do you want to do then, senior brother?”

“According to the sect’s rules, you should…” Pan Xuan’s words suddenly stopped halfway. His gaze moved across Qin Lie as respect appeared on his face. “Please go up the mountain, Miss Xie.”

Qin Lie turned around.

Xie Jingxuan wore a snow white martial practitioner’s uniform. Her expression was cool, and she was just walking up from the foot of the mountain.

Pan Xuan’s main task for coming downhill was to lead her up the mountains. The moment he saw her, he quickly stopped scolding Qin Lie, and after harshly glaring at him once, he went forth with the other three junior brothers, ready to lead her up.

At the foot of the mountain, Liang Zhong was directing the Dark Asura Hall generals to carry spirit materials. As the leader, Xie

Jingxuan did not need to bother with these trivial matters, and just walked up on her own.

Seeing that Pan Xuan and the trio had come forth, she nodded slightly and calmly walked up the mountain.

When she arrived beside Qin Lie, there was obvious surprise leaking out of her eyes. She was very surprised to find that the young man she saw last night was actually an Armament Sect inner sect disciple.

Amidst Pan Xuan and the others' doubtful gaze, she stopped beside Qin Lie and focused her cool clear eyes. After examining him closely, she suddenly said, "You look like someone I know."

Qin Lie frowned and channeled Frost Arts quietly. His aura was as cold and sharp as an ice peak.

"But you're probably not him," Xie Jingxuan said to herself once more and then nodded to Qin Lie before finally passing by him to proceed up the mountain.

Seeing that she had proceeded on, Pan Xuan did not dare to stay for long either. He let go of Qin Lie for now and hurriedly led the way with his other three junior brothers. They respectfully stayed by her side and let loose flattering smiles.

Qin Lie stopped and secretly observed the direction Xie Jingxuan and the others were heading in. When he realized that Xie

Jingxuan was going to the peak of the mountain, his expression changed slightly.

The peak of the mountain was where the sect master and three great reverends had lived in for a long time. Unless the person had an extraordinary background, they would not have the qualification to go up at all.

“Xie Jingxuan’s identity at Dark Asura Hall was probably not a small one. Otherwise, Pan Xuan would not have personally welcomed her, and she could not have possibly gone up the mountain peak,” Qin Lie thought silently.

He headed back to his cavern.

“Senior Sister Tang, the sect master has asked me to go up with you to the mountain peak.” Liang Shaoyang’s voice came from Tang Siqi’s cave. This caused Qin Lie to pay attention and gaze in that direction from afar.

“Got it. You go first, I’ll come later.” Inside the closed cave, Tang Siqi’s impatient voice rang out.

“I’m fine. I’ll just wait for you a little while.” Liang Shaoyang continued to hound her.

“Am I not being clear?” Tang Siqi’s angry voice came from inside the cave. “Then I’ll say this more directly. I do not want to go up the mountain with you! This is because I dislike you very much,

and the moment I see you, I feel disgusted! You should understand if I put it this way, shouldn't you?"

Her raging voice was not soft, so the few inner sect disciples near the cavern could clearly hear her .

Lian Rou and Pang Shishi both wore shocked expressions when they heard her yell and quietly appeared from their respective caves. They watched Liang Shaoyang together with a few other inner sect disciples.

Liang Shaoyang's expression turned incredibly ugly as his gaze darkened. After standing for a while he said, "I understand."

He no longer continued to hound her, and while leaking a dangerous aura from his body, he went up the mountain peak alone.

Lian Rou continued to stare at Liang Shaoyang and watched him slowly walk away. Then, she hurriedly rushed to Tang Siqi's cave and said in a low tone, "It's me, Siqi."

The cave entrance opened. Tang Siqi let Lian Rou in while saying with a cold expression, "I've never seen such a shameless person."

"Siqi, you might upset him saying such rude things in front of so many people." Lian Rou was a little worried as she lowered her voice and said, " Liang Shaoyang's methods are dark. He isn't afraid to kill Yin Hao and isn't afraid to attack Qin Bing. Not only

that, but he grew up at Dark Shadow Tower. Such a person would definitely not have too big of a heart."

"I've tried the indirect way before, but he never responded. Recently, I've been feeling really irritated. I don't give a damn about his feelings." Tang Siqi couldn't care less. "I may not like fighting too much, but I am at the early stage of the Manifestation Realm. Very soon I'll be breaking through to the middle stage. Even if he's good at fighting, he is just at the late stage of the Natal Opening Realm. Why should I be afraid of him? Besides, this is Armament Sect. It may be fine if he screws with someone else, but if he dares attack me, then the sect master and three great reverends will definitely not protect him!"

"You should still be careful," Lian Rou warned her in worry. Recalling Liang Shaoyang's expression, she just couldn't let it go.

"As long as I don't leave the sect, he absolutely can't do anything to me. Nothing to worry about. Don't worry, I'll pay attention."

After tidying her attire for a moment Tang Siqi headed out of the cave, "Today, Xie Jingxuan of Dark Asura Hall's Department of Foreign Affairs had brought a spirit tablet over. There is a very peculiar spirit diagram inscribed inside the spirit tablet. A month ago, Dark Asura Hall had sent over a letter with a brief description about the matter. Both Sect Master and Elder Mo were very curious about it and said that they wanted to see the real thing, so she has probably brought that over today. That's why Sect Master has asked Liang Shaoyang and me to study it together."

"I see." Lian Rou looked a little envious. "Even Pan Xuan did not

have the qualification to study it. It seems that you and Liang Shaoyang truly are the future of the sect in Sect Master's heart."

"Qin Bing..." Tang Siqi walked out of the cave. She noticed Qin Lie outside as well at first glance and snorted, saying, "What are you here for? Come to watch me be embarrassed?"

"Liang Shaoyang is not a good man. You better be more careful." Qin Lie threw down those words and walked away.

"He actually cares quite about you, doesn't he," Lian Rou smiled lightly.

"It's all false pretense." Tang Siqi kept a straight face. "Not a single word from this guy's mouth is real! I'll be a fool to believe that he would really care for me."

"Maybe he really didn't enter Armament Sect for you." Even Lian Rou was doubtful now. "From the moment he entered the inner sect, he has never proactively looked for you. He acted secretive all day long and always shuts himself inside his cavern. Last night, during the thunderstorm, he actually went out of the sect alone..."

Lian Rou shook her head with strange eyes. "This guy is very strange. You can't see through him, and you just don't know what on earth he's thinking."

"Junior Sister Tang! The sect master asks you to hurry up!" Pan Xuan yelled halfway up the mountain.

And so, Tang Siqi stopped her conversation with Lian Rou and hurried up the mountain peak. When she passed by Pan Xuan, he suddenly said, “You did well just now. You should be relentless towards a bastard as shameless as Liang Shaoyang!”

“Mn, that was a great yell!” The trio beside him also expressed so.

“But you should be more careful. This Liang Shaoyang had been arrogant all day ever since he entered the inner sect. He doesn’t even put us in his eyes.” Pan Xuan said caringly, “This person came from Dark Shadow Tower, and it is rumored that he had been performing killing missions since he was a child. His hands are covered in blood, and he might do something after you upstaged him today.”

Tang Siqi was a little surprised. She didn’t expect Pan Xuan to be so disgusted by Liang Shaoyang either. “Thank you for your reminder, senior brother,” she said in a serious manner.

“If there are any problems, you can inform me in advance. Don’t worry, I’ll stand by your side. If Liang Shaoyang dares to cause trouble, your senior brother definitely won’t go easy on him!” Pan Xuan righteously exclaimed .

“Understood.” Tang Siqi gave a light smile before going up the mountain like a ball of flames.

Chapter 153: Ancient Diagram

In the dignified large hall, Armament Sect's Sect Master Ying Xingyan and the three great reverends sat upright, each of them with serious expressions.

Mo Hai and the six inner sect elders were sitting separately at the corners of the hall and seemed to be silently waiting for something.

"Miss Xie, the sect master is waiting inside the hall. Please enter immediately," the respectful voice of the guard came from the outside.

Inside the hall, the eyes of Ying Xingyan and the three reverends lit up, and they focused themselves.

Mo Hai and the six inner sect elders couldn't resist looking at the door. Their expressions were very stern, and their eyes hid their anticipation.

One month ago, Dark Asura Hall had sent a letter. The letter had been personally written by Great Master Lu from Dark Asura Hall, and the subject of the letter were two basic spirit diagrams. He stated that he could not understand the two spirit diagrams, but he felt they were extremely mysterious, so he was requesting for Armament Sect to take a look.

He wrote the effects of the two spirit diagrams, the number of spirit lines required to inscribe it, and the degree of

compatibility...

When the letter came into Ying Xingyan's hands, he studied it and thought that it was a very rare and ancient spirit diagram. He then expressed that Armament Sect was very interested in examining it, but they had to see the actual object.

Today, the actual object was formally being delivered to Armament Sect. Ying Xingyan placed great importance on it, so he invited the three reverends and the seven elders.

—For them to all examine the wonders of the two spirit diagrams.

Under the gaze of Ying Xingyan and the others, Xie Jingxuang walked with an aloof expression while dressed in simple robes. "Greetings Sect Master, greetings Elders."

Ying Xingyan nodded his head with a smile and indicated for her to walk in the middle of them. He then said, "Please take the object out."

Xie Jingxuan's spatial ring lit up. An Amplified Spirit Gathering Board that Qin Lie had made appeared in her hand.

"Sect Master Ying, please inspect it." She bowed slightly and held up the spirit tablet. Then, she immediately retreated to the side and took a seat to silently examine Ying Xingyan's reaction.

Ying Xingyan took the Amplified Spirit Gathering Board and said casually, “It is just the most basic spirit tablet, there is nothing special about the material, the crux must be inside...” His gaze focused, and then, a sliver light seemed to flash through his eyes.

It was a very clear soul ripple that suddenly spread out from his body. An incomparably pure consciousness flowed through his hand into the spirit tablet.

Ying Xingyan closed his eyes and used his mind to roam between the complex spirit line world inside the spirit tablet. His body visibly shook once.

The three reverends and the seven inner sect elders all looked at Ying Xingyan with shock. Curiosity filled their hearts.

The hall was so quiet that if a needle dropped, it could be heard. There wasn’t even any heavy breathing.

All of the people looked at Ying Xingyan.

Eyes tightly closed, Ying Xingyan’s trembling became even more evident. He seemed to be unable to control his excitement while his face gradually became flushed.

Half an hour later.

Ying Xingyan exhaled deeply and then solemnly handed the spirit tablet to the Chief Reverend, who was also his teacher, Luo

Zhichang. He said, “Take a look.”

Luo Zhichang’s hair was completely white, and his features were withered. When he took the spirit tablet, he also inspected it with seriousness.

“Ancient diagram!” he exclaimed and shook after a wisp of his mind consciousness entered it.

All of the reverends and elders became excited upon hearing this. Their eyes all burned as they looked at the small spirit tablet.

That little spirit tablet passed from the hands of one reverend to another, then to Elder Mo Hai, and finally down to the other elders...

Everyone took turns inspecting it.

Four hours later, the Amplified Spirit Gathering Board returned to Ying Xingran’s hands. At this time, his face was pale, as though he had expended great mental effort, and his voice was clearly weak. “Everyone has seen this, is there anything you want to say?”

“Xingran, go back and rest first,” Luo Zhichang said in concern.

Ying Xingran shook his head. His complexion was not well, but his eyes were excited. “No matter, I’m fine. Everyone, speak your thoughts.”

He looked at everyone else.

“It is definitely an ancient diagram.” Second Reverend Fang Qi’s tone was certain.

“It is an ancient diagram.”

“Definitely an ancient diagram!”

“It can’t be wrong!”

Everyone voiced their opinions.

“A’Hai, your thoughts?” Ying Xingyan looked at Mo Hai with bright eyes.

Mo Hai also nodded, “One is the Spirit Gathering diagram, the other is the Amplification diagram. They are both the most basic diagrams, but the wonders and complexity far surpasses our knowledge and is more wondrous than the Spirit Gathering and Amplification diagrams that our Armament Sect has. They say that the most ancient spirit diagrams originated from the laws of the world and contain the meaning of the supreme principles, containing the essence of the universe…”

He raised his head and looked at everyone in the hall, then continued, “Those spirit diagrams were comprehended by the

powerful artificers during ancient times through observing the rise and fall of the sun and moon, the movements of the stars, and all kinds of worldly changes. Only those kinds of mysterious spirit diagrams can create the strongest spirit diagrams and bestow high ranks on spirit artifacts!”

Ying Xingyan, the reverends, and the elders became excited as they heard this, and they could see the excitement in each other’s eyes as they looked at each other.

“It is a pity that the two ancient spirit diagrams in these spirit tablets are the most basic and that they are just diagrams. We are unable to obtain the corresponding inscribing method. We cannot know how much spirit energy needs to be added to every spirit line.” Mo Hai shook his head and said regretfully, “We naturally do not have a way to truly grasp the wonders of these two ancient diagrams.”

As these words were said, all the reverends and elders of Armament Sect had dejected expressions.

“But perhaps we can comprehend something unique through observation just like the people who truly have talent and comprehension can discover the wonders of the patterns on the spirit pattern pillars,” Ying Xingran suggested.

As he spoke, Liang Shaoyang and Tang Siqi appeared in the corner of the hall one after each other. The two were shocked when they saw the participants and did not dare to speak. They stood quietly in the corner and listened.

“Miss Xie, please, where did you get this spirit tablet? Can you find the one who made this?” Luo Zhichang’s gaze burned as he stared at Xie Jingxuang and said, “Our Armament Sect hopes to find this person and invite them to in. The entire sect will respectfully welcome him!”

“You should have heard of the one who made this.” Xie Jingxuan’s brow furrowed as she said calmly, “He is called Li Mu. That Li Mu from Icestone City.”

“Li Mu!” Ying Xingran, the reverends, and elders of Armament Sect all had shocked expressions.

“...So it is him, it’s him! This Li Mu is a wondrous person!” Ying Xingran sighed, “It is a pity that he has disappeared for over a year. No one knows his origins, ah, such a pity.”

The name of Li Mu was extremely popular in the recent year. This person that could cause the First Hall Master of Dark Asura Hall to swallow his anger was already a legend.

—A legend that had disappeared mysteriously.

“We of Dark Asura Hall also want information on him and hope you can use this Amplified Spirit Gathering Board to determine his origins and identity.” Xie Jingxuan suddenly stood up and bowed slightly towards Ying Xingran. “But it appears that you cannot help us so please give the spirit tablet back to me.”

“Miss Xie, this spirit tablet is not of much use to you, but it is extremely important for our Armament Sect.” Ying Xingran gripped the spirit tablet tightly and shouted lowly, “Quote your price!”

“Two spatial rings!” Xie Jingxuan seemed to have been prepared and instantly replied.

Liang Shaoyang and Tang Siqi were shocked. They couldn’t resist looking at the female dressed in white as though they were startled that she dared to name such a high price.

It was just a spirit tablet, and she dared to demand two spatial rings. Did she not know the value of a spatial ring?

Liang Shaoyang and Tang Siqi shook their heads. They felt that Xie Jingxuang was too naive and did not know how hard it was to forge a spatial ring.

“Agreed!” Strangely, Ying Xingran immediately agreed and decisively said, “Before we finish this transaction, two spatial rings will be delivered to you.”

Xie Jingxuan nodded in satisfaction, bowed, and then walked straight out of the hall.

Ying Xingran gripped the Amplified Spirit Gathering Board. After thinking for a while, he said, “Inside the sect, only A’Hai, Siqi, and

Shaoyang have comprehended something the twelve spirit pattern pillars, so in terms of talent, you three are the most outstanding. This spirit tablet is inscribed with an ancient diagram. This will be given to you, A'Hai. You will try to comprehend it first, then let Shaoyang and Siqi also try to see if anything can be learned from this. This will be a... side matter. If you can gain something, it will be worth the value of the two spatial rings."

"That is right."

"Mn, what you are doing is right."

"Sect Master is wise."

The three reverends and the elders voiced their thoughts.

Mo Hai took the spirit tablet and inhaled deeply. Under the expectant gazes, he said, "I will do my best."

.....

"Siqi, this are the spirit artifacts you need to forge. They have been custom-ordered by the commanders from Dark Asura Hall."

Second Elder Tan Dongling came into Tang Siqi's cavern and handed her a list. He said, "In total, six artifacts. Try to make them all at Profound Grade One. Most of the spirit materials necessary have been delivered by Dark Asura Hall. The sect has almost all of the remainder. I took a look. There are about five type of spirit

materials that the sect does not have. You can send someone to harvest them. Try to start as soon as possible."

"Why me?" Tang Siqi asked as she took the list.

"Of all the inner sect disciples, your success rate is the highest, and the grade of the artifacts you forge is the best. We will be busy forging the spatial rings and do not have the time to forge these six spirit artifacts," Tang Dongling explained. "You also know how difficult it is to forge spatial rings. Old Mo also has to study that ancient diagram, and since the sect master's body cannot stand it, there is only us."

"I understand," Tang Siqi replied helplessly.

"Don't worry, after the grade of the spirit artifacts come out, we won't skimp on your contribution points," Tan Dongling comforted.

"Alright, I will make them. Really, I need to push down the grade. You guys seriously don't want me to use my true skill."

Tan Dongling left with an awkward smile.

After he left, Tang Siqi thought for a while inside the cavern. Her expression suddenly changed as though she thought of something.

Suddenly, walking out of the cavern, Tang Siqi headed to Qin Lie's cave. Tang Siqi said, "Junior Brother Qin, are you inside?"

“I’m here.” Qin Lie opened the cavern door and allowed her to enter.

At a corner south of the cavern at a raised part of the cliff, Liang Shaoyang’s expression was dark as he looked from a distance as Tang Siqi entered Qin Lie’s cave. His eyes were murderous.

Turning, he dove down the mountain like a bird and quickly landed at the bottom.

With a cold face, he passed through the plaza and walked forward, and shortly after, he walked out of the gates of Armament Sect.

Chapter 154: Killing Intent

“Look through the requests first.”

Inside the cave, Tang Siqi passed over the artifact forging list Tan Dongling had given her to Qin Lie. Then, she began to casually walk inside the cave.

Her bright eyes roamed everywhere as she observed the furnace in the cave and the spirit materials on top of the cupboards, trying to determine if Qin Lie had been forging recently.

After a while, she appeared to be disappointed. Judging from the furnace and the surrounding materials, Qin Lie probably hadn’t started for real yet.

“Why did you want me to look at this?” Qin Lie did not understand.

“I want you to help me forge these together. Relax, I’ll pass a portion of the contribution points to you.” Tang Siqi was no longer looking about as she turned around and stared at Qin Lie with glittery eyes, saying, “Since you are an artificer as well, you should have no problem forging these spirit artifacts now, right?”

Tan Dongling’s request was to make sure that all six spirit artifacts were controlled at Profound Grade One. She wanted to clear up exactly what Qin Lie’s artificer rank was through the spirit artifacts’ grade requirements.

—This was a problem that had plagued her for a very long time.

“I probably can’t help you.” Qin Lie frowned.

“You can’t, or you don’t want to?” Tang Siqi stared into his eyes.

“I can’t,” said Qin Lie as he shook his head. “I only know the most basic spirit diagram inscriptions, and I have no experience in forging Profound Grade spirit artifacts. I really don’t have the skills to help you with this.”

“Really?” Tang Siqi was a little disbelieving.

“I can help you forge the artifacts, but you should perform the final step—that is, inscribing the spirit diagram—yourself,” Qin Lie said.

Tang Siqi looked surprised as she asked, “What rank of an artificer are you anyway?”

“I… I don’t know myself,” Qin Lie hesitatingly answered. “Before I came to Armament Sect, I have never formally learned how to forge artifacts. I only practiced inscribing spirit tablets first and did not really learn how to forge arti… I’m telling the truth!” Seeing surprise coloring the entirety of Tang Siqi’s face, he had no choice but to speak louder to emphasize his point.

Tang Siqi's beautiful eyes rolled about, and suddenly, a radiant smile appeared over her recently serious face.

Seeing Qin Lie acting slightly embarrassed, her mood suddenly grew much better. An attractive curl lifted from the corners of her lips as she smiled, saying, "So you really didn't lie to me? It's just as you've said a few days ago, that you've only learned how to inscribe spirit diagrams and never truly learned how to forge artifacts?"

Qin Lie replied dejectedly, "That's right."

She didn't know why, but after she confirmed that Qin Lie did not lie to her, it was as if the dark clouds in her heart had been cleared away in an instant. Her feelings had turned sunny in an instant.

An intoxicating smile once again spread across her beautiful face. Her entire being seemed to be filled with high spirits. "Never mind. I suppose I'll forgive you about the... matters from back then."

Qin Lie was a little confused. He wasn't sure exactly what Tang Siqi was forgiving him for. He didn't remember offending her at all, did he?

So how would this "forgiveness" come into picture then?

Qin Lie shook his head on the inside. He realized that he still

couldn't understand a woman's mind. He just didn't know what a woman's occasional words meant at all.

"Alright. Then you'll just assist me by forging the artifacts. I will complete the final step and inscribe the spirit diagram." Tang Siqi was full of smiles. "We are still lacking a few spirit materials. The sect just ran out of stock recently, so we'll have to stop here today. Tomorrow, you'll go out with me to the city to purchase all of the missing spirit materials."

"Oh," Qin Lie nodded. Then, pretending carelessness, he asked, "What exactly did Sect Master ask you guys to gather for?"

"For a spirit tablet. A spirit tablet called the Spirit Gathering Board." Tang Siqi's feelings were better, and so, her box of words had also been opened as she began to explain everything about the Spirit Gathering Board, the two ancient diagrams inside it, and Xie Jingxuan's request in great detail.

When she was done, she was a little angry. "It was just a spirit tablet with an ancient diagram inscribed on it. Because there was no way to grasp the spirit energy used to inscribe the spirit lines, even if it was possible to view the diagram's interior with a wisp of mind consciousness, there is no way to learn it. But Sect Master had actually agreed to her requests and agreed to trade it for two spatial rings. This is just unbelievable..."

"Qin Bing! Are you listening to me?" Tang Siqi suddenly frowned.

She noticed that Qin Lie's expression had turned incredibly odd when she mentioned the Spirit Gathering Board, and when she heard that Xie Jingxuan had exchanged it for two spatial rings his entire body had even shuddered once, as if he was deeply shocked inside his heart.

"I'm listening." Qin Lie sucked in a deep breath and recovered from the massive shock. "I was just really surprised. It was just a spirit tablet, how can it be worth two spatial rings."

"Spatial rings are rare alright. Even I do not have the qualifications to forge them. Only the inner sect elders of our Armament Sect have the capabilities to forge these items." Tang Siqi was very much in agreement. "Perhaps it's because ancient diagrams are too rare nowadays. I should be able to get it from the great elder and look at it myself some time later. I also want to see what's so special about it, how it was worth so much attention from the sect master, the three reverends, and seven elders."

Qin Lie no longer said anything else. He was still sunk in deep shock.

Right now, he was plagued with so much regret he could die. At the time he had only sold the Amplification Spirit Gathering Board to Xie Jingxuan for only five Profound Grade One spirit stones. At the time he had even thought it was expensive.

But he could not imagine that Xie Jingxuan would be able to exchange it for two spatial rings after bringing it to Armament Sect!

“Looks like the four spirit diagrams inside the Soul Suppressing Orb are far more valuable than Armament Sect’s so-called spirit diagrams. I must be very careful in the future!”

……

“Young master.”

“Young master.”

At the Water District of Armament City’s Earth, Fire, Water and Wind main districts, Liang Shaoyang arrived at a secluded house. The moment he walked in, there were many martial practitioners with dark gazes saluting him respectfully.

Liang Shaoyang’s expression was cold. He walked to a secret room behind the house and shook a special bell.

Not long after, two thin, middle-aged men appeared like ghosts before him. Their figures formed bit by bit, and it took a few seconds before they really turned solid.

“Greetings, young master,” respectfully said the duo after having knelt on one knee.

“Our plan will have to change.” Liang Shaoyang slowly controlled his emotions and stared at the two great shadow guards,

Gray Shadow and Black Shadow. He withdrew his usual arrogance and said, “It will be very hard for me to control Tang Siqi. Since this path is impassable, then we have no choice but to change to a new one.”

There were strange, flowing lights on Gray Shadow and Black Shadow’s faces. This caused their faces to be blurry and unrecognizable. They looked at Liang Shaoyang and did not interrupt him, awaiting their next orders.

“Father’s plan is for me to court Tang Siqi, and after she takes over the sect master’s position, to control Armament Sect from the shadows through her.” Liang Shaoyang calmed down as his thoughts quickly became clear. “Now, we can change that plan. Since I have also incited a reaction from the spirit pattern pillars and become a future sect master candidate, once Tang Siqi is dead, there will be no one left to compete with me. Then, I can ascend to the sect master’s throne directly!”

“You would like to attack Tang Siqi, young master?” Gray Shadow asked with a raspy voice.

“Yes. Keep a close eye on Armament Sect’s entrance. She should be going out to purchase spirit materials soon. I want her to die outside Armament Sect.” Liang Shaoyang’s expression was cold and brutal. “Most of Blood Spear’s experts operate inside Armament Sect and the surrounding regions. Pay attention when you act, and stay away from Armament Sect’s entrance as much as possible.”

“Understood.” Gray Shadow and Black Shadow withdrew

quietly.

“If I can’t get you, then I may as well destroy you. I won’t feel uncomfortable when I see you then.” coldly exclaimed Liang Shaoyang in a low tone after the two people disappeared .

He stayed only for a little while before leaving quietly again. With that, he then returned to Armament Sect very quickly.

……

On the other side of Armament City.

“Liang Shaoyang has gone to a house in the Water District. It should be Shadow Tower’s base at Armament Sect. Gray Shadow and Black Shadow should be hiding inside it.” The moment Xie Jingxuan returned, Liang Zhong had quickly reported the latest findings, “I’ve been following him all the way and saw him enter the house. There should be a secret passage inside that house since I didn’t see him walk out. However, I have just confirmed that he has returned to Armament Sect. He should have appeared on the other side of the street through the underground secret passage and escaped me before leaving from some other location.”

“You have a confirmation on the location?” Xie Jingxuan’s eyes turned cold.

“There is no mistake,” Liang Zhong nodded.

“Very good.” There was terrible killing intent brimming inside Xie Jingxuan’s clear and cool eyes. “We wait. We’ll wait until he uses it the next time! It will be best if we can act at night, and we will kill everyone inside the house and not leave a single man alive. We must not let Armament Sect have any leverage.”

“Mn. If the news slipped through, and Armament Sect realizes that we are the ones who did it, then we may not be able to leave Armament City,” Liang Zhong said solemnly.

“Continue watching Armament Sect’s entrance. When Liang Shaoyang comes out, I want to know immediately,” Xie Jingxuan ordered.

“Mn.”

……

The next day.

Tang Siqi had arrived at Qin Lie’s cave very early in the morning as she yelled, “Qin Bing, come with me for an outing today.”

“Oh.” Qin Lie opened the cave entrance and walked down the mountain with her. “Should we inform First Senior Brother?”

“He can’t bother with my business. Just ignore him.” Tang Siqi was wearing a luxurious, dark red artificer robe. The corner of the skirt was adorned with flowers of flames, and when she moved her

waist, the flames at the corner of her skirt would dance along as if burning furiously. It was like it could draw out the dark desires in one's heart, causing people to feel hot and bothered.

"Senior Sister Tang, Junior Brother Qin, are you guys going out to the city?" Lian Rou asked in surprise after seeing the two.

"Yeah, we're going to purchase some spirit materials and help those people from Dark Asura Hall to forge some spirit artifacts." Tang Siqi's smiled cheerfully, "How is Yi Yuan as of late? I don't see you looking for him for the past few days?"

"Who knows where that bastard went to," Lian Rou cursed in a low tone.

"He has probably entered Blood Spear's exam," Qin Lie interrupted.

"Blood Spear?" Tang Siqi and Lian Rou's expression shook slightly before they nodded. They did not say a thing but seemed to be very surprised.

When they arrived at the plaza at the foot of the mountain, Lian Rou went to a outer sect elder to inquire about some things. Meanwhile, Qin Lie and Tang Siqi had arrived at the entrance and gone out the sect together.

There were many people selling spirit materials along the streets of Armament Sect. The moment they saw someone from

Armament Sect come out they would surround the person and advertise their products.

When Tang Siqi and Qin Lie had come out, there were many such people who passionately walked forward and yelled about some precious spirit materials they have, hoping that they would be selected by the people of Armament Sect.

One of them, wearing a normal face, was mixed amidst the crowd.

When he saw Tang Siqi and Qin Lie coming out together, not only did he not go up and surround them, he had even backed away suddenly. He only watched the two moving away from afar.

Chapter 155: Free Trade Street

Armament City was divided into four large districts, the Earth, Fire, Water, and Wind Districts. Each district had many spirit material commerce streets and shops.

On the border of Armament City were the five major Black Iron factions, Dark Asura Hall, Seven Fiends Valley, Dark Shadow Tower, Purple Mist Sea, and Cloud Sky Mountain as well as dozens of Limestone factions.

These factions all had bases in Armament City that were responsible for selling the spirit materials they did not need and buying the spirit medicines and pills they needed.

Armament City was formed from all kinds of spirit material shops. Almost all of the Common and Profound Grade spirit materials and pills and all kinds of Common Grade spirit artifacts could be bought at Armament City.

As the owner, Armament Sect knew the states of all the large commerce streets in the four districts as well as the back of their hand. It was very easy to find spirit materials.

In front of a business tower called “Heart of the Great Earth,” Qin Lie and Tang Siqi suddenly appeared and caused the employees to shout in shock.

Qin Lie and Tang Siqi’s artificer robes had a small insignia of a smelting furnace—that was unique to the inner sect disciples of

Armament Sect.

"You are Armament Sect's inner sect disciples!" Someone came up to them with a respectful expression. "Please wait, I will ask for the owner to come."

"Thanks," Tang Siqi smiled brightly.

The male employees in the tower felt the interior suddenly light up. Their expressions were intoxicated as though they had drunk too much.

"You are too polite, too polite." The person's face was bright red as he bowed and left.

"This is the store that Cloud Sky Mountain has set up. That place is a good producer of all earth-type spirit materials. We can definitely find the Earth Magnets we lack here." Tang Siqi was long used to the burning gazes of males around her. She smiled as she pulled over a soft chair and sat down. She then nodded towards another chair and indicated for Qin Lie to also sit.

Qin Lie naturally sat down.

"Junior Sister Pang Shishi grew up in Cloud Sky Mountain and is very skilled in forging earth-type spirit artifacts. Oh, right, Pang Feng in the outer sect is Pang Shishi's brother. He also lived in Cloud Sky Mountain before," Tang Siqi introduced with a smile.

Hearing her speak of Pang Shishi and Pang Feng, the employees that came from Cloud Sky Mountain all had awed expressions.

Pang Shishi and Pang Feng had some fame in the present Cloud Sky Mountain. Before they joined Armament sect, Pang Feng had been a star among the young generation, and almost all the youths knew of Pang Feng's strength.

"Is it Miss Tang Siqi?" A short while later, a slightly plump, middle-aged person came over with a smile. "The Earth Magnets have already been prepared and will arrive soon."

"Thanks," Tang Siqi smiled and nodded.

"It is what we should do." The middle-aged person's attitude was fawning as he said, "Would you like some tea or liquor?"

"That's not necessary. We will leave after getting the Earth Magnets," Tang Siqi gently refused.

"Oh, so that's how it is. That's good, that's good."

A few minutes later, two employees moved over several copper-colored rocks. When the rocks appeared, many metal artifacts in the surroundings vibrated.

Earth Magnets had a strong attraction to metal ore and was a very rare Profound Grade Four spirit material, one of the rare items that was hard to buy.

“Alright.” Tang Siqi stood up and walked next to the Earth Magnets. Her hand grabbed at the air.

Bright green light came from the spatial ring on her finger and covered the Earth Magnets. Under Qin Lie’s gaze, the Earth Magnets slowly shrunk and then disappeared into her ring.

“Spatial ring… they really are great,” Qin Lie thought.

“Let’s go and visit somewhere more interesting.” Tang Siqi smiled at Qin Lie and then said, “After a few days, someone from the outer sect will come with the payment.”

“No problem, no problem.” The store owner bowed as he saw them off.

“Why is he like that?” Qin Lie asked in puzzlement after they came out of the door.

“We are inner sect disciples.” Tang Siqi walked to one of the side streets. “Every inner sect disciple will become a true artificer in the future. You will slowly learn the power of an artificer from Armament Sect in this land.”

As they spoke, he and Tang Siqi came to a busy street. The street was not wide, and the two sides were filled with stalls. Many martial practitioners dressed in various sets of clothes were sitting in front of their stalls. Some had indifferent expressions and were

silent, some were very enthusiastic and exclaimed the value of what they were selling to the martial practitioners that passed by.

Many strange stones, crystals, medicinal jars, and spirit artifacts of unknown grade were at each stall.

Numerous martial practitioners of various rank walked on this commerce street. Some people were picking out spirit materials while others sat down and sold what they had on them.

“I came out this time mainly because I wanted to visit this place. Sometimes, if my luck is good, I can find good things here.” Entering this bustling and loud street, Tang Siqi suddenly became alert. Her eyes seemed to flash as she glanced at the spirit materials on the street.

“Free Trade Street?” Qin Lie unconfidently asked.

“Mn, this is Free Trade Street,” Tang Siqi smiled.

Free Trade Street was between the Earth and Fire districts. This street was not very wide, but it was quite lengthy. Any martial practitioner could set up a stall here and sell the spirit materials and medicines they did not need. They could also buy spirit materials they needed as the price was usually ten to twenty percent lower than formal stores.

Of course, because of the chaos, there could be problems with the spirit pills bought here...

Here, nothing had a guarantee. Making a transaction depended on luck and also one's eyes. Once the transaction was closed, if one made a loss, they could only swallow it.

"Ghost Birds?" Qin Lie suddenly exclaimed lowly.

There were seven Ghost Birds in a cage at a martial practitioner's stall up ahead. He was shouting loudly and wanted to sell them at a price of one hundred Profound Grade One spirit stones.

"Ghost Birds can only be caught on the Nether Battlefield. This kind of avian can be used to scout in the air, but they do not have any offensive capabilities, so the price is not high." Tang Siqi saw his interest and explained, "Profound Nether Beasts are also low-level spirit beasts from the Nether Battlefield, but they are much more expensive than Ghost Birds. A Profound Nether Beast is worth at least one thousand Profound Grade One spirit stones and is ten times more expensive than these seven Ghost Birds."

Profound Nether Beasts could sprint like the wind and were very useful for martial practitioners that needed to travel long distances. It was normal that their price was high.

Looking at the Ghost Birds that were being sold, Qin Lie couldn't help but think of Liang Zhong and Xie Jingxuan who he had seen yesterday...

Just as he was immersed in his thoughts, an extremely sharp spirit energy came from behind. Someone had pressed a hand on

his back and a needle-like power suddenly pierced into him.

Enormous pain flooded his body. Shouting loudly, Qin Lie suddenly turned around.

“He actually didn’t die.” A middle-aged normal practitioner who looked extremely average had a shocked expression in his eyes. He was examining his palm as though he was suspicious that something was wrong with his spirit art.

Chapter 156: Crush You With Spirit Artifacts!

As one of the three great shadow guards, Gray Shadow had been put in a cruel environment by Shadow Tower and trained since young. It was only after he climbed out of a heap of corpses that he was taught all kinds of assassination techniques and allowed to cultivate the various high-level spirit arts in Shadow Tower.

The three shadow guards of Shadow Tower's level in the martial way might not be all that impressive, but they were all top-class experts when it came to assassinations and ambushes.

To them, taking a life was as easy as eating and sleeping.

The reason Gray Shadow had been keeping watch at Armament Sect's entrance for so long was to assassinate Tang Siqi. As for Qin Lie... he was just an unimportant character to be cooked along the way. In his eyes, someone who was only in the Natal Opening Realm was no different from lambs waiting to be slaughtered.

However, when "Shooting Divine Beam" had shot into Qin Lie's heart from behind, not only did he not die instantly, Qin Lie was even able to turn immediately around. Now this was definitely something that would surprise Gray Shadow a little.

How could a martial practitioner who was only in the Natal Opening Realm with his guard down survive being shot by him at close range?

Something was wrong!

“Crak crak crak!”

An even layer of ice crystal covered Qin Lie’s entire body like scale armor. His eyes had turned into a bizarre silvery white, as he unleashed cold mist from his body.

“Frost Blade!”

A blade formed from solid ice appeared from Qin Lie’s right arm, connected to it. Its tip glittered with a cold light, and the cold energy shot out like a bolt.

It was like cold lightning that had pierced through the void.

“Bam!”

Sparks flew from Gray Shadow’s chest, and a trace of light flashed through those dark gray eyes as he suddenly cracked a grin.

Three small, emerald-colored snakes flew out of his sleeves. Each of them was only the width of a little finger and a meter long. Delicate snake-like patterns adorned their bodies.

The little emerald snakes swam through the air as if gliding in water. They agilely wiggled their way to Qin Lie’s side and

abruptly attempted to bite his neck.

"Qin Bing!"

"Soft Bone Snake!"

Tang Siqi and another stranger's voice rang from the streets. The moment they saw a conflict happening, the martial practitioners in the surrounding stalls looked unmoved and indifferent. It was as if they couldn't see what was going on.

The only thing they did was try to protect their own stalls and attempt to retreat from the conflict.

There were fights every day at Free Trade Street due to conflicts over spirit materials. Blood being spilt and deaths occurred often enough that everyone had become numb to it a long time ago.

This place wasn't sanctioned by Armament Sect in the first place, so Armament Sect did not put any security in this area.

Those who made up their minds to operate at Free Trade Street must also make up their minds to endure all consequences. Even if they died here, they couldn't not blame anyone but themselves.

This was why Gray Shadow had chosen to attack at Free Trade Street.

“Ice Crystal Shield!”

Qin Lie had wanted to attack, but when he saw the three little snakes snarling at him, he quickly changed his skill from Frost Blade into Ice Crystal Shield. Then, he took a step backwards and protected his front with the ice shield.

“Pak! Pak! Pak!”

The three dark green Soft Bone Snakes bit at the ice shield, and the Ice Crystal Shield abruptly exploded into smithereens.

The shattered ice was like icy stars flying out in all directions with great force.

However, the martial practitioners at the stalls stayed fixed at their positions. They calmly lifted their hands, channeled their respective spirit arts, and blocked the bits of shattered ice that flew over.

Amazingly, no one was hurt by the shattered ice.

“Who are you? How dare you attack an Armament Sect inner sect disciple in Armament City?” Tang Siqi yelled harshly. Then, she defended herself. “Flame Silk!”

Six ribbons burning with purple flames suddenly flew out of her spatial ring. The purple burning flames were incredibly hot, causing many martial practitioners on the street to back away.

“Inner sect disciples! They’re actually inner sect disciples!”

It was only now that these martial practitioners of Free Trade Street noticed the furnace emblem on Qin Lie and Tang Siqi’s clothes and realized their identities.

But surprise was surprise. No one interfered or looked as if they had any intention of helping Qin Lie and Tang Siqi fight back against Gray Shadow.

In fact, many of these people were gloating. It would seem that they were very happy to see Qin Lie and Tang Siqi suffer a loss or be killed.

“Armament Sect relied on renting out all the large shops inside the city to gather their wealth. They had always wanted to clear out Free Trade Street and kill off any business that tried to go off on their own. Free Trade Street’s chaos and lawlessness was caused because Armament Sect had ignored them intentionally. They couldn’t wait for people to die everyday in Free Trade Street, so no one would visit here. Only then they would be satisfied.”

“Yeah, they hoped that Free Trade Street would decline so everyone would have to buy spirit materials from those stores.”

“If an inner sect disciple had died at Free Trade Street, then this will get really interesting, hehe.”

The martial practitioners on the street automatically made space for Gray Shadow and Qin Lie to fight. Meanwhile, they stood scattered at the side, watching and discussing with cold smiles.

“Whoosh whoosh whoosh!”

Six purple Flame Silks danced and flew. The sky above the streets glittered with purple fire, causing fear among the three Soft Bone Snakes. Amazingly, they could not break through to Qin Lie’s side.

“Nine Shuttle Stars!”

Nine shuttles that were like nine flying comets flew out of Tang Siqi’s pockets, dragging a beautiful light behind them.

“Cloud Shield!”

A thick earthen energy mixed with large clouds abruptly formed a solid light shield in front of Tang Siqi.

“Frost Bone Spear!”

A spear formed from five white bones howled like crying demons and chillingly charged at Gray Shadow.

“Nether Ghost Claw!”

A huge claw appeared again from Tang Siqi's palm. Like the devil's hand, it moved to grab Gray Shadow in midair as if it could rend the earth.

Qin Lie suddenly froze.

The many martial practitioners on the sides of the streets were also staring wide-eyed at the scene. Their eyes flowed with the light of utter shock.

"Profound Grade spirit artifact! It's at least Grade Three!"

"This light shield is probably Grade Four!"

"That bone spear was at least Profound Grade Three!"

"Nether Ghost Claw. T-this is the claw of the Bloodthirsty Blade Demon from Nether Battlefield! Bloodthirsty Blade Demons are Rank Four spirit beasts, so this claw should be a Profound Grade Five spirit weapon!"

There were many people who could not hold it in and cried out. They were all shocked by Tang Siqi's spirit artifacts that she had unleashed one after another.

Bolts of fiery light, shuttles, a spear, and a ghost claw that made a grabbing motion in midair all fell onto Gray Shadow. Gray Shadow was instantly drowned in a sea of light.

“Rrmmmb!”

Powerful, dazzling light followed by violent rumbles exploded from Gray Shadow’s position.

The light shadow faded. Gray Shadow’s gray clothes were blown to shreds. The dark brown spirit armor he wore had also cracked, and he was bleeding from many parts of his body.

Tang Siqi waved to Qin Lie while remaining hidden behind the Cloud Shield. She said mightily, “Come!”

Qin Lie very obediently went over and stuck close to her, hiding beneath the Cloud Shield in case Gray Shadow had more powerful attacks that he had not used yet.

A refreshing fragrance came from Tang Siqi’s voluptuous body and slipped into Qin Lie’s nose. He subconsciously looked at her.

Beneath the Cloud Shield, Tang Siqi appeared enraptured, and her beautiful face shone with dazzling brilliance. There was an unspeakable beauty in her.

Gripping her little fists, she excitedly exclaimed, “What a reckless fool! He dares to attack us inside Armament Sect? It looks like he doesn’t know how powerful his grandaunt here is!”

The shuttles and the bone spear scattered beside Gray Shadow, abruptly shuddered, and jumped back to mid-air yet again. Spirit energy boiled inside them, ready to form yet another round of attacks.

The Nether Ghost Claw above Gray Shadow's head howled piercingly, looking as terrifying as a demon about to break through hell.

"I finally know why Blood Spear is so scary."

"If those Blood Spear bastards were also equipped with a handful of spirit artifacts like those, then that is really quite scary."

"Armament Sect really is Armament Sect."

The crowd exclaimed.

Qin Lie was also shocked.

He did not know where Gray Shadow came from, but judging from that single hit that blasted into his body and nearly pierced through his internal organs, he immediately confirmed that the enemy was definitely a Manifestation Realm expert.

It was thanks to the fact that he had some success in forming his Heavenly Thunder Sacred Body so his body had become extremely tough that he wasn't killed instantly.

He dared to confirm that if Yi Yuan was in his place, then he would instantly die with his internal organs exploding after being silently attacked once by this enemy, with the enemy leaving no trace of himself behind.

He would also die just as quietly.

Originally, the man had planned to silently kill him in and kill Tang Siqi before she could react as well with the same method.

Unfortunately, this man had incorrectly estimated the toughness of Qin Lie's body and failed to kill him in complete silence.

Therefore, the perfect plan had been mercilessly torn apart by this accident.

"Your grandaunt here may not be good at fighting, but I have a ton of spirit artifacts. I'll crush you to death with just spirit artifacts alone!" Tang Siqi exclaimed in high spirits. Hidden behind the Cloud Shield, her beautiful eyes glittered as she hooted and taunted while controlling the Nine Shuttle Stars, Frost Bone Spear, and Flame Silk remotely with her mind.

Every artificer was good at controlling spirit artifacts with their mind and, good at attacking and defending through the excellent control of their spirit artifacts.

This was because artificers must be able to accurately control

their mind and consciousness and control the spirit energy inside each spirit line to achieve the most delicate balance when they were inscribing spirit diagrams. Only then could they perfectly inscribe a spirit diagram.

Under Tang Siqi's control, the Nine Shuttle Stars, Frost Bone Spear, and Flame Silk surrounded Gray Shadow and indiscriminately bombarded him as if they had grown minds of their own. No matter how Gray Shadow dodged or defended, the three loose spirit artifacts were always able to find the trickiest of corners and break through Gray Shadow's line of defense.

"I love forging artifacts, but I also love bullying people. You actually dare attack us? Do you really not know how the word death is written?" Tang Siqi chuckled, and while rubbing her spatial ring with one hand, she cried out arrogantly, "There are still so many spirit artifacts I haven't brought out, you know. You must hold out a bit longer so these spirit artifacts of mine can see the light of day. Let's test their effects and see if they're as I imagined them. Yeah, please hold on okay!"

Gray Shadow was at the middle stage of the Manifestation Realm. His cultivation was one level higher than Tang Siqi, and he was skilled in art of assassination, but he really wasn't used to such head-to-head combat.

Especially when he was facing someone who fought with countless spirit artifacts like Tang Siqi. It gave him an even bigger headache.

It was only now that he finally understood why the tower lord

had deliberated to such an extent and spent so much effort to gain control of Armament Sect.

"Qin Bing, are you okay?" Tang Siqi suddenly remembered and turned around to look at Qin Lie, "You were the one who was attacked first. Are you injured at all?"

"My heart was injured, but it's not a big problem." Qin Lie answered.

"Oh, your heart..." Tang Siqi thought seriously for a moment. "That will be the Heart Protection Pill then. Okay, come, swallow this Heart Protection Pill and you will be able to stabilize your wound very soon." She passed over a dark green pill. The pill was refined to the shape of a heart and looked incredibly beautiful and delicate.

Qin Lie did not bother to be modest and swallowed it immediately after accepting it. Then, he channeled his energy to dissolve the spirit pill.

After a dozen seconds or so, Qin Lie's eyes lit up, and he said under Tang Siqi's gaze, "I also understand why Blood Spear is so powerful now."

Chapter 157: Fight

Qin Lie noticed that Tang Siqi had taken out seven pill bottles all at once just now. She poured out the Heart Protection Pill from one of the bottles.

“How is it? Is it better?” Tang Siqi’s gaze was full of concern.

“Much better.” Qin Lie sensed about and found out that the Heart Protection Pill had formed a strange film paste at his heart area. It caused the wound at his heart to swiftly become better.

“Do you have a lot of medicine?” he asked in surprise.

“Mn. I have the pills to treat all kinds of internal organs and wounds.” Tang Siqi’s expression was natural, as if she was talking about something very common. “Every Armament Sect inner sect disciple carries at least ten or more kinds of healing medicine. Heart protection, flesh wound healing, mind nursing, and so on.”

“How about Blood Spear?”

“Even more naturally, other than various high grade spirit artifacts, the sect will supply them with new pills every month to help them cultivate and recover at a quicker rate so their wounds will stabilize quicker.” Tang Siqi smiled like a blooming flower, “This is our sect’s advantage. Every sect disciple has a huge advantage compared to their opponents in terms of spirit artifacts and spirit pills.”

Qin Lie nodded silently.

Fights between martial practitioners involved a lot of aspects such as the level of one's realm, the toughness of one's body, the recognition of one's spirit art, the grade of their spirit artifacts, the healing rate of wounds, and so forth.

Suppose that two martial practitioners of the same rank fought each other and the difference in other aspects weren't huge. If one of them not only had a lot of spirit artifacts, but their ranks were also a level higher and they had pills that could swiftly replenish their spirit energy, spirit armor that could protect their bodies, and spirit pills that could heal their wounds...

Then that person would definitely possess a great advantage. Such an overwhelming advantage would allow them to be able to destroy their opponents with ease.

The reason Blood Spear martial practitioners were powerful was because their spirit artifacts, spirit armor, and spirit pills were a level higher than their opponents. Naturally, their combat capabilities were extraordinary as well.

"Bang!"

A purple flaming ribbon rushed at Gray Shadow's shoulders from the side, causing his body to shudder from the impact.

The eerie, white bone spear howled and seized the opportunity to shoot at him from behind. It blasted the back of his spirit armor, causing Gray Shadow to spit out of mouthful of blood.

A trace of weakness leaked from his dark gray eyes. His footsteps moved erratically, ready to run away from the streets.

“Who are you? Who ordered you to attack us?” Tang Siqi cried out as the spatial ring in her hand lit up again.

A screen-like, flowing cloud barrier floated out of the ring and flew at Gray Shadow’s back. It fell down like a cage that was about to trap Gray Shadow inside.

That was yet another new spirit artifact.

Qin Lie felt slightly dazzled. Staring at the spatial ring, he suddenly had the misconception that the spirit artifacts inside it were limitless!

“Old Black! Help me already!” Gray Shadow rasped out in a yell.

Tang Siqi was caught by surprise.

Qin Lie’s expression had also changed.

There was actually another assailant!

The duo quickly focused on their surroundings and stared at the people closest to them. They were afraid that they would be ambushed by one of them.

The Cloud Shield could only protect one side. If someone attacked them from the back or their two sides, the light shield would not be able to fully defend them from the attack. They would still need to deal with it themselves.

“Don’t look at me. I may not like Armament Sect, but I’m not so bold as to try to kill you.”

“This is Armament Sect’s city, I have no intentions of dying.”

“Not me either.”

The martial practitioners who the duo made eye contact with subconsciously backed away. They opened their arms and expressed that they were here just to watch the show.

The people around them—other than Gray Shadow—backed away themselves, opening up an area of about ten meters around the duo. They were afraid that Tang Siqi would misunderstand them and mistake them as Gray Shadow’s companion.

Most of the martial practitioners who dared to operate around Free Trade Street had a reason they could confident enough to be there Their realms weren’t weak as well.

It wasn't that they were scared of Tang Siqi and Qin Lie, but they were scared of their identities, scared of Armament Sect who was backing them, and even more terrified of being relentlessly hunted down by Blood Spear.

"Beneath you!" suddenly called out a familiar voice from the crowd.

That was Liang Zhong's voice!

Qin Lie's expression twisted greatly, and without a second thought, he immediately channeled Frost Arts with everything he had.

"Crak crak crak!"

The ground beneath him had instantly turned into frost. Even more icy light appeared to form icy rocks on the ground surface.

A mass of energy that was a thick as a mountain nearly shot out from the ground, causing Qin Lie to feel cold from the bottom of his heart as he coldly yelled, "Watch your feet!"

"Bang!"

The ice formed by Frost Arts suddenly shattered before they could form into an even thicker sheet of ice.

Amidst the flying ice slags, a black figure actually drilled out from the underground, and with a terrible earthen energy, that figure barreled towards Qin Lie and Tang Siqi like a mountain.

“Ice Crystal Shield!” Qin Lie grit his teeth as ice formed on his body. An ice shield was also formed in front of him.

The black shadow could not be stopped. He cared for nothing but charging right at them.

“Boom!”

The Ice Crystal Shield shattered. The black shadow was like a pillar of steel, forcefully crushing him with earthen energy.

Upon impact, the ice on Qin Lie’s body exploded. His body flew straight into the air as if he had been run into by a wild beast.

The tough and vigorous earth energy was still working even while he was in midair. This caused Qin Lie to let out a dull grunt. His chest felt as if it was being sat on by a huge mountain, and it was so oppressive that he nearly spat blood.

After Black Shadow had rammed Qin Lie into the sky, he no longer looked at him. Cruelty appeared on his average face that was just like Gray Shadow’s.

He looked to Tang Siqi!

Dull rumblings suddenly came from beneath Tang Siqi's feet. An earthen-yellow metallic drill shot out bright yellow light, and after it drilled through the ground, it flew out and plunged towards Tang Siqi's stomach.

"Tututu!"

The metallic drill was still spinning at top speed. There was a strange whistling sound, and its speed was incredible.

Tang Siqi's gaze turned to one of panic as she quickly took out a huge, brown-colored turtle shell and used it to block the metallic drill's strike.

"Bam bam bam!"

The drill plowed into the turtle shell as sparks flew off it. Tang Siqi's body abruptly shuddered as a line of blood appeared at the corner of her lips.

She threw down the turtle shell and retreated to where Qin Lie had fallen to the ground like blazing fire. Pressing her hands together into a spirit art, she hurriedly cried out, "Cloud Shield!"

The light shield standing tens of meters in front of her turned into twelve bolts of light that flew in her direction before reforming into a shield which guarded her front again.

Calming down, she suddenly sat down and closed her eyes. She controlled the Nine Shuttle Stars, Frost Bone Spear, and Flame Silk beside Gray Shadow and moved the spear and ribbons to attack Black Shadow.

She reformed her energy again so the Nether Ghost Claw would rush down from the sky and slash Black Shadow's skull.

The Nether Ghost Claw was created from the claws of Nether Battlefield's Bloodthirsty Blade Demon. Mo Hai had even operated on it personally, so she needed to gather all of her spirit energy before she could unleash its true might.

When going up against Gray Shadow earlier, the Nether Ghost Claw was only there to act as a deterrent. She hadn't unleashed everything she had.

Now that Black Shadow had shown up, Tang Siqi had no choice but to give it her all.

Spirit energy gushed out as the Nether Ghost Claw suddenly turned dense with dark energy. It was as if it had brought everyone into the desolate and terrifying Nether Battlefield.

Dark green will 'o wisps floated above the anchor-like Nether Ghost Claw. Then, the phosphorous poison began to fall like rain!

"OOOOOOooOOOoOoOOOOOoOOOOoOOOO!"

The Bloodthirsty Blade Demon's cries came out from with the claw. A violent and bloodthirsty aura that could twist one's mind suddenly covered the entire street.

It was the Rank Four Bloodthirsty Blade Demon's frenzy field!

Many of the onlookers' faces were riddled with shock as they screamed and retreated, afraid that they would be affected by the bloodthirsty frenzy field and lose themselves in frenzied combat.

Black Shadow's icy cold eyes wavered and shuddered because of the spreading of the bloodthirsty and violent aura.

"Old Black! Let's leave for now, don't fall into the bloodthirsty frenzy field!" Gray Shadow cried out.

Black Shadow was reminded by him. His pair of murderous and crazy eyes stared Qin Lie and Tang Siqi up and down before he dove head first into the hole that led underground.

That metallic drill had also turned into a bolt of golden light and followed close behind him.

Seeing that he had left, Gray Shadow relaxed and swiftly retreated like a gray cloud, flashing towards the nearest street.

The duo quickly disappeared without a trace.

“Pak!”

Tang Siqi spat out a small mouthful of blood. Her pretty face paled slightly as she waved her hands and recollected her spirit artifacts.

“How are you?” She looked towards Qin Lie who was struggling to sit up.

“I’m fine. Two of my chest bones broke, but I won’t be dying anytime soon.” Qin Lie’s gaze was cold as he stared at the hole and asked, “Who would try to kill us?”

“I don’t know. I’ll investigate this thoroughly once we get back,” Tang Siqi hatefully replied.

“Liang Shaoyang. It should be Liang Shaoyang!” Qin Lie suddenly exclaimed, “He’s the only one we offended as of late. It must be him!”

Tang Siqi suspected him as well. Hearing Qin Lie’s words she nodded slightly and said, “If I find evidence that he is the one behind this, I won’t let him off easy!”

“You two, come and rest for a moment at my shop.” The fat owner of Cloud Sky Mountain’s commercial building popped out of nowhere and stood beside Qin Lie and Tang Siqi. His little eyes were narrowed as he looked at the members of the crowd surrounding them and unleashed an incredible aura. “Please give

way!”

“Cloud Sky Mountain’s Wu Tuo!”

“It’s actually Wu Tuo!”

The crowd that had gathered changed their expressions and quickly retreated after hearing his yell.

Amongst the crowd, Liang Zhong was also secretly shocked. He seemed to be wondering why Wu Tuo was in Armament City.

Both Tang Siqi and Qin Lie felt inwardly surprised when they saw the fat, middle-aged man who was flattering them earlier had abruptly changed his aura.

“My apologies. My place is slightly far away, so when I heard of the fight and rushed over, they had already escaped.” Wu Tuo’s expression was apologetic. “If I had arrived earlier, then you would not have been hurt.”

He had said this with strong confidence.

Qin Lie tried sensing the aura from his body, and suddenly, a shudder rippled within his heart. “Netherpassage Realm!”

This fat, middle-aged man was actually a Netherpassage Realm expert!

“Milord!”

“Milord!”

The two shop clerks had also hurried over before standing beside Wu Tuo with steady expressions.

Wu Tuo nodded, bowed slightly, and said, “Will the two of you come back with me to rest your feet or head straight back to Armament Sect? Don’t worry, those two people should not dare to return with me watching over you.”

“Then we will rest for a bit at your shop. We are both hurt, and we need to nurse ourselves and recover.” Tang Siqi stared at him in surprise before asking with uncertainty, “Are you really Cloud Sky Mountain’s Wu Tuo?”

“It’s me.” Wu Tuo smiled kindly, “I’ve only come to Armament City recently. Please take care of me in the future.”

Hearing his words, Tang Siqi immediately relaxed and withdrew her Cloud Shield.

Chapter 158: Difference In Status

After returning to “Heart of the Great Earth,” Qin Lie and Tang Siqi were given rooms in the back to rest while Wu Tuo stood guard at the front yard.

Sitting straight on a bed made of Ice Jade Stone, Qin Lie quietly channeled Frost Arts and froze his body in ice.

As he looked inside with his mind, he could see that his heart had congested blood and the broken bones at his chest.

A few wisps of earthen-yellow spirit energy were still rushing about inside his body as they tirelessly destroyed his muscles and veins and attempted to drill into the deeper parts of his bones and spleen.

Qin Lie’s entire body was icy cold as he continuously gathered frost energy to counteract the earthen-yellow energy.

After a few attempts, Qin Lie realized that the frost energy could slow down the earthen-yellow spirit energy from damaging his body, but could not directly remove it from inside his body.

“Heavenly Thunder Eradication!”

His spirit art abruptly changed as violent thunder and lightning energy gushed inside his muscles, veins, and bones.

The wisps of earth spirit energy Black Shadow had infected his body was quickly dissipated after they were attacked by the thunder and lightning energy. It was cleared out in a very short time.

After the hidden danger was eliminated, Qin Lie let out a quiet sigh of relief. Then, he gathered his mind to dissolve the spirit pill he just swallowed.

A heartwarming feeling spread out from inside his body. He calmed himself and slowly directed the pill's energy towards the injured area inside his body.

An hour later.

Tang Siqi walked in from another room and asked, "How is your recovery?"

"The internal damage is fine. The external ones will take some time to heal," Qin Lie replied. Then, he opened his eyes and in turn asked, "How about you? Do you have any serious injuries?"

"I'm fine." Tang Siqi shook her head. "We'll go back to the sect later. I will thoroughly investigate this matter. If I find any evidence that Liang Shaoyang is part of this, then I will definitely not let him escape!"

"It's probably very hard to find any evidence," Qin Lie scowled.

“I really didn’t think that he would be this rash!” Tang Siqi grit her teeth in silence. “It’s very normal that inner sect disciples would argue with each other. But he actually commits murder just over such a small matter. It’s completely illogical!”

“If Lian Rou wasn’t around last time, I would’ve been killed by him already.” Killing intent was born in Qin Lie’s heart. “I won’t return to the sect temporarily. I will rest for a few days outside and return only when my injuries are healed.”

“Why?” Tang Siqi did not understand.

“I’m hurt right now and I’m not in a good state. I’m afraid that I will be ambushed by Liang Shaoyang in the sect.” Qin Lie was very cautious. “If he dares to kill me with Eclipse Insects in the outer sect, then he will dare to attack me in the inner sect as well. I do not wish to be ambushed by him and die without knowing how he did it while I’m hurt.”

“You have a place to stay outside?”

“I do.”

“Then, how about I accompany you?”

“It’s okay. You can go back first. Liang Shaoyang might dare to attack me in the sect, but he definitely would not dare to attack you in the same fashion. You are the sect master’s future successor and the genius chosen by the sect master and Elder Mo Hai. He

would not dare to act too imprudently towards you.”

Qin Lie knew this very well.

Liang Shaoyang did have some scruples with Tang Siqi. Otherwise, he would not have arranged two more people to attack her outside the sect.

He didn’t need to use such a roundabout method if he had planned to only confront Qin Lie. It was likely he would dare to openly murder Qin Lie inside the sect.

He was a future pillar who had caused a reaction in the spirit pattern pillars and a heaven blessed child who managed to have the sect master and three great reverends come down to personally welcome him. Even if he did “accidentally” kill a normal inner sect disciple, who could judge him?

This point was clear from Tong Jihua’s sudden change in attitude after he caused a reaction in the spirit pattern pillars.

They were both a life, but in the sect master and three great reverends’ eyes, Liang Shaoyang’s life was far more distinguished than Qin Lie’s. If he were to die by Liang Shaoyang’s hands, it would not affect Liang Shaoyang’s position in their hearts in the slightest.

That was why he wasn’t willing to take the risk and chance an accident while he was still injured.

“You two, can I come in?” Wu Tuo’s hearty laughter came from the outside.

“Please come in, Senior Wu Tuo.” Tang Siqi looked to the entrance, and after Wu Tuo came in ,she bowed respectfully, “Thank you for escorting us here to heal, Senior Wu Tuo.”

“Courteous, you’re being too courteous.” Wu Tuo’s smile was pleasant. “If I knew that there would be an incident when you were heading back to the city, I would have escorted you all the way back to Armament Sect. I really did not expect that there would be people who had the gall to attack Armament Sect’s inner sect disciples. How absolutely impudent!”

“Armament Sect will definitely get to the bottom of this,” Tang Siqi snorted.

“I have a presumptuous request.” Wu Tuo smiled embarrassedly, “When you guys get back, if you see Pang Feng and Pang Shishi, then please tell them that I’ve come to Armament City and wish they can come to this business tower. As you know, your sect dislikes it very much when I contact the both of them, so it isn’t too easy for me to meet them…”

Pang Feng was Cloud Sky Mountain’s genius among the young generation, and he had ignored the advice of Cloud Sky Mountain’s mountain master to come to Armament Sect with his sister without hesitation.

That was why Cloud Sky Mountain had sent people to Armament Sect multiple times to meet with Pang Feng, hoping to persuade him to come back to the mountain.

Pang Feng had already turned them down many times.

Armament Sect had also grown tired of it, and since they valued Pang Feng quite a bit, they would directly stop anyone from Cloud Sky Mountain who requested to meet with Pang Feng and Pang Shishi. They were afraid that Pang Feng would be persuaded and that he would take Pang Shishi away from Armament Sect and return to Cloud Sky Mountain once more.

“Um, about this...” Tang Siqi grew awkward hearing his request. “The sect is very tired of Cloud Sky Mountain’s attempts to persuade Pang Feng and Junior Sister Shishi. If they leave Armament Sect because of the words I delivered to them, then even I will not be able to escape the sect master’s punishment.”

“No, I’m not going to try to convince them to come back to Cloud Sky Mountain. There is something else I need to notify them of.” Wu Tuo quickly gave his word, “You can rest assure, Miss Tang. I promise on my character that I have not come to see them both to persuade them to come back home. Plus, Pang Feng should’ve become a member of Blood Spear by now, so it will be even harder to persuade him now.”

“Alright.” Tang Siqi thought seriously for a moment before nodding her head. She said, “I trust your character.”

Wu Tuo grinned and smiled kindly, “Thank you, Miss Tang. If you have nothing else, then I can escort you back to Armament Sect anytime.”

“Senior Sister Tang, I’ll be leaving first. Once my wounds have healed I will return to the sect immediately.” Qin Lie suddenly turned around and headed to the outside alone. “I will trouble you to explain the matter to the inner sect elders.”

Tang Siqi frowned and watched Qin Lie walk out of the building. She appeared to be somewhat unhappy.

After walking out of Heart of the Great Earth and identifying his current location, Qin Lie carefully sensed the surrounding energy waves before heading to the little residence Li Mu had left him.

In a secluded alley, Qin Lie’s hurried figure suddenly stopped as he stared cold-faced at a person in the corner—Liang Zhong.

“I do not mean you harm.” Liang Zhong’s expression was light. “I am also the one who reminded you that Black Shadow was hiding below you. If it weren’t for me, you would’ve suffered even greater injuries.”

Qin Lie quietly channeled Frost Arts until his entire body was flowing with a frosty aura. He stared coldly at him.

“I’m just here to tell you that those two people are two of Shadow Tower’s three great shadow guards, Gray Shadow and Black

Shadow. Only those who are familiar with Shadow Tower's three great shadow guards would know about this. The rest of the forces will find it hard to identify them." Liang Zhong frowned for a bit and then continued, "Gray Shadow and Black Shadow are here at Armament City under Liang Shaoyang's instructions. That they would act today must be Liang Shaoyang's orders."

Qin Lie thought quietly, "So it was him!"

"Dark Shadow Tower conceals a lot of information from their subordinates. There are a lot of people outside of Dark Shadow Tower who only know that they have raised many killers, but it is incredibly difficult for them to get information on the actual circumstances within, or Dark Shadow Tower martial practitioners' titles and true power. Even Armament Sect would have no way of investigating Dark Shadow Tower's true depths. That's why I'm telling you this so you will know who is out to kill the both of you."

Staring at Qin Lie's eyes and seeing the thick, murderous intent in them, Liang Zhong smiled in satisfaction knowing that he had achieved his objective.

He no longer wasted his words or waited for Qin Lie's reply. Just like that, he turned around and walked away.

After a while, he arrived at Dark Asura Hall's house in Armament City and the entrance to the room where Xie Jingxuan was resting and said respectfully, "Miss."

“Come in,” Xie Jingxuan answered.

Liang Zhong pushed the door open and walked in. He explained in detail the battle he had watched at Free Trade Street before concluding, “Liang Shaoyang plans to kill that Tang Siqi because they are the only ones who are qualified to sit on Armament Sect’s Sect Master throne. That elder cousin of mine had been scheming to obtain Armament Sect since many years ago. Unfortunately for him, before Liang Shaoyang, the few people he had sent into Armament Sect had too little talent to realize his thoughts.”

“Uncle Zhong, have you crossed paths with the three great shadow guards before when you were at Shadow Tower in the past?” Xie Jingxuan asked.

“The old Gray Shadow and Black Shadow have died a long time ago. These two were appointed after their deaths and they have never seen me before. I examined them closely earlier. The current Gray Shadow is in the middle stage of the Manifestation Realm, and Black Shadow is at the late stage. Their direct combat capabilities are just average, so it should not be too hard for us to kill them.”

Liang Zhong thought for a moment and continued again, “Blood Shadow is still the original Blood Shadow. I have crossed paths with him before, but thankfully, he is always by my elder cousin’s side, and thankfully, the one who had come to Armament Sect isn’t him. If the one who had come was Blood Shadow, then we would not have even the slightest chance of success. If we attacked recklessly, then we would all be eliminated by Blood Shadow.”

“Blood Shadow is that much more powerful than them?” Xie Jingxuan exclaimed in deep shock.

“Even the original Gray Shadow and Black Shadow aren’t Blood Shadow’s match, much less these two newly appointed ones.” Liang Zhong’s expression was bitter. He shook his head and concluded, “Blood Shadow is on a completely different level than them.”

Xie Jingxuan was shocked on the inside.

“I have told that inner sect disciple called Qin Bing Gray Shadow and Black Shadow’s backgrounds. After he learned that this had been arranged by Liang Shaoyang, it appears that he has the heart to kill him. I hope that he can provide us with a little help,” Liang Zhong said again.

“It’s useless even if he wants to.” Xie Jingxuan didn’t really care about this. “His status is too low and his realm is lousier than Liang Shaoyang’s. He will only be killing himself if he attempts it.”

“That’s right. He definitely will not be able to do anything to Liang Shaoyang, but he could tell that to Tang Siqi. If this Armament Sect genius girl really gets mad, then she may be of actual help to us.” When he recalled Tang Siqi’s set of spirit artifacts flying everywhere and beating down Gray Shadow and Black Shadow so much that they had to run away, even Liang Zhong felt a shudder run down his spine.

“If she was the one who wants to kill Liang Shaoyang, then there

is a small chance of success," Xie Jingxuan nodded.

"I will keep a close eye on Armament Sect's entrance. The next time Liang Shaoyang comes out I will inform Miss immediately," Liang Zhong said.

"Mn."

Chapter 159: Fall Into A Trap

Armament Sect.

“Qin Bing and I was ambushed at Free Trade Street. We were almost killed!”

Inside Tong Jihua’s cultivation room, Tang Siqi’s eyes burned with anger as she explained the whole matter from beginning to end.

“Who is so audacious as to attack an inner sect disciple in Armament City!” Tong Jihua was also furious. “Don’t worry, Siqi. I will thoroughly investigate this matter!”

“Liang Shaoyang must be the one who ordered them!” Tang Siqi insisted, “A few days ago I had scolded him. He must have held a grudge and ordered the assassins of Dark Shadow Tower to find an opportunity to kill me!”

“He tried to kill you just because you scolded him earlier?” Tong Jihua looked shocked.

“I have offended no one else besides him.” Tang Siqi said with a cold face, “Right, there is also Qin Bing. He had used Eclipse Insects to attack Qin Bing and killed Yin Hao after that. This man is practically everyone’s scourge as long as he stays inside the sect! Elder Tong, if you capture him directly and search through his cavern, you will definitely find something!”

Tong Jihua did not answer.

After a moment of silence he nodded and said, “I heard you. I will investigate this seriously, and if it is really Liang Shaoyang… then I will personally explain this matter to the sect master. But if I am to search his cavern myself…” Tong Jihua sighed, “then I’m afraid it isn’t really possible. With his current status, I do not dare to act against him carelessly.”

“Just because he also caused a change in the spirit pattern pillars?” Tang Siqi asked in dissatisfaction.

“That’s right. It’s exactly because he caused a change in the spirit pattern pillars.” Tong Jihua did not deny it as well. “He is the same as you. You are both the sect’s treasures and you may sit on the sect master’s throne in the future. That is why he is different from the other inner sect disciples. Even if he did do some things, the sect master would turn a blind eye to it.”

“He tried to kill me!” Tang Siqi yelled angrily.

“That will depend on the sect master’s attitude.” Tong Jihua was also helpless.

“I got it!” Tang Siqi no longer said anything and angrily left the place. She did not respond to anyone and headed straight up Flame Volcano.

“Did Senior Sister Tang trip on the road? It appears that you have a lot of dust on you and your expression is a little ugly. You don’t look as beautiful as before anymore.” Liang Shaoyang stood facing against the mountain wind. His clothes fluttered as he taunted Tang Siqi with scorn in his eyes and a dark expression.

Tang Siqi was so angry that she did not pay any attention to her surroundings when she was on her way. When she suddenly heard Liang Shaoyang speaking, she abruptly turned her head around.

“You sure are in the mood today, Junior Brother Liang!” The spatial ring on her hand abruptly lit up as the Nether Ghost Claw appeared yet again above her head. Its mind-twisting, frenzied power was immediately unleashed from inside its claw.

“What do you think you’re doing, Senior Sister Tang? Are you going to attack me?” Liang Shaoyang laughed coldly without the slightest fear, “If Tang Siqi attacks anyone else inside the sect without reason, then maybe Sect Master and three great reverends will protect you. But if you attack me, then perchance not even the sect master will allow you to do whatever you want!”

While saying that, dark gray air surged inside Liang Shaoyang’s two sleeves.

He had also secretly channeled his spirit art and readied himself to act at any moment. He was wary that Tang Siqi might go crazy regardless of the cost.

“Siqi! What are you doing?” Hearing their argument, Lian Rou

hurriedly rushed out of the cave and stopped her. “This is Flame Volcano, you must not be reckless or the sect master will not ignore this.”

“Senior Sister Tang, Junior Brother Liang, what are you guys doing?” Pang Shishi had also showed up.

More inner sect disciples had came out from their caves and appeared nearby when they heard the commotion. They all looked at the two in surprise.

Tang Siqi and Liang Shaoyang were both people who had learned the wonders of the spirit pattern pillars, the hopes of the sect’s future, and the beloved children in the sect master and three great reverends’ eyes. They had always been jealous of them.

Now that the two of them had clashed against each other, the inner sect disciples immediately became excited. Not only did they not stop them, some were even fanning the flames.

“Of course, Senior Sister Tang is currently better in artifact forging. But I wonder how they’ll fare in combat?”

“Junior Brother Liang had walked out of Dark Shadow Tower, so he must be pretty extraordinary in combat. Hehe, if they fight, it will be quite interesting.”

They assumed that Tang Siqi and Liang Shaoyang had argued because of some small matter.

“Siqi!” Lian Rou pulled her back and persuaded her continuously in a low tone. She forcefully dragged her back inside the cavern.

“Senior Sister Tang, be more careful when you leave for another outing next time. Don’t trip and come back dusty again,” Liang Shaoyang yelled coldly.

“Let’s have you talk shit some more!” Tang Siqi was originally going to withdraw, but when she heard his taunt, the anger in her heart abruptly exploded as that Nether Ghost Claw suddenly flew out again and fiercely attempted to grab Liang Shaoyang’s chest.

“Bang!”

The cold aura unique only to Nether Battlefield shot down from the claw. Liang Shaoyang’s chest crumpled as he suddenly fell backwards.

He fell straight into the mountain creek filled with stones!

His extremely shrill cries suddenly pierced through the sky, causing even the inner sect disciples on this side to cover their ears.

Tang Siqi’s beautiful expression suddenly turned dumbfounded. “But the Nether Ghost Claw hasn’t really dropped down on him?” While she thought, she suddenly realized that something was wrong as her gaze abruptly changed.

“This is bad! You fell for his trap!” Lian Rou stomped her feet in anxiety.

“He fell down the mountain just like that?” The faces of the inner sect disciples at the side had also turned strange. They could see that something was off.

“It’s Shaoyang’s cries!”

“Shaoyang is screaming!”

At the mountain peak, Sect Master Ying Xingran and Chief Reverend, Luo Zhichang heard the commotion and hurried over to the mountainside.

Meanwhile, Liang Shaoyang lay at the heap of gravel beneath the foot of the mountain, looking horrible with scratches all over his body.

While wiping the blood until it was everywhere on his body, he angrily yelled, “Senior Sister Tang, what have I done to offend you? I’ve simply reminded you to be somewhat careful in the future. You would kill me just for this?”

“What’s going on?!” Ying Xingran came down from the mountain peak and stood at the center of the crowd with a dark expression. When he looked downwards and saw Liang Shaoyang amidst the gravel heap, his expression had turned even uglier.

“Can someone tell me what is going on?”

“Uh, it’s like this.” An inner sect disciple explained in a soft voice, “Junior Brother Liang and Senior Sister Tang had an argument. As a result S-senior Sister Tang had taken out the Nether Ghost Claw and, and then Junior Brother Liang had fallen off that cliff and down the mountain…”

“Siqi! What is wrong with you?” Ying Xingran’s eyes were full of anger. “I’ve told you more than once to be a good teacher to Shaoyang. Is this how you teach him?”

“He deserved it!” Tang Siqi cried out.

“How dare you!” Ying Xingran was so mad he began to cough loudly. He reprimanded while pointing a finger at Tang Siqi, “It looks like we’ve spoiled you far too much in the past! How dare you do such a thing like this today!”

“Xingran, go back and rest first.” Chief Reverend Luo Zhichang pressed his white eyebrows together. He looked to the outer sect elder, Cheng Ping, rushing over from the foot of the mountain and instructed him, “Lead Tang Siqi to the back of the mountain to repent for her actions. We will declare her punishment three days later after our discussion.”

Cheng Ping’s expression turned into one of shock. “We still have an agreement with Dark Asura Hall, and the spirit artifacts requested by Dark Asura Hall are a-also under Tang Siqi’s responsibility. Won’t this cause a delay?”

“Just have them wait,” Luo Zhichang said coldly.

The moment he said it, Cheng Ping immediately realized that Luo Zhichang’s anger was real. He didn’t dare to say anything else and quickly nodded. He arrived beside Tang Siqi and said, “Follow me to the back of the mountain.”

“Fine, I’ll go!” Tang Siqi glared once at Liang Shaoyang beneath the mountain before turning back to stare at Ying Xingran and Luo Zhichang. She scoffed once and lost her temper saying, “My condition is bad as of late, so I probably can’t forge the artifacts requested by Dark Asura Hall. Go find someone else to do it.”

Once finished, she took out the Earth Magnet from her spatial ring, threw it on the ground and left for the back of the mountain with Cheng Ping.

“Shortsighted! How utterly shortsighted! To think that she would waste the great expectations we place on her!” Ying Xingran was so angry that his entire being shook.

Chief Reverend Luo Zhichang, was also shaking his head ,saying, “She is not suited for great responsibility…”

Liang Shaoyang watched Tang Siqi as she was led to the back of the mountain on the gravel of the foot of the mountain while laughing coldly on the inside, “What can a woman spoiled by her sect possibly do to fight against me? You won’t even know how you died when I’m done with you!”

“What else are you staring at? Hurry up and help Shaoyang clean up his wounds!” Ying Xingran yelled angrily.

The inner sect disciples hurried down the mountain after hearing his orders.

Lian Rou stared at the sect master and Luo Zhichang’s expressions. At this point, she also sighed, knowing that Liang Shaoyang had successfully overturned the two men’s thoughts towards Tang Siqi.

Tang Siqi might not be the best sect master candidate in their eyes in the future.

“Liang Shaoyang. What a devious and despicable bastard.” She lowered her head and looked at the foot of the mountain with a slight frown, “With this person in the sect, Siqi’s situation will be difficult in the future. Also, why is Siqi so angry today? Where’s Qin Bing?” Lian Rou turned doubtful as she searched around for Qin Lie’s shadow. She realized that he wasn’t there at all.

……

“Liang Shaoyang! This is the second time already!”

Inside an inconspicuous little building, Qin Lie muttered with a cold expression.

A few months ago, Liang Shaoyang had schemed against him with Eclipse Insects, and just when Qin Lie was ready to retaliate, he had suddenly learned the wonders of the spirit pattern pillar and received a huge boost in status, turning him into the key to the prosperity in the sect master and three reverends' eyes.

This was also why Tong Jihua had given up on immediately capturing him. Qin Lie had also tolerated it under Tang Siqi and Lian Rou's continuous urging.

But he did not expect Liang Shaoyang to grow even more impudent. Not only did he want to kill him, even Tang Siqi had become his target.

Qin Lie had a terribly uneasy feeling!

For the past two days, while he was healing, his mind grew more and more unstable as if there was a voice calling out constantly in his mind. The voice kept telling him to stop hesitating and kept wanting him to kill Liang Shaoyang directly to calm the frustration in his heart.

It was like the voice of his own heart, his hidden nature, the madness inside his bones!

"This can't go on! I can't go on like this!" Qin Lie realized that even the cultivation of Frost Arts could not calm the murderous intent inside his heart. For the past two days he had not been able to eat or sleep well. The moment he closed his eyes, he would think of how to kill Liang Shaoyang.

Once the mad flames in his bones were ignited, it was as if that they could not be extinguished any longer. It burned him until he was starting to lose his mind.

“He must die. If he doesn’t die, I won’t be able to sleep!” Qin Lie opened his eyes. The madness in his eyes were shocking, and after sucking in a deep breath, he made up his mind.

After making up his mind, he immediately calmed down and was able to relax his heart.

Chapter 160: Phantasmagoria Of The Ancient Era

Three days later, under the Arctic Mountain Range.

Inside every tall glacial mountain was an ancient and enormous beast that had been frozen.

Those colossal beasts seemed to be roaring furiously or tearing at something before they were frozen. Some of the beasts had completely red eyes. Even in their frozen state, they caused one's soul to shake.

"Tap tap!"

Qin Lie walked on thick ice. He raised his head to look at the icy peaks around him and the ancient beasts inside the mountains of ice.

There was an enormous python whose body was like a wandering mountain road that was frozen in the glacier. Other than the natural python patterns on its body, there were also silvery white scales. Each scale was the size of a palm and flashed with dazzling silver light within the ice. The brightness was uncomfortable for Qin Lie to look at.

The Ice Soul Python in the Arctic Mountain Range was about seven or eight meters. It was slightly similar to this enormous python, but their bodies were exponentially different in mass.

If an Ice Soul Python appeared here, compared to this enormous python, which was covered in silvery-white scales, it would be as adorable and small as an earthworm.

“The thirty-seventh colossal beast.”

Qin Lie respectfully turned his gaze away from the enormous python and walked forward as he calculated inside.

He had entered this place dozens of times, and every time he came, he would be amazed by the ancient, colossal beasts that were sealed within the ice. Compared to these, the spirit beasts of Arctic Mountain Range were not on the same level of size.

Qin Lie did not doubt that, if any of these ancient beasts could come alive and reach the surface, they could tear apart and consume all the spirit beasts in the Arctic Mountain Range in just a brief amount of time.

Including the Purple-eyed Flame Lion King that was the present beast king of the Arctic Mountain Range!

Dark Asura Hall, Seven Fiends Valley, Dark Shadow Tower, Purple Mist Sea, Cloud Sky Mountain, and even Armament Pavilion, if the experts of these seven Black Iron forces all came together, they still might not be able to kill the ancient beast.

This was an intuition that was unable to be verbalized.

A wave of pain suddenly came from the broken bones at his chest. Qin Lie slowed his steps and reflexively touched his chest.

The chest bones that had split under Black Shadow's attack had not managed to completely heal. This kind of bone injury would need time to slowly recover.

Due to this, he had some free time on this trip here, and he wanted to see how many ancient beasts were actually sealed here. He wanted to see if he could find some clues from the ancient beasts' bodies.

"They should be dead because I cannot feel any vibrations of life, and it seems their souls aren't present." As Qin Lie walked, he assured himself, "They cannot be alive. If they were alive and were to break through the seal of ice restraining them one day, escaping from this place..."

Qin Lie didn't dare to continue that line of thinking any further.

He was certain if something like that really happened, then it would spell calamity for the entire Scarlet Tide Continent.

"This is the last one. In total, thirty-eight ancient beasts have been sealed here. This one is... huh?" Qin Lie came to the remotest place. Looking at the last mountain of ice, he suddenly exclaimed in surprise.

In the center of the enormous ice block, that was dozens of meters tall, was an enormous, grayish-yellow skeletal beast that had been frozen. The skeletal beast was shaped like an enormous primate and stood like a human. It had no flesh, skin, or sinew on its body, only bare bones that appeared like jade. Even the bone on the pinky toe was half the length of Qin Lie's arm.

"It is not the body of the beast, just its skeleton. Of all thirty-eight glacial peaks, this is the only one with a skeleton inside."

Qin Lie stopped and stood underneath this enormous skeleton. He reached out to touch the ice where the beast's skeleton had been frozen.

The ice was cold as usual when he touched it. He was able to tolerate this kind of coldness because he had been working hard to cultivate Frost Arts. If it was someone else who touched this, their fingers would be frozen solid.

"Very cold, the feeling is the same as normal ice, there does not seem to be anything special," Qin Lie concluded inwardly.

He would reach out to touch the ice that sealed every ancient beast to see if there was anything different about the ice that formed each of the thirty-eight glacial peaks.

The result was the same.

Shaking his head, Qin Lie pulled his hand away and then looked

around at this unique beast skeleton and the enormous bones that composed it.

He did not discover anything special.

Disappointed, he sighed and took out the Eye of Frost in preparation to leave.

He gathered his mind to activate the switch in the Eye of Frost. His soul consciousness moved, and the Soul Suppressing Orb inside his brow suddenly gave off a strange burst of ripples.

Inside the bead, a blinding light shot out. The light flew towards the opening of the bead and was going to come out.

An enormous pain came from between his bows. Immediately after, the Soul Suppressing Orb was like a black eyeball that came out of the flesh at his brows. A dazzling light suddenly shot at the enormous skeleton in front of him.

“Boom!”

Countless bright yellow lights suddenly came from the enormous beast skeleton. The entire glacial mountain instantly lit up.

Qin Lie’s heart shook violently as he looked at the skeleton with amazement . He looked at the yellow light coming from the skeleton—those were an extremely ancient type of characters!

The enormous skeleton was monumental and made from hundreds of bones. Each bone was inscribed with that type of character.

Those ancient characters moved like earthworms and kept on giving off bright yellow light. An ancient and primitive aura spread. These kinds of earthworm-like ancient characters seemed like the characters first created by the beings of the ancient era. It gave off a mysterious, natural, simple, and grand feeling.

Looking at the characters on the bone, he felt as though he was in the Ancient Era, walking alone through the desolate mountains and swamps.

He felt that he had never seen these characters before, but for some reason when he focused, he found he recognized them!

“Records of Geocentric Magnetism!”

He turned and looked at the skeleton’s forehead. His eyes suddenly lit up and he couldn’t help but read out loud.

He really could read it!

“This is extremely odd. For as long as I recall, I have not encountered these characters before, how can I read it?” He was shocked by himself and then looked at other parts of the skeleton. “The Great Earth has spirit, the passages of the earth’s heart will

never rest, feel the beating of the great earth, control the magnetic power of the earth's core…"

Any section of ancient characters that he could see on the beast bone, he could also read!

"I know this, I definitely know this!" Qin Lie was stunned. He channelled the Frost Arts to calm himself down. He thought hard to think through why he could read these characters.

Dozens of seconds later, his body shook slightly and he shouted, "Ten years ago!"

"I learned these ancient characters ten years ago! The characters were imprinted into the deep recesses of my memory. Even if the memories of my past were erased, the things I learned will stay with me for the rest of my life!

He now understood.

Prior to ten years ago, he had definitely learned ancient characters such as these! The memory of these ancient characters were not the same as the memory of his past experiences. If he learned it, it could not be erased from his mind and would be almost unsealable.

It was similar to a child learning how to walk. This had become instinctive. No matter how chaotic the later memories were, this kind of instinct could not be erased.

“Records of Geocentric Magnetism, Records of Geocentric Magnetism…”

He calmed down and started to walk around the enormous skeleton inside the glacier to look at the ancient characters from every angle to memorize the unique art of “Records of Geocentric Magnetism.”

Between his brows, the Soul Suppressing Orb released light that illuminated every bone.

One hour later, something else happened.

A squiggly ancient character suddenly flew off one of the bones. Like a snowflake, it landed on Qin Lie’s shoulder and entered his body.

Also at this time, Qin Lie’s body froze, and his eyes became scattered.

After pausing for a moment, he immediately started to move again. The Soul Suppressing Orb was still casting light on the skeleton. He seemed to have entered an unknown state as he circled it.

Squiggly ancient characters turned to yellow snowflakes one after the other and landed on him.

Inside the glacier, the strange, squiggly ancient characters on the enormous skeleton disappeared one after the other.

When the characters on a bone all flew away, that bone instantly rusted, as though it had endured tens of thousands of years of decay. The jade-like bones suddenly became rotten wood and lost all of their light.

Qin Lie circled around the skeleton and was forced to accept the squiggly ancient characters, taking them away from these enormous bones.

A long time later, he suddenly sat down and slowly closed his eyes. The Soul Suppressing Orb in between his brows did not release any more light and retreated back into his flesh.

At this time, the beast's remains next to him had lost their light. Each individual bone was dark gray, and it was possible to discern faint cracks.

—It seemed to have endured the corrosion and weathering of billions of years of wind.

Qin Lie was in a muddled state. He seemed to become a ghost that had gone to the ancient era and was looking down at the ground from the sky.

On the vast and endless ground, there were countless peaks that reached into the high clouds like enormous swords piercing the

heart of the sky.

There were enormous ancient trees, thousands of meters tall, and their canopies covered parts of the sky. Within the ancient and dangerous forest, many unnameable, ancient beasts roared and squealed. They were moving mountains and twisting rivers as they roamed and killed others in the forest.

There were martial practitioners who were simply dressed that wandered in space. Seeing the sky fill up with meteors, they would reach out to catch them and put the meteors into their sleeves.

In the endless ocean, islands that were as large as continents would occasionally move. If he looked closely, it was some kind of enormous beast that floated out of the water and was consuming the energies of the sun and moon.

There was one dressed in golden armor, and when they stood up straight, their heads moved among the clouds. They dragged along enormous blades, thousands of meters long, as they proudly travelled the land.

As the enormous blade slid across the earth, it created long and curving rivers. The river water was formed from pure spirit energy and never dissipated.

Scene upon scene appeared in the vast world below. Qin Lie's mind floated in space as he looked down at the ground, completely astounded.

An unknown amount of time later, his soul suddenly felt pain, and his mind suddenly woke up from that strange world.

“Hm?”

He instantly detected a change in his dantian’s spirit sea.

Focusing his attention, he found that two new Natal Palaces had appeared in his spirit sea.

These two were formed from bright yellow light. They were thick and weighty, giving off an earthen aura!

Squiggly characters were imprinted on the earthen-yellow balls and flashed as they spun.

It was the Records of Geocentric Magnetism that had flew out from the enormous bones.

Chapter 161: Abandoned

Returning to the house within Armament City, Qin Lie was still in shock as the wondrous ancient scenes repeatedly played in his mind.

The images of the spirit beasts which were as large as mountains, the giants which pierced through the clouds, the incredibly high level practitioners, and their ruinous, heaven destroying earth extinguishing battle...

One scene after another emerged, causing Qin Lie's blood to boil and him to hate himself for not having been born within that ancient world, for not being able to witness the ferocity and terror of the peak practitioners of this ancient era.

The broken bones within his chest had mysteriously healed as not the slightest trace of pain could be felt any more.

Using his mind's eye to observe his dantian's spirit sea, two completely new earthen-yellow Natal Palaces were now floating within his spirit sea. Densely clustered on top of them, tiny words flashed and emanated a thick earthen aura.

"Records of Geocentric Magnetism!" Qin Lie's eyes lit up.

At the start, the giant, spirit beast skeleton, frozen within the glacier, had shown no abnormalities. It had shown not even a single point of interest.

But when it had been illuminated by the radiance from within the Soul Suppressing Orb, the ancient characters hidden within the skeleton had emerged. Furthermore, those characters had entered his spirit sea and condensed into two completely new Natal Palaces—two domains filled with an extremely thick earthen energy.

"Could it be that Records of Geocentric Magnetism is some kind of spirit art used in cultivation from the Ancient Era? The energy of Records of Geocentric Magnetism... it should be gravitational energy?" Qin Lie's expression was full of emotion.

He had originally only wanted to clearly map out the grounds of the Arctic Mountain Range and figure out how many ancient spirit beasts had been frozen and sealed within the ice. He hadn't expected that, within the last colossal spirit beast's skeleton, there would actually be the imprints of a mystical cultivation spirit art and it would be discovered by his Soul Suppressing Orb, resulting in the formation of Natal Palaces from the thick, earthen energy.

Currently, all of the wounds on his body had healed. His chest bones were once again as hard as metal.

Within his spirit sea, there were now six Natal Palaces. It was the sign that he had reached the pinnacle of the middle stage of the Natal Opening Realm!

A smile emerged on his face as he focused his mind and looked at the tiny ancient words on the Natal Palaces, trying to firmly

imprint the Records of Geocentric Magnetism within his mind.

Two days later.

A earthen-yellow halo suddenly appeared above his head as a gravity-distorting magnetic field suddenly formed within the house.

“Bang! Bang!”

Many of the copper bowls and stone pots, as well as the urns which contained special unique spirit materials all suddenly, due to the change in gravity, wobbled and came crashing to the ground, breaking into tiny fragments.

Qin Lie opened his eyes. Feeling the increased gravity, he satisfactorily nodded.

“Liang Shaoyang!” he shouted.

……

Armament Sect.

“Siqi, control your temper. Listen to Sect Master’s words and forge the six spirit artifacts designated by Dark Asura Hall.”

Within Tang Siqi's smelting cavern, Lian Rou was repeatedly trying to persuade Tang Siqi, trying to get her to stop being so capricious and obediently do as she was instructed.

It had already been several days since Tang Siqi had returned from Fire Prison Cliff. During this time, she had constantly shut herself within her cave and ignored Ying Xingran's several instructions.

At this time, the elders were all busily refining the spatial rings, and Mo Hai was focused on comprehending the ancient diagram within the Spirit Gathering Board. Because Sect Master Ying Xingran had injuries on his body, he couldn't personally work on it. For the six spirit artifacts which had been requested by Dark Asura Hall, it was only suitable for her to forge them.

However, Tang Siqi had constantly refused, saying her body felt unwell as she angrily refused to forge the six spirit artifacts. Day after day was wasted.

"Last time Sect Master called for me and ordered me to persuade you, his complexion was already not so good." Lian Rou, locking her brows, thought about Ying Xingran's expression. Feeling worse, she said, "Siqi. If you act like this, it will only cause them to believe that you don't care about the sect and make it increasingly likely that they feel that you are unsuited to be the next Sect Master."

"I never had much interest in that position in the first place. It was only because they begged me that I couldn't help but agree," crooned Siqi.

“You don’t care, but others do. Once Sect Master and the three great reverends give up on you, then they will begin to spend all of their resources on Liang Shaoyang and raise him as the next Sect Master. This is precisely what he wants. The more you fade away, the happier he is.”

Lian Rou sighed.

“You don’t know this, but these last few days, Liang Shaoyang has become increasingly domineering. He has already personally insulted First Senior Brother several times in his presence. When First Senior Brother gave notice to Sect Master, Sect Master’s only response was that he hadn’t matured yet. Furthermore, he requested that First Senior Brother give him some leeway. Because of this matter, First Senior Brother’s face has been used to sweep the ground. The prestige that he gained after so many years has been ruined all at once.”

“If he wants to become Sect Master, then let him become Sect Master. Either way, I will not submit to Sect Master!” Tang Siqi’s expression was rather ugly as she said, “After coming out of Fire Prison Cliff, I very calmly went and found Sect Master and told him that Qin Bing and I were attacked on Free Trade Street. I told him that it was definitely ordered by Liang Shaoyang.”

Tang Siqi’s expression was dark as she disheartenedly said, “His response was that I was intentionally slandering Liang Shaoyang, that I was afraid that Liang Shaoyang would take away my position as Sect Master and was thus using any means possible to deal with him. Moreover, he said that I was oblivious of the larger picture

because I wanted to chase Liang Shaoyang away from Armament Sect."

"It seems like Sect Master is gradually leaning towards Liang Shaoyang." Lian Rou gently sighed, her voice bitter as she said, "This fellow is indeed terrifying. In such a short time, he has won over all future authority. Sigh, if in the future he truly gains that position, I wonder in what direction he will bring Armament Sect."

"Qin Bing still hasn't returned yet?" suddenly asked Tang Siqi.

"Nope," replied Lian Rou as she shook her head.

From outside the cave, the sound of footsteps emanated over. Before long, Ying Xingran's voice could be heard saying, "Put it down!"

"Yes." Several Armament Sect practitioners put numerous baskets of spirit materials in front of the entrance to Tang Siqi's cave. Waving his hand, Ying Xingran motioned for them to back away and then said in the direction of the cave entrance, "All of the needed materials for forging those six spirit artifacts are all in front of the entrance to your cave. I shall give you ten days. If you still refuse to realize the error in your ways after these ten days, then in the future, the sect will no longer use its resources on you."

Lian Rou's expression changed.

Tang Siqi's body stiffened as if she seemingly didn't believe that Ying Xingran had actually said those words. A trace of terror finally emerged within her eyes.

She opened her mouth about to say something, but in the end, no words came out.

Ying Xingran didn't give her any time to respond either as he casually walked away as soon as his final remark was said. When he left, his expression was also rather ugly.

"Sect Master actually... actually said those words." Lian Rou had also become horrified. "He's decided to abandon you! Siqi, I think you should give in! If you continue to resist, the sect will no longer let you freely use its spirit materials. I'm afraid they won't let you continue comprehending their high level spirit diagrams either."

Tears emerged within her eyes as she stubbornly grit her teeth and said, "I don't care!"

On the other side, within a great hall inside a mountain peak.

"Xingran, have you truly made a decision?" asked Chief Reverend Luo Zhichang.

Second Reverend Fang Qi and Third Reverend Jiang Hao were also within the great hall. The expressions of all three of these white haired elders were all solemn.

“The decision is in her hands.” Ying Xingran’s expression was somber as he said, “I gave her ten days. If after ten days she persists, then in the future, the sect’s resources will be directed towards Liang Shaoyang.”

“Xingran, you must not forget that Liang Shaoyang is Liang Yangzu’s son,” said Fang Qi, narrowing his brows.

“I know what Liang Shaoyang’s intentions were before he came to Armament Sect.” Ying Xingran looked towards the three reverends. He pondered for a moment, then said, “But Liang Yangzu doesn’t only have one son. Furthermore, Liang Yangzu is only the tower lord of Shadow Tower. As long as Di Shijiu doesn’t die, Liang Yangzu will never be able to attain the position of Dark Tower’s tower lord.”

The three reverends were stunned.

“Even if Di Shijiu dies and allows for Liang Yangzu to become Dark Tower’s tower lord, Liang Yangzu still might not be able to give Dark Shadow Tower to Liang Shaoyang.” Ying Xingran continued, “Explaining it after taking ten thousand steps back, even if Liang Yangzu is able to smoothly become Dark Tower’s tower lord and plans to give Dark Shadow Tower to Liang Shaoyang in the future, tell me, between Dark Tower’s tower lord and Armament Sect’s Sect Master, which one is more alluring?”

The three reverends were silent.

“Liang Shaoyang has talent as well as wild ambition. He has more

means to accomplish things," evaluated Ying Xingran. "Once he becomes Armament Sect's Sect Master, there is absolutely no way for Liang Yangzu to control him. In the future, as long as we slightly guide him along, he might also be able to leverage his status within Dark Shadow Tower and, conversely, take control of Dark Shadow Tower.

"That's reasonable." Luo Zhichang was the first to nod his head.

Fang Qi and Jiang Hao contemplated for a while, then also followed suit and nodded their heads as their doubts towards Ying Xingran's proposition had been cleared away.

"Tang Siqi has been spoiled since she was young and has become too used to it. Furthermore, she still has the temperament of a little girl and has yet to experience any true difficulties. It will be very difficult for her to adapt to any sort of future conflicts. Originally, I had no other people to choose from, but now..." Ying Xingran shook his head, "From my point of view, Liang Shaoyang is a little more suited than she is. As long as we can get Liang Shaoyang to understand what we can give him, he will forget about his status within Shadow Tower and begin to do things in Armament Sect's interests. If he becomes Sect Master, Armament Sect's interests will in turn become his interests. He is a smart person and should know what choice to make."

"Possible."

"I also believe that the boy is better than the girl."

“A ruthless practitioner is indeed more qualified for your position than a softhearted one.”

The three great reverends successively stated their own positions, each one agreeing with the course set by Ying Xingran. They would rearrange the sect’s distribution of resources and focus them around Liang Shaoyang.

Ten days later.

As Tang Siqi didn’t have a single spirit artifact to give, Ying Xingran and the three great reverends completely gave up on her. Other than Mo Hai, they found the rest of the great elders and conversed with them, informing them of the sect’s new approach.

When each elder learned of the sect’s decision, they were all extremely shocked and were unable to understand just what had happened.

All they knew was that in the period of the last ten days, Tang Siqi, the person whom they had all considered to be the future successor, had been ruthlessly abandoned.

Now, the sect was exhausting all of its resources to assist Liang Shaoyang to break through to the next realm and help him quickly accumulate experience in forging artifacts.

In the following period of time, whenever a elder met Tang Siqi, they would all have looks of pity.

However, their pity was only pity as they still acted as ordered by the Sect Master and three great reverends, taking back the things that they needed to take back.

“This is a detailed list of all of the sect’s most profound and intricate spirit diagrams. In the past, they were all handed to you for you to analyze and study, but now the Sect Master is ordering us to take them back and give them to Liang Shaoyang,” said Elder Tan Dongling. He stood in the entrance of the cave, his face full of helplessness as he said, “Siqi, please don’t blame me. I can only do as I am told.”

“I understand.” Tang Siqi’s face was expressionless as she retrieved many beautifully wrapped diagrams and books from within her spatial ring and silently handed them one by one to Tan Dongling.

“Ah.” Tan Dongling shook his head as he gently sighed. Carefully packing up all of the scrolls and books, he began walking towards Liang Shaoyang’s cave.

This transfer of scrolls and books meant that the position of future Sect Master had already been taken from Tang Siqi and given to Liang Shaoyang.

Chapter 162: I Will Help You Take Back Everything!

Qin Lie entered Armament Sect.

He walked directly to the foot of the volcano and stood atop the plaza which had the twelve spirit pattern pillars erected on it. Raising his head, he looked towards the mountain.

“Qin Bing, how come you are only returning now?” Yi Yuan, who was in a nearby stone building, upon seeing Qin Lie’s figure, hurriedly and loudly greeted him.

Qin Lie silently nodded in Yi Yuan’s direction and then began to directly walk to the caves on the side of the volcano.

“Qin Bing!” shouted Lian Rou.

Qin Lie turned his head and looked at her for a moment before saying, “I’m looking for Liang Shaoyang so I can resolve some private issues.”

Lian Rou’s expression slightly changed as she quickly mentioned, “Liang Shaoyang went out last night and has yet to return. Even if he returns, it would be best for you to not do anything rash.”

Qin Lie’s eyes were indifferent.

“Come with me,” said Lian Rou as she gestured towards him. “Come, I have something to speak with you about.”

Qin Lie furrowed his brows as he thought for a moment. Afterwards, he entered Lian Rou’s artifact refinement cave and asked, “What does Senior Sister Lian Rou want to talk about?”

“The status of the current Liang Shaoyang is even higher than before. Forget about you, even if Siqi were to clash with him, she would only be seeking her own demise.” Lian Rou sighed and then gave a brief explanation of what had happened recently, “Sect Master had Elder Tan take away all of the scrolls and books in Siqi’s possession. Currently, all of those high level spirit diagrams are in the possession of Liang Shaoyang. As of right now, everyone now knows that the Sect Master and the three great reverends have reached some kind of tacit understanding between themselves and have given up on Siqi, choosing to instead focus everything on grooming Liang Shaoyang.

Qin Lie’s mind trembled. He didn’t expect that in such a short time such a big change would have occurred within the sect.

Tang Siqi, who everyone had considered as the successor, had suddenly been abandoned by the sect master. Ying Xingran and the three reverends had chosen to elect Liang Shaoyang instead.

“Where is she?” asked Qin Lie as he quickly calmed down.

“She shut herself within her cavern and has not come out for several days. She has lost her will. Not even I know how to comfort

her," answered Lian Rou as she pointed towards Tang Siqi's cavern.

"I'll go and take a look." Qin Lie turned around to leave.

"Perhaps you will be able to do something," said Lian Rou with an expression of helplessness.

"Senior Sister Tang, it's Qin Bing," deeply said Qin Lie from outside the cave.

Tang Siqi opened the entrance to the cave and let him in.

After having not seen her for ten days, it was clear that she had lost a lot of weight. Her cheekbones were now slightly sunken in, and her face no longer had its former allure. Even her stunning, clear eyes had become dim and lifeless.

After letting Qin Lie in, Tang Siqi sat back in between her seven furnaces. Suddenly, she spoke to the furnaces, "I am just slightly unable to part with you guys."

"Senior Sister Tang, it is merely a tiny Liang Shaoyang. Why are you so worried?" asked Qin Lie.

"It's not because of him, but because of the attitudes of the sect master and three reverends. It's because they don't believe what I say." Tang Siqi shook her head. "They don't believe me, and thus, there is nothing left to say. I'm preparing to leave Flame Volcano

after a while, lest they see me and feel angry."

"You're leaving?" Qin Lie's expression sunk.

"You have yet to see the current Liang Shaoyang. Anyway, I cannot stand it anymore, being bullied by the sect. I might as well leave and feel more relaxed." Atop Tang Siqi's gorgeous face, a look of bitterness and helplessness emerged. "I don't want to leave, but I can't bear it any longer. Otherwise, I would not be as I am right now."

She also had some regret.

She had thought that Ying Xingran's words were only threats and that he wouldn't truly do as he said. Thus, she hadn't forged artifacts as ordered by Ying Xingran.

All this time, Ying Xingran and the three great reverends had greatly spoiled her, and thus, she had become accustomed to it since long ago. This was why she believed that Ying Xingran would give in to her.

But she had been wrong.

Ten days later, Ying Xingran didn't come. The one who had come was Tan Dongling, and it was to reclaim the sect's secret manuals that were in her possession.

At that moment, she had truly despaired as she knew that she

had been abandoned by Ying Xingran and the three great reverends.

When Tan Dongling walked away, she had begun to cry. She cried for the entire night.

Ying Xingran and the three great reverends never again appeared outside her cavern. Other than Lian Rou, no one else had come to comfort her either.

Disheartened, she had reluctantly decided to leave. Upon telling her thoughts to Lian Rou, Lian Rou had quickly informed Ying Xingran.

Ying Xingran's only response had been, "I understand."

He hadn't come over to try to converse with her over the matter.

She had thoroughly given up.

"When you are the envy of the heavens, everyone revolves around you. But when you fall, no one will sympathize with you, you can only quietly cry by yourself.

"I wasn't as important as I thought I was.

"Without me, they don't lose anything much, the sect will still continue on."

These last few days, she had constantly repeated these words to herself and gradually realized the cruelty of reality. Her heart had grown increasingly disheartened.

Qin Lie's expression was indifferent as he deeply looked into the dim, lifeless eyes of Tang Siqi. He suddenly said, "Don't leave yet. Give me some time. I will let you reclaim everything that was yours."

Tang Siqi lifelessly raised her head, her face full of confusion and puzzlement.

"As long as Liang Shaoyang dies, everything that is currently considered his will be returned to you." After he said these words, Qin Lie, under the shocked gaze of Tang Siqi, turned and walked out of the cave.

He walked back to the plaza with the spirit pattern pillars.

The sun had just peeked out its head, and thus, there weren't very many disciples moving around atop the square. Only Seven Fiends Valley's Ouyang Jingjing sat below one of the spirit pattern pillars, hoping that she would be able to see through the mysteries on the spirit pattern pillar.

Qin Lie sat down in the very center of the square.

For the first time, he began to intently analyze the twelve spirit

pattern pillars, analyzing the mysterious diagrams and patterns as well as the inscriptions which seemed to contain some kind of hidden mystery.

From between his brows, a wisp of light was released—it was the light from within the Soul Suppressing Orb.

Under the rays of the sun, the wisp of light was invisible. Not even Ouyang Jingjing, who was nearby, was able to see any abnormality...

The wisp of light illuminated the nearest spirit pattern pillar. Qin Lie closely observed, and after a few seconds, his body violently trembled as the look in his eyes became seemingly sharp enough to shoot people.

As if he had discovered some new great continent, he constantly turned his head and looked at the spirit pattern pillars around him!

The faint light from between his brows illuminated each spirit pattern pillar he looked at. Each time he looked at another spirit pattern pillar, his eyes would brighten by another level!

When Qin Lie looked at the spirit pattern pillar closest to Ouyang Jingjing, the look of Ouyang Jingjing, who was also observing the pillar, suddenly became dazed.

That was because, at this time, she discovered that the long rivers which made up the diagram atop the spirit pattern pillar

suddenly seemed to have become animated. It was as if she could actually hear the sound of flowing water and see the momentum of the flowing waves in the currents.

Ouyang Jingjing's body quivered. She was excited to the point that she almost jumped right up. Rubbing her eyes, she quickly took another look.

But at this time, Qin Lie had already retracted his gaze and turned to look at another spirit pattern pillar.

When Ouyang Jingjing looked again, she discovered that there was no change atop the spirit pattern pillar. The long rivers within the diagram were only inanimate things within the diagram without any movement.

Naturally, she no longer heard the sound of flowing water either.

"I must have gone crazy to have come up with such a hallucination. It seems like I need some rest." Disappointed, Ouyang Jingjing sighed as she moved her stiff body and began walking towards the dining hall.

She didn't care at all about Qin Lie who was nearby.

After she walked away, only Qin Lie was left within the plaza.

Atop the square, Qin Lie looked at each of the twelve spirit pattern pillars once more before suddenly standing up and walking

towards Armament Sect's sect entrance.

The sun gradually heated up. Under the sun's intense rays, Qin Lie was like a sculpture of ice erected by the entrance as frozen energy covered his entire body.

He was waiting for someone to return to the sect.

"Sister Lian. Qin Bing, Qin Bing said he was going to kill Liang Shaoyang! He said he would help me reclaim everything!" exclaimed Tang Siqi in shock after rushing to Lian Rou's cave.

"He's gone crazy!" said Lian Rou as her expression changed.

"He's truly gone crazy! When I looked at him, something looked off. I, I think he's serious!" shrieked Tang Siqi.

"When did this happen?" hurriedly asked Lian Rou.

"It happened just now. At the time, I was too shocked and thought he was just joking, so I wasn't able to react in time," said Tang Siqi. When she thought back to Qin Lie's expression, she increasingly felt like it wasn't normal as she continued, "He's going to kill Liang Shaoyang! He's truly going to kill Liang Shaoyang. I can say it for sure right now!"

"Good heavens! Right now, Liang Shaoyang is a precious treasure in the eyes of the sect master and three great reverends. Why does he dare be so rash?!" anxiously said Lian Rou.

“Sister Lian, hurry and come with me to persuade him. He is no match for Liang Shaoyang, he’s only seeking death!” After thinking about it clearly, Tang Siqi had also become anxious. “Before Liang Shaoyang returns to the sect, we must convince him. Otherwise, even if Qin Bing dies, the sect master and three great reverends won’t put a single bit of blame on Liang Shaoyang.

“Let’s go find him!” decisively said Lian Rou.

She knew that the words which Tang Siqi said were absolutely true. Even if Liang Shaoyang didn’t have a reason for killing Qin Lie, Ying Xingran, Luo Zhichang, and the rest would at the most just say a few words.

If Qin Lie took the initiative to provoke Liang Shaoyang and was then killed, it was most likely that Ying Xingran wouldn’t even care about it.

They would just act as if Qin Lie deserved it!

In the eyes of the sect master and the three great reverends, Liang Shaoyang was the future hope of the sect. He was a seed which they had to make every effort to groom and raise!

As for Qin Lie, he was only a person who had stepped on lucky dogshit. He was an undeserving disciple who had been put into the inner sect by Mo Hai. There was simply no reason for them to care.

While Tang Siqi and Lian Rou were anxiously looking for Qin Lie, in a remote alley which lead to Armament Sect's entrance, a bloody battle was happening.

Xie Jingxuan, Liang Zhong, and the rest of Dark Asura Hall's practitioners, who were all clothed in white and wearing hideous masks to cover their faces, were currently facing off against Gray Shadow and Black Shadow as they chased after Liang Shaoyang.

Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong's premeditated plan for murder had started at the darkest hour of night last night at Dark Shadow Tower's secret stronghold.

Dark Shadow Tower's sixteen death knights had already become corpses which would eternally remain within the secret stronghold. However, when Gray Shadow and Black Shadow had discovered that their stronghold had been surrounded, they had immediately escorted Liang Shaoyang through a secret underground path to escape. It was in this remote alley that they had come out.

Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong had long since known where the exit of the secret path was and thus had quickly brought several people and stationed them there, leaving several others behind to completely sweep through Dark Shadow Tower's secret stronghold. They were barely able to catch Liang Shaoyang and Gray and Black Shadow.

"I know who you all are. Xie Jingxuan, you are Dark Asura Hall's Xie Jingxuan!" Liang Shaoyang's clothes were stained with fresh blood as blood wildly flowed on top of his body. Under the cover of

Gray Shadow and Black Shadow who were fighting without a care for their lives, he calmly backed up towards the entrance of the alley.

Liang Shaoyang's eyes were full of malicious and were insidious as a ghastly, ruthless aura exuded off of his body. His voice was rather relaxed as he said, "You all will also die. You all will all die within Armament City. Not a single one of you will escape. I am the future sect master of Armament Sect. The scrolls deemed by Ying Xingran and the three great reverends as the sect's most precious treasures have all been handed to me. If you all dare to kill me within Armament City, then Blood Spear will definitely chase you all down and eliminate every last one of you."

Looking back, he looked at Flame Volcano behind him. Looking at Armament Sect's sect entrance which was gradually entering his line of sight, he said, "All I have to do is enter Armament Sect's sect entrance, and you all will quickly die."

After saying that, he ignored Xie Jingxuan's gaze which was filled with bottomless hatred and laughed as he rushed towards Armament Sect without looking back.

At this moment, Gray Shadow and Black Shadow, along with the death knights of Shadow Tower, were meat shields which blocked the paths of Xie Jingxuan's scythe and Liang Zhong's Azure Moon.

Through their reckless methods, each death knight had managed to buy Liang Shaoyang some time. Even Gray Shadow didn't show an ounce of hesitation as he too directly took on the scythe.

There wasn’t a single Dark Shadow Tower practitioner who was afraid of death.

Gray Shadow’s flesh was instantly torn, and as his hands clenched the scythe, his eyes didn’t show the slightest trace of fear. Before he died, he said, “Once young master enters Armament Sect, all he has to do is state your identities and you will all die at the hands of Armament Sect’s Blood Spear.”

Xie Jingxuan’s clear, cold eyes turned crimson red.

Watching Liang Shaoyang move farther and farther away and then quickly disappear without a trace, Liang Zhong also felt a sense of despair.

At that moment, Qin Lie, who had long since been standing by Armament Sect’s sect entrance, was still waiting for Liang Shaoyang to return like a statue of ice.

Chapter 163: Exterminate A Genius!

At the entrance of Armament Sect.

There were many Armament Sect disciples going in and out of the entrance. There were also a lot of merchants selling spirit materials keeping an eye at this place, watching the people coming out from inside.

Qin Lie stood just like that at the entrance.

The cold aura flowing out of his body repelled anyone who came close, catching people who were going through the entrance by surprise as they quietly measured him.

“Zing zing zing!”

The whistling sounds of spirit artifacts flying swiftly through the air came from far, far away. The expression of many martial practitioners shifted when they heard the commotion and subconsciously stared at where the sound came from.

An azure crescent moon abruptly flew out with a blurry azure light following it from an alley far away. It flew towards Armament Sect as if a long rainbow that would cut through the sky.

Standing still with cool indifference, a strange light suddenly shot out of Qin Lie’s eyes as he abruptly looked at the azure

crescent moon. “An azure moon! It’s Liang Zhong’s azure moon!”

“Bzzzzzz!”

The azure moon let out a strange hum, and under the bright blistering sky, azure blade beams rained down like meteors and then shot out in a particular direction.

In that direction, Liang Shaoyang was escaping as fast as he could. While he was running, blood splashed everywhere, creating many fresh, bloody flowers on the stone floor.

“Liang Shaoyang! It’s the inner sect’s Liang Shaoyang!”

“Am I seeing this right? Someone dares to hunt after Liang Shaoyang in Armament City in broad daylight?”

“I heard that Armament Sect’s sect master had chosen Liang Shaoyang as his successor. He had even reserved the sect’s secret scriptures for him. Who is so rash as to dare to commit murder at Armament Sect?”

There were also many martial practitioners from other forces standing by the sect entrance. When they saw the scene, they immediately stopped and became filled with shock.

The chilliness in Qin Lie’s eyes had grown even heavier at this time. He stared straight at Liang Shaoyang as he swiftly ran towards him.

“Dragonscale Armor!”

While running, Liang Shaoyang suddenly tore his outer robe and threw it down, revealing the tight, valuable set of armor.

It was a set of armor sewn from the scales of a deep sea water jade dragon. It was personally made by Armament Sect’s sect master, Ying Xingran, and it was a Profound Grade Four Dragonscale Armor. It enjoyed a little fame even in Armament Sect.

Seeing the azure moon rushing towards him, Liang Shaoyang slammed his right hand at his heart and dully humphed.

Surprisingly, the Dragonscale Armor had shattered instantly. The silver glittery scaled armor flew up into the sky from his body to form a silver shield.

The azure moon’s blades of light all shot into that silver shield until sparks were everywhere.

Liang Shaoyang did not take a second glance at the Dragon Scale Armor as he seized the opportunity to escape. He had traded the destruction of a Profound Grade Four spirit artifact for a chance at life.

In the end, the azure moon was lacking, and it wasn’t able to exterminate him before he could enter Armament Sect.

A floor of bodies and pieces of flesh were scattered across the floor. The pungent smell of blood was everywhere.

Other than Black Shadow who had fled underground, all the other Shadow Tower martial practitioners who accompanied Liang Shaoyang were killed by Dark Asura Hall at this time.

Xie Jingxuan stood together with Liang Zhong in the shadows of the alley while gripping a scythe dripping with blood. They stared at the entrance of Armament Sect from afar in unison.

“We failed.” Liang Zhong’s voice was bitter, “He simply needs to say that it was us who attacked him and Armament Sect’s Blood Spear will immediately come after us. If we evacuate the city now, we may still have a sliver of a chance.”

Xie Jingxuan’s eyes burned with deep-seated hatred. “I want to charge inside and kill him!”

“That will be suicide.” Liang Zhong was shocked as he hurriedly said, “There is not a chance we can harm even a hair of Liang Shaoyang’s head inside Armament Sect. We will simply be exposing ourselves to Blood Spear for nothing.”

Xie Jingxuan also knew that it wasn’t a rational move to make. She quietly channeled her spirit art and forced herself to calm down, saying, “We will evacuate Armament City immediately!”

Liang Zhong nodded, “Understood!”

“Liang Shaoyang! I will be taking your life today!” It was at this moment a cold yell came from Armament Sect’s entrance .

“Bang!”

Liang Shaoyang, who was running perfectly fine and was just about to rush through Armament Sect’s entrance, suddenly fell onto the ground and stumbled until his entire face was bloody.

“Gravity field! Multiple gravity fields!” many people cried out.

Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong, who had already turned themselves around and were getting ready to evacuate Armament City, subconsciously looked back as soon as they heard the cries.

They actually saw Liang Shaoyang being stopped in front of Armament Sect’s entrance!

Therefore, their footsteps had stopped once more as they stared, stunned at the murderous Qin Lie, watching him madly rush at Liang Shaoyang who still hadn’t stood up.

“Thump! Thump! Thump!”

Every time Qin Lie took a step, the hard stone beneath his feet were like beaten drums, letting out a huge tremor.

Both Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong's realms were powerful. After sensing for a brief moment, they couldn't help but look at their feet and exclaim in surprise, "The pulse of earth!"

"Frost Blade!"

A bright, crystalline ice blade formed in Qin Lie's hand. It glittered with a cold light, and its blade was incredibly sharp.

The frost blade slashed once, and an icy beam of light abruptly shot out and slashed, aiming at Liang Shaoyang's neck.

Every onlooker's expression changed. They could see from Qin Lie's actions that he wasn't simply making verbal threats but was really going to kill Liang Shaoyang.

Had this person gone crazy?

Many people knew Liang Shaoyang's status and knew how glorious his position was at Armament Sect. They knew how highly the sect master and three great reverends regarded him.

And now, under the gazes of so many in front of Armament Sect's entrance, there was actually an Armament Sect disciple who dared to kill Liang Shaoyang?

Who was this person?

“Qin Bing! You are seeking your own death!”

Caught by surprise, Liang Shaoyang was suddenly tripped by the enhanced gravity. After he lifted his head, he noticed a beam of cold energy heading right for him. Hardening his heart, he opened his mouth and spat out a green light.

It was an incredibly small sword.

The sword’s name was “Shattered Light.” It was a Profound Grade Five spirit artifact and Chief Reverend, Luo Zhichang’s masterpiece!

The little green sword was as green as willow leaves. It was weightless, and it nimbly floated across the air while riding the wind. However, it contained a terrifying energy that could shatter stones and crack metal!

“Zzzt!”

The instant cold lightning made contact with Shattered Light, it dissipated in an instant, and without wavering, the little green sword continued forward!

“Frost Shield!”

A shield formed from thick, solid ice blocked the little green sword while shining with the sunlight reflecting off of it.

“Crak crak crak!”

The moment the ice shield was shot by Shattered Light, it instantly shattered into hundreds of shards of ice. It couldn’t even withstand a single strike from the little green sword.

Qin Lie’s expression changed.

It was at this moment that he suddenly realized that he did not have a spirit artifact that he could use in his hands. The wooden sculpture Qin Shan had left him could barely be counted as his one and only spirit artifact.

But he could not reveal the wooden sculpture or his true identity would immediately be exposed. He would attract Dark Asura Hall’s attention, and would Yuan Tianya come over to kill him.

Shattered Light had solidified into a single point of green light, and its terrific aura had tightly locked onto him. The sharp light that could pierce metal stones and metal jades caused every hair on Qin Lie to stand on their ends.

“Profound Grade Five spirit artifact!” Qin Lie finally understood why all the large forces were afraid of Armament Sect’s Blood Spear.

“Liang Shaoyang!”

He exploded into a roar. Thunder and lightning intersected in his eyes as thunder rumbled inside his body.

A mind shockwave that would extinguish a soul and obliterate all that was living shot out from inside his eyes.

Liang Shaoyang had met his eyes once.

It was only one time, and yet Liang Shaoyang's eyes suddenly turned painful as if they were stabbed by iron needles. His soul was suffering the utmost pain as if had been shot by a cold arrow.

His psyche lost control immediately after!

The little green sword named Shattered Light violently shuddered in midair and instantly lost its target. It wasn't able to continue hunting down Qin Lie.

Liang Shaoyang's psychic lock on to Qin Lie ended in failure. His eyes were temporarily blinded, and after a moment of shock, he hurriedly switched to using his all to defend himself.

"Flame Lion Fireglass Barrier!"

Blue flames gushed out from his spatial ring. The blue flames were eerie and bizarre as they formed into a frenzied lion.

The frenzied lion crouched in front of him and roared

noiselessly, ready to pounce.

Layers of gauze-like, barriers of blue light began to form on Liang Shaoyang's body. It firmly wrapped around him and was able to assist him in defending against any attack.

Liang Shaoyang's eyes burned with pain and he could not see anything. But he wasn't afraid at all as he coldly scoffed, "The Flame Lion Fireglass Barrier is a Profound Grade Four spirit artifact. Even if I do nothing, you will not be able to break through the barrier! Once I am able to see you, I will lock onto you once more with my mind and have Shattered Light kill you."

Qin Lie did not answer. The electric snakes in his eyes withdrew as his spirit art changed once more.

A cold and frosty aura spread out from his surroundings, and it was as if a cold wind had blown underneath the blazing, hot sun.

Channeling Frost Arts, Qin Lie summoned the frost energy inside his Natal Palace and allowed the chilly, white frost mist to gush out of his pores. His consciousness seeped into the diagram where the frost concept had evolved, sensing its biting cold concept to help expand his own momentum.

He took one step after another towards Liang Shaoyang.

With him at the center, the space within ten steps around him was as cold as a harsh winter. A layer of crystalline frost formed,

starting from his hair and then quickly covered his entire body.

“Crack!”

A concept of utmost chilliness was unleashed from the ice beneath his feet. It was as if the heavens and earth themselves would be frozen in ice.

“So cold!’

“What’s going on? Why does it feel like the world is about to be frozen? I-is this a concept?”

“Heavens, it’s actually a concept!”

At Armament Sect’s entrance, many onlookers had tightened their clothing and felt a terrifying fear that winter was coming. They had all pulled away from Qin Lie.

The moment they put some distance between themselves and Qin Lie, they would realize that the icy feeling had greatly decreased and they would be able to feel the hot day’s heat again.

Qin Lie’s heart and frost concept had merged into one.

Layers of thick ice formed on his body. They formed into a natural frost armor, and a sharp frost blade was formed once more.

He arrived five steps away from Liang Shaoyang.

Liang Shaoyang's vision returned, and he was finally able to see Qin Lie. He saw the earth frozen and the frozen streams in the air.

He also saw a frost blade coming towards him, ready to cut him down.

Dazzling with a frosty light, the frost blade carried with it an aura that would freeze the world and seal the heavens. Wherever the blade's beam went, space itself would become frozen.

The blue flames of the Flame Lion Fireglass Barrier were invaded by the frost aura before the frost blade had fallen downwards. The white frost mist spread out and swiftly extinguished the blue flames. The roaring, frenzied lion of fire scattered like ashes.

Liang Shaoyang's body suddenly froze.

His arteries clogged and his nerves froze. His spirit sea was like a frozen sea...

The frost blade fell downwards.

"Crrr-ack!"

Liang Shaoyang's skull shattered, and the fresh blood flying out of his eyes and the corner of his mouth had turned into crystalline

red diamonds.

—His very blood was frozen.

“Qin Bing! Stop!”

Tang Siqi, Lian Rou, and Yi Yuan nearly screamed out in terror when they saw the scene before them.

Qin Lie arrived in front of Liang Shaoyang, and as if he hadn’t heard the trio’s cries and without a single trace of hesitation he stabbed the frost blade in his hands into Liang Shaoyang’s heart.

The other side of the frost blade protruded from Liang Shaoyang’s back, right where his heart was. Under the bright sun, the icy light shining from the tip of the frost blade grew more and more terrifying.

Chapter 164: Snowfall Under The Blazing Sun

Tang Siqi, Lian Rou, and Yi Yuan stood at the entrance and watched as Liang Shaoyang's heart was pierced and the light in his eyes faded, bit by bit.

The noisy bustling sounds from before suddenly stopped at this very moment. The numerous martial practitioners of Armament Sect and other forces all stared at Qin Lie in utter shock.

At the alley at the corner of the street, a disbelieving light shot out of Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong's eyes. Xie Jingxuan's body even shook slightly.

"A great death!" Liang Zhong yelled in a low tone.

Regarding the matter where they pursued Liang Shaoyang and eliminated all of Dark Shadow Tower's death knights, the only way Armament Sect's Blood Spear could righteously begin to hunt them down was for Liang Shaoyang to personally notify Armament Sect.

Even if Black Shadow still lived, he had no say in the matter. He could not aid Armament Sect in proving anything.

As long as Liang Shaoyang died, then everything that Liang Zhong and Xie Jingxuan did will no longer garner Blood Spear's attention, avoiding the threat to their lives .

And now, Liang Shaoyang had really been killed...

“A great death indeed.” Xie Jingxuan’s cool and clear eyes lit up as she stared at Qin Lie from afar with a complex expression. “This Qin Bing has helped us a great deal. It’s unfortunate that he won’t be able to live.”

Liang Zhong sighed once and nodded lightly.

“Liang Shaoyang’s dead!”

“Liang Shaoyang has been killed!”

After a long moment of silence, shocked cries suddenly came from Armament Sect’s entrance one after another.

There were hurried footsteps coming from the back area of Armament Sect. Many Armament Sect martial practitioners who had heard the sounds of combat and were just about to arrive at the entrance were shocked to their very core when they heard that Liang Shaoyang had actually been killed.

“Qin Bing! Run! Run now! Run as far as you can!” Yi Yuan calmly yelled with a solemn expression.

Lian Rou and Tang Siqi had also recovered as they cried out in a hurry, “Escape quickly! Leave Armament Sect as fast as you can!”

Surprisingly, Qin Lie stood indifferently and unmoving beside Liang Shaoyang's corpse.

A will of absolute zero suddenly spread out with him at the center!

The area twenty steps around him instantly became filled with cold, biting wind. The world had become filled with a cold will that would seal the heavens and earth in ice.

This was the frost concept!

He was still learning the wonders of the frost concept.

"To seal the heavens and earth in ice, to freeze everything, absolute zero..."

His mind consciousness floated amidst the picture of endless glaciers in his head. It was as if he was walking alone amidst an icy plain and sensing the coldest aura with his soul.

He did not hear Yi Yuan and the others' advice.

"Eh?!"

"Snow? It's snowing!"

“H-he is causing the world to change with his concept! Heavens!”

Many people screamed out as they watched the countless white snowflakes falling down under the bright hot sun and onto their shoulders and skin.

Discarding their disguises, Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong returned to their original appearances and walked out of the alley.

The two of them suddenly stopped and stared at the falling snowflakes. Disbelieving shock appeared on their faces as if they could not believe what was falling was really snow.

A snowflake dropped onto Xie Jingxuan’s face. She felt its iciness as her figure abruptly shuddered, and she exclaimed, “This isn’t an illusion!”

“To cause a natural phenomenon with a concept, to cause a snowfall with the frost concept. What, just what kind of a talent is this?” Liang Zhong’s voice was raspy.

Yi Yuan, Tang Siqi, and Lian Rou were as stunned as wooden chickens.

The martial practitioners who came due to the commotion, when watching the snowflakes under the bright hot sun, also experienced what seemed to be an illusion. They thought that they had fallen into a dream.

There were many people who extended out their hand to touch these falling snowflakes in order to confirm that this wasn't a dream, that this was still the real world.

Qin Lie was like an ice sculpture standing beside Liang Shaoyang's corpse. The Frost Blade in his hand had already disappeared a while back.

He closed his eyes and felt the frost concept amidst the falling snow. He used his understanding of the frost land to cause the change in this world.

The snowfall grew heavier and heavier...

It was as if the ground had been covered with a white carpet. An icy wonder was forming beneath the sunlight.

"Elder Tong?" An Armament Sect martial practitioner questioned in a low tone.

No one noticed that Tong Jihua had already been standing, nor did anyone noticed how long he had been standing there for.

Tong Jihua waved his hands and motioned for the person to be silent. He frowned while continuing looking towards Qin Lie and answered in a calm tone, "Unless he attempts to run away, you do not have to do anything."

The person nodded and kept quiet.

After a while, Cheng Ping had also arrived, and once he moved beside Tong Jihua, he said in a low tone, “The sect master and three great reverends would be coming over soon.”

Tong Jihua nodded slightly, “As long as Qin Bing stays here, it’ll be fine. We’ll leave the rest for the sect master to decide.”

“Mn.” Cheng Ping stared deeply at Qin Lie. As he watched the frozen land and the snow growing heavier and heavier, he sighed and said, “With such talent, why would he need to forge artifacts? How good will it be if he joins Blood Spear? A person who can learn a concept and cause the world to change will be a true expert in the future. Why must he force himself onto the narrow path of an Artificer?”

“I will try to talk with the sect master and see if we can keep him,” Tong Jihua said.

“I will join you,” Cheng Ping nodded.

“Is it snowing over there? What’s going on? The sun is high up in the sky here, how can it be snowing over there at Armament Sect?”

“Who the hell knows. Maybe it’s because of some powerful spirit artifacts. Wanna have a look?”

“Let’s go.”

The martial practitioners who were passing by noticed the strange events transpiring at Armament Sect’s entrance, and they all gathered there.

Very soon there were many martial practitioners from all factions showing up at Armament Sect’s entrance. They had all come to Armament City to seek for a spirit artifact that was compatible with themselves.

Some of these people even had high status among their forces and enjoyed a little fame at Armament Sect.

Wu Tuo was one such person.

He had brought along a few shop attendants from Cloud Sky Mountain. He was also within the crowd, and his eyes were filled with unconcealable shock. “To cause the world to change with a concept, if this Qin Bing continues to study his frost spirit arts, he will definitely become an outstanding person in the future!”

“It’s a waste for someone like him to forge artifacts,” someone interrupted.

The people were moved on the inside. They were observing Qin Lie and quietly sensing the wonderfulness of his concept.

“What to do? What to do? What are we going to do?” Tang Siqi

was incredibly anxious as she muttered continuously for Yi Yuan and Lian Rou to think of a way.

Yi Yuan smiled bitterly and shook his head, “He has already sunk within the miraculous world of his concept. I can wake him, but I do not want to do it.”

“My realm is weak, and I can’t get close to him.” Lian Rou was also helpless. Then, she quietly pointed at Tong Jihua and Cheng Ping, “They are also around. It’s best if we don’t act carelessly and just wait and see.”

“If Qin Bing doesn’t leave now, then he will immediately die once the sect master arrives!” Tang Siqi yelled.

“Sect Master!”

“The sect master’s here!”

“Greetings, Sect Master!”

For a while, there were many people saluting at Armament Sect’s entrance. They had automatically opened the way and allowed Ying Xingran and the three great reverends to come over.

Ying Xingran’s expression grew paler and paler. While he walked, he coughed loudly. The fiery anger shooting out of his eyes was almost real, as if he would burn every onlooker in the area.

Liang Shaoyang was dead! Liang Shaoyang was actually dead!

The future successor he and the three great reverends had chosen, the one that could cause the spirit pattern pillars to change, the one that was destined to become Armament Sect's seed for the future had been eradicated at the roots before it even had a chance to flourish!

Intolerable! Absolutely unforgivable!

Nowadays, his body was growing weaker and weaker. He was running out of time and he didn't know how long he would have to wait before another genius that could cause a change in the spirit pattern pillars would show up.

He could no longer afford to wait.

Qin Lie's act of killing Liang Shaoyang was the equivalent of extinguishing his hope and pushing him into the depths of despair!

"Tong Jihua! Cheng Ping! What are you still standing there for?" Ying Xingran coughed loudly and yelled in a loud voice, "Capture Qin Bing immediately and escort him to Fire Prison Cliff. Burn him to death with Geocentric Fire!"

Luo Zhichang, Fang Qi, and Jiang Hao's bodies trembled. Their expressions were as ugly as one could imagine. The three old men who looked to be entering their graves soon grasped their chests as

if they could not endure it any longer and would die of anger at any moment.

From the back, Mo Hai and the six great elders had also appeared. They were also looking at Qin Lie under the falling snow and Liang Shaoyang who had completely died.

They could understand Ying Xingran's anger.

Qin Lie had single-handedly extinguished the sect master and the three great reverend's hope and murdered the best successor for the position of sect master. This was even more painful than stabbing through their hearts with a sword.

Muo Hai shook his head and sighed.

He knew that Ying Xingran and the three great reverends had sacrificed their entire lives for Armament Sect. For Armament Sect's prosperity, these four men had sacrificed far too much. They had never married and had never experienced love. They would die for Armament Sect and would throw everything away for it!

As they reached old age, what they wished for was to see Armament Sect walking towards the right path to glory.

However, on this day, all of this had been single-handedly destroyed by Qin Lie!

This was several times more terrible than killing them!

“Sect Master, Qin Bing has caused the world to change with his concept. He, he can become the strongest Blood Spear warrior ever. Please, may Sect Master...” Tong Jihua knelt on one knee while bowing his head begging for Ying Xingran to forgive Qin Lie and spare him.

Cheng Ping also knelt, “He can become the greatest Blood Spear warrior in the future!”

“May Sect Master reconsider!” Tang Siqi, Yi Yuan and Lian Rou had also persuaded in unison.

“Tong Jihua! I asked you to bring this man to Fire Prison Cliff and burn him to death!” Ying Xingran’s entire body was trembling. “I order you as the sect master of Armament Sect! You will immediately bring him to Fire Prison Cliff right now! I will watch him be burned alive by earthfire to ashes with my own eyes!”

“Understood,” Tong Jihua said with a bowed head.

He stood up and walked towards Qin Lie with a heart filled with regret.

“Sect Master Ying, Liang Shaoyang had a devious heart. Even if he acquires Sect Master’s position in the future, he may not necessarily be able to bring a whole new future to Armament Sect.”

Xie Jingxuan walked out and said, “A martial practitioner who can understand a concept and, through it, can cause the very world to change has a talent in the martial way is no weaker than an artificer who has caused the spirit pattern pillars to change.”

It was rare that she would speak so many words. “Although Liang Shaoyang is dead, you still have Tang Siqi. Tens of years later, if Armament Sect has Tang Siqi handling internal affairs and Qin Bing standing guard on the outside as a part of Blood Spear, then a new chapter shall start for Armament Sect. Armament Sect may even be able to push itself to become a Copper ranked force.”

The moment she said this, many onlookers’ eyes lit up immediately after. They were all surprised by this vision she was describing.

That’s right. Sure, Armament Sect was one Liang Shaoyang less, but there was still a Tang Siqi, wasn’t there?

Tang Siqi had the same amount of talent, and she could cause the spirit pattern pillars to change as well. In the future, she would definitely become an artificer as powerful as Mo Hai.

As for Qin Bing. If this genius martial practitioner could cause the world to change with his concept now, then after he was raised wholeheartedly by Blood Spear and acquired the financial and material support from Armament Sect, he would definitely develop into a top expert tens of years later!

One on the inside and the other on the outside. If these two

people watched over Armament Sect, then they might really acquire the title of a Copper force in the future!

The three great reverends' faces quivered. Even they had been moved by Xie Jingxuan's words and felt that this future wasn't bad.

Chapter 165: Watched By The Entire City!

“Xingran, how about you... reconsider?” Chief Reverend Luo Zhichang started.

Second Reverend Fang Qi and Third Reverend Jiang Hao’s eyebrows also moved slightly. A strange light appeared in those dim yellow eyes.

Once they were reminded by Xie Jingxuan’s explanation and changed their way of thinking, they realized that the anger in their hearts actually calmed down quite a bit when they looked at Qin Lie again.

Xie Jingxuan understood that things should be done in moderation and that she did not need to add any more pressure onto Ying Xingran anymore, so she kept quiet as well.

The moment the two outer sect elders, Tong Jihua and Cheng Ping, heard that Chief Reverend Luo Zhichang had a change of heart, they immediately became excited. They hurriedly look towards Sect Master Ying Xingran and waited for him to make a new decision.

Tang Siqi, Yi Yuan, and Lian Rou’s eyes also lit up as they stared in unison at Ying Xingran with hope blossoming inside their hearts.

At this moment, Qin Lie was still completely frozen while standing still amidst the falling snowflakes.

The snowfall was heavy, and the snowflakes that were like goose feathers had covered Armament Sect's entrance. The many people standing around could not feel the slightest bit of warmth from the blazing sun and were all shivering in the bitter cold.

But they still stayed in place and waited, waiting for a decision that would decide Armament Sect's future.

Wu Tuo and many other heads of other forces all had solemn expressions on their faces. From time to time, they would look at Qin Lie and then they would look at Ying Xingran. They were unable to calm down.

"Xingran..." Fangqi said quietly.

The crowd could clearly see Ying Xingran's gaze swimming between Qin Lie and Tang Siqi. His expression of anger that was like an erupting volcano was also starting to slowly calm down.

He seemed to have regained his cool.

"Qin Bing's background is unknown, and there is no way to investigate his identity. It is a possibility that he was placed into our sect by other forces and bears ill will towards Armament Sect," Ying Xingran pondered for a moment while staring somberly at the onlookers. He let out a cold snort and started again, "If that is true, then introducing Qin Bing into Blood Spear will only cause a huge problem in the future!"

The moment he said this, many people's expressions had changed a little once again. Even the three great reverends nodded their heads lightly.

The knew that Ying Xingran had finally truly regained his rationality and begun to consider the problem from many angles. Therefore, they chose not to speak any longer.

They trusted in Ying Xingran's abilities.

"Imprison Qin Bing temporarily at Fire Prison Cliff and check his background first. We will discuss this further and come to a decision together on whether he lives." Ying Xingran stared at the three great reverends.

The trio nodded and acknowledged his decision.

"Tong Jihua! Cheng Ping!" Ying Xingran yelled, "Escort him to Fire Prison Cliff!"

"Please wait for a moment." Tong Jihua bowed. Staring at him, he said seriously, "To be able to affect the world with a concept and influence nature is a wondrous state that could only be encountered through pure luck. Qin Bing is still experiencing the wonders of a concept at the moment, and this will bring him great benefits in the future. To forcefully awaken him from this state will not be proper."

Ying Xingran and the three great reverends had given their entire lives to Armament Sect. All their efforts were committed to the study of artifact forging, so their recognition of the many wonders of martial arts was not deep enough.

But they were not stupid. They immediately understood upon hearing Tong Jihua's explanation.

"Then we shall wait," Luo Zhichang nodded.

"Just wait," Ying Xingran followed.

And so, everyone watched Qin Lie quietly at the entrance to Armament Sect, waiting for him to awaken on his own from the frost concept.

A heavy snow that was like goose feathers fell under the hot sun. The snowflakes grew larger and larger, and they slowly covered the area near the Armament Sect entrance while exuding cold air. The snow fell, slowly covering the trees, stone floors, roofs...

Four hours later, everything within a five hundred meter radius of Armament Sect's entrance had actually turned into a silvery world of harsh winter!

This extraordinary phenomenon had shocked everyone in Armament City!

The leaders of various forces who were currently in Armament

City, the martial practitioners who had traveled a thousand miles to obtain spirit artifacts at Armament Sect, the individual travelers who stayed around Free Trade Street for years, they had all heard of the shocking phenomenon at Armament Sect.

And so, they all gathered there.

White snow covered both heaven and earth. There were crystalline icicles an arm's length hanging off the eaves. The martial practitioners all looked like snowmen with their bodies buried in snow.

Ying Xingran, the three great reverends, and the seven great inner sect elders all stood by Armament Sect's entrance.

There were also some outer sect elders who wore blood-red shirts present. The fierce and brutal Blood Spear experts had rushed over after hearing the news.

This land sealed by white snow in front of Armament Sect's entrance seemed to have attracted every single martial practitioner in the entire city there.

If there was someone floating in the sky right now, they would see that with the snowy land beneath them as the center, the area was completely filled with people and they squeezed so tightly together that they looked like ants, causing the streets nearby to be completely congested.

Those who stood at the center of the snowy lands were true experts, the heads of various forces and Armament Sect's higher ups.

They knew what was happening and could endure the chilliness of this land. That was why they stood here and waited in silence. No one had spoken up noisily, nor did anyone whisper to each other.

But on the outside, those who had heard of the news and rushed over were all having loud discussions and shrilly questioning others for details because they did not know the exact situation. Some of them were pushing to the center, desperate to get a glimpse of the icy world.

A martial practitioner who could learn a concept and, with said concept, cause a phenomenon was incredibly rare on this continent.

For many people, a concept was the stuff of legends. To cause snow to fall with a concept, under the blazing sun even... this was practically a miracle of the gods.

Naturally, this attracted countless people's gazes, and among them were Han Qingrui, Han Feng, Kang Hui, and Kang Zhi.

These former Nebula Pavilion personnel were forced to leave because Liu Yuntao had ascended to the position of Pavilion Master.

Under Pan Jueming's recommendation, they had arrived in Armament City and become Armament Sect's foreign delegates. They were responsible in assisting Armament Sect with transporting spirit materials and selling them at the various Armament Pavilion at the surrounding forces.

"Armament City is truly Armament City. It really can't be compared to Icestone City. Truly, the experts here are as numerous as the clouds." Little fatty Kang Zhi had been pressed by the human traffic until he was as shrivelled as having lost ten pounds of fat. He sweated profusely while trying to rush inside for a look. "Dammit, all these people pushing against me are all Natal Opening Realm practitioners. Some of them even look to be in the Manifestation Realm. It seriously makes me want to crawl in a hole."

"This place is truly vast. There's actually a genius who can learn a concept and even triggered a world changing phenomenon!" Hang Feng exclaimed.

These two former higher ups of Nebula Pavilion, Han Qingrui and Kang Hui, were also defeated by the traffic and had no choice but to retreat. They were unable to see the wonder of the inner frost land. The two met each other's eyes and shook their heads with wry smiles.

"Sigh, let's hope that we can receive Elder Tong's invitation after our mission is complete a while later." Han Qingrei said.

"Yeah. At the very least we could get him to get us a place to stay in the city for real. Then we'll be able to get an identity card from

the outer sect and traverse the outer sect freely.” Kang Hui sighed once, “This truly is a Black Iron force, and the richest and most headache inducing for its surrounding forces, Armament Sect. There are too many people who want to become their high rank foreign delegates. There seriously isn’t anyone who fancies us.”

“Endure it. We’ll eventually rise as long as we endure long enough,” Han Qinrei said helplessly while tiptoeing in attempt to look inside. Unfortunately, he still couldn’t see anything.

“Awake! He’s awake!”

Abruptly there was a cry of shock coming from inside, and everyone madly rushed inside once more.

Han Qingrui and Kang Hui’s group was knocked off balance by the rushing crowd, and a moment later, they were completely flooded by the sea of people.

Inside the circle formed by the sea of people, an icy land of falling snow, Qin Lie, who was like an ice sculpture, had suddenly opened his eyes.

He had awakened from his concept.

His eyes were icy and cold. It was as if he was still walking alone in the endlessly wide land of absolute chilliness, as if he was still tasting what absolute zero meant with his own soul...

“Qin Bing!” While he was still in a trance, he heard Tong Jihua’s solemn cry and finally but slowly regathered his consciousness.

He frowned and looked around him.

Countless faces of curiosity, doubt, shock, and excitement appeared before his line of sight. Tong Jihua, Yi Yuan, Lian Rou, Tang Siqi, Sect Master Ying Xingran, the great elder Mo Hai...

Many recognizable and strange, familiar and unfamiliar faces abruptly appeared all at once.

“Qin Bing!” Tong Jihua cried out softly and immediately said, “You have killed Liang Shaoyang, and we will judge you by the sect’s rules. Come with us to Fire Prison Cliff at the back of the mountain and await the sect’s decision!”

“We will investigate your background and make a final decision about your fate in accordance to the sect’s laws and the judgment of the sect master and three great reverends,” Cheng Ping also said.

Qin Lie calmed down and quickly sorted out his mind. He understood what had happened.

He had expected all of this from the moment he decided to kill Liang Shaoyang, so he wasn’t surprised in the least. “I will come with you.”

He cooperatively took the first step.

“Pak pak pak!”

The ice that had formed on his body shattered and fell heavily onto the frozen stones on the ground. Cracks had also appeared on the icy land, and as he walked, the world of snow and ice that seemed like it would stay frozen forever strangely began to shatter.

The heavy snow falling from the sky had also stopped at the same time.

Under the radiance of the blazing, hot sun, the people standing in this area of ice and snow had finally experienced the long missed warmth of the sun at this moment.

“It was him. It was all because of him. The moment he woke up, this phenomenon had also stopped.”

“Amazing. He looks to be only at the Natal Opening Realm, and he looks very young. If he truly could pour all of his heart into working for Armament Sect, then Armament Sect has truly picked up a treasure. This person’s value may not be weaker than that dead Liang Shaoyang!”

“I believe that his value is way higher than Liang Shaoyang! Based on the fact that he had learned a concept alone, he would be placed at the same level as Liang Shaoyang who caused the spirit pattern pillars to react, and this guy was even able to cause the world itself to change. This isn’t something that Liang Shaoyang could do.”

“Makes sense.”

The crowd watched Qin Lie as he followed behind Tong Jihua and Cheng Ping, walking to Armament Sect’s entrance one step at a time. They watched Ying Xingran and the three great reverend’s complex expressions as they began to discuss quietly.

“No matter what the circumstances, you should not have killed Liang Shaoyang. The sect will have to imprison you for at least half a year.” When Qin Lie had walked beside Luo Zhichang, Luo Zhichang abruptly let out a cold yell with a stern face.

However, everyone who had heard this cold yell felt their expressions froze.

They’re going to imprison him for only half a year?

Didn’t they say that they were going to burn him to death with Fire Prison Cliff’s earthfire?

Wasn’t this change in attitude a little too quick?

What surprised the crowd even more was that Sect Master Ying Xingran, did not refute him at all. He actually did not reprimand him for this ridiculous statement.

Tong Jihua, Cheng Ping, Tang Siqi, and Yi Yuan’s eyes abruptly

lit up and grew excited on the inside.

"I do not believe that you will imprison me for half a year." Qin Lie's footsteps paused as he turned around and looked at Ying Xingran and the three great reverends. He then said with certainty, "You will not even imprison me for even a day."

"Wanton!"

"Too arrogant!"

"Even if you're a talented martial practitioner, don't you think too highly of yourself?"

"Do you really think we'll be merciful?!"

Ying Xingran and the three great reverends were utterly flabbergasted. They all thought that Qin Lie did not appreciate their kindness and that he had actually said something so blunt in front of so many people. This caused them to turn furious instantly.

The onlookers were all dumbfounded as well.

Tong Jihua and Cheng Ping repeatedly glanced at Qin Lie. They also felt that this kid was a block of wood. The chief reverend was obviously covering for you already, but still you contradicted him. What was going on in his brain?

“Qin Bing, quick, apologize to the sect master and three great reverends, quickly!” Tang Siqi was so anxious that she stomped her foot.

“Brother Qin, aren’t you being a little too, too full of surprises?” Yi Yuan smiled wryly and didn’t know what to say.

“You should be imprisoned for a whole year! Ungrateful fellow!” Lian Rou yelled loudly.

“Let’s lock him up for a year!” Luo Zhichang was so angry that his beard fumed as he glared, “Let’s see how your behavior is after a year. If your attitude is still the same, then the imprisonment will continue!”

“Take him away!” Ying Xingran was also annoyed as he yelled harshly.

Tong Jihua and Cheng Ping had also scolded Qin Lie blue and black in their hearts. They thought to themselves, “Does he have glue inside his head? He’s practically an idiot. To think that he would taunt the sect master and three great reverends at a time like this.

“Is he really not afraid of death?

“You will change your minds.” Qin Lie coolly threw down such words and finally moved through Armament Sect’s entrance.

He left behind the ugly-looking higher ups of Armament Sect who were still taking turns to reprimand him at the entrance.

Chapter 166: I Can Do Whatever I Want From Here On Out!

After Qin Lie entered Armament Sect's entrance, the ice quickly melted under the bright, blazing sun.

The icicles that were like numerous swords dripped crystalline droplets of water as they fell onto Ying Xingran and Luo Zhichang's shoulders.

Ying Xingran and Luo Zhichang's face had darkened as the anger in their hearts was incited by Qin Lie yet again. At this moment, they were still angrily yelling about how Qin Lie was un ungrateful fellow and was incomparable to Liang Shaoyang when it came to etiquette or the greater good.

Xie Jingxuan, Liang Zhong, Wu Tuo, and the heads of various forces did not scatter immediately. Instead, they walked forward in succession to greet Ying Xingran.

As Armament Sect's sect master, Ying Xingran had very seldom showed his face for a very long time like today due to his injuries.

The many people who were planning on making a connection with Armament Sect quickly rushed in upon seeing the opportunity and congratulated Ying Xingran.

"Congratulations to Armament Sect for the birth of a new genius in the martial way!"

“With Tang Siqi forging artifacts on the inside and Qin Bing assuming command at Blood Spear, Armament Sect will certainly soar to greater heights!”

“The future of Armament Sect is limitless!”

“……”

Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong had also walked over. Watching the crowd flattering Ying Xingran with Wu Tuo as their leader, they too let out a sigh of relief.

Tang Siqi’s feelings were mixed. Qin Lie’s words resonated repeatedly inside her head: I will help you take back everything!

“He did it!”

“He actually did it!”

Even at this point, Tang Siqi still found it slightly hard to believe that Liang Shaoyang was truly dead; she couldn’t believe everything that was happening before her!

“Siqi, Qin Bing may be reckless and foolhardy, but the fact that he was willing to do everything in his power to kill Liang Shaoyang and sacrifice his life for you alone is...” Lian Rou herself was touched as she said softly, “He’s worthy of you to treat him

seriously.”

Tang Siqi’s body shuddered slightly as ripples appeared within the lake of her heart, and as she thought over the events, the ripples only grew larger and larger.

“Sect Master, what are we going to do with Liang Shaoyang?” Second Elder Tan Dongling asked softly.

Ying Xingran, whose expression had grown weak suddenly froze before staring at Liang Shaoyang’s corpse from afar. He instructed, “Give him a proper burial.”

“He is Liang Yangzu’s son. Liang Yangzu will not let this go after his son was murdered at Armament Sect’s entrance just like that,” said Tang Dongling with a heavy expression.

Right now, Ying Xingran, the three great reverends, Mo Hai, and the seven great elders had already retreated back into the sect.

Those passionately congratulating heads of other forces were blocked from entering by the outer sect elders. They could only lift their heads and look towards the entrance, wanting to know what kind of decision Ying Xingran and the three great reverends would make.

“Liang Yangzu will be a bit troublesome to handle.” Luo Zhichang also frowned.

“The key is that when Qin Bing killed Liang Shaoyang, there was no legitimate reason at all. He just killed him and that’s it.” Tang Dongling analyzed, “Moreover, there were many people who witnessed it at the entrance, so we can’t find an excuse to cover it up either. According to Armament Sect’s rules, Qin Bing should have been executed.”

“Liang Yangzu will definitely want an explanation,” Fang Qi also agreed.

Ying Xingran’s face turned dark. “Give me some time to think about this some more. I will see if this Qin Bing is truly worthy of Armament Sect investing everything in him. I will see if he is worth us clashing against Dark Shadow Tower.”

“This kid is a little arrogant.”

“Mn, he’s a little presumptuous.”

“He thinks too highly of himself!”

Everyone expressed their agreement.

“We will see how he performs. If he is still of the same attitude, then we may have no choice but to sacrifice him for the sect’s stability.” Ying Xingran was also a little disgusted by Qin Lie’s arrogance.

He had seen too many splendid disciples. However, no matter

how talented a disciple was, they had always been respectful towards him and the three great reverends.

Liang Shaoyang might have been slightly arrogant at the inner and outer sect, but even he was respectful and polite in front of them. In this aspect, they really couldn't pick out a single flaw.

On the other hand, Qin Lie was completely different.

He was a thorn through and through!

He was obviously in danger, and if Ying Xingran gave the word, then he would be thrown into Fire Prison Cliff to be burned to death.

Under this circumstance, anyone with a functional brain would have known their place and acted more obedient when they had changed their attitudes.

But this Qin Lie was actually arrogant enough to contradict them!

This completely unexpected move greatly angered Ying Xingran and the three great reverends, causing them to feel that this kid was ineducable.

"Well, we'll see." Luo Zhichang also sighed, "No matter how good his martial talent is, if he is just a reckless boor, then he is not worthy to have us wholeheartedly cultivate him."

Everyone nodded silently.

……

On the stony path leading to Flame Volcano.

Tong Jihua and Cheng Ping kept watch of Qin Lie on both sides to prevent him from escaping and disobeying the rules.

Along the way, there were many Armament Sect martial practitioners who had already learned of the happenings at the entrance and were all staring at Qin Lie with utmost shock.

Pang Feng, Ouyang Jingjing, Tian Jianhao, and the rest were also among the crowd. They were all sizing up Qin Lie.

“Holy shit, so he’s actually a madman. Thank god I didn’t really offend him.” Dark Asura Hall’s Tian Jianhao inwardly rejoiced at his good fortune with an odd expression.

Before he had entered the sect, he had been knocked right off his feet by Qin Lie when he jumped the queue in front of Qin Lie.

At the time, he had sworn in his heart to teach Qin Lie a lesson when he got the chance.

Before he had the chance to act though, he had suddenly heard

that the recently arrogant and domineering Liang Shaoyang, the man said to be a child blessed by the heavens, was actually killed by Qin Lie at the sect's entrance.

Tian Jianhao was completely shocked by the news.

It was also at this moment that he made up his mind once more—he would never provoke this crazy lunatic ever again.

"Why must you act like this, Qin Bing? Sect Master and Chief Reverend were ready to exempt you. Why would you still challenge the sect master's patience?" Tong Jihua could not figure it out no matter what, and so, he couldn't help but ask midway, "From my understanding of your character for the past few days, you are not a foolish person. You should know very well that offending the sect master and three great reverends will bring you no benefit. So why did you still choose to do this?"

The same question had confounded Elder Cheng Ping.

As long as one wasn't stupid, one should know to obediently bend their backs in that kind of situation.

That kind of unreasonable and baseless arrogance would only cause him to lose control and incite the sect master's anger.

It might even cause the sect master and three great reverends to change their minds and decide to burn him to death at Fire Prison Cliff with the earth fire in accordance with the sect's rules out of

sheer anger.

—It would also placate Dark Shadow Tower for what had happened.

Tong Jihua and Cheng Ping both could not understand.

“Just because Liang Shaoyang had caused a response in the spirit pattern pillars, just because he had shown talent in artifact forging, just because he was good at using those devious and despicable methods, I had been bitten by the Eclipse Insect previously and then attacked by Gray Shadow and Black Shadow at Free Trade Street. Both times I almost died.”

Qin Lie’s eyes were filled with chilliness and his tone was indifferent.

“With the sect master and three great reverends’ experience, they should know what he has done before and that he has tried to kill me twice. But Liang Shaoyang was perfectly fine. There was no one who punished him, and all of you outer sect elders also pretended that nothing had happened.”

He looked towards the two people. “According to Armament Sect’s rules, anyone who dares to kill a sect disciple will be burned to death with the earthfire of Fire Prison Cliff. But why was Liang Shaoyang still left alive? The sect master, the three great reverends and you. What have you ever done for me? In your eyes, Liang Shaoyang’s life is a life and mine isn’t, is it?”

Tong Jihua and Cheng Ping's expressions were full of shame as they stuttered but could not say anything in response.

This was because everything Qin Lie said was true.

There had never been such a thing as true fairness in this world. The sect master and three great reverends themselves had not obeyed the rules of Armament Sect.

"Not only was Liang Shaoyang perfectly fine, he had even become the treasure in the sect master and three great reverends' eyes. They had even passed over Senior Sister Tang's secret scriptures to him and trained him to be the future sect master," Qin Lie's tone was cold. "And this all happened simply because Liang Shaoyang had caused a reaction in the spirit pattern pillars, that he had shown outstanding talent, and that he was somewhat 'humble' in front of the sect master and three great reverends?"

Tong Jihua and Cheng Ping had become silent.

"If I hadn't caused a world-altering phenomenon with a concept, if I hadn't displayed my talent in the martial way, would you have pleaded for me just now?" Qin Lie exclaimed solemnly.

Tong Jihua and Cheng Ping continued to stay silent.

"You won't." Qin Lie answered for them, "If I was just a normal martial practitioner, then you would never waste your breath on me. You would not suffer the risk of being reprimanded by the sect

master to do anything for me. If I was just a normal martial practitioner, then the sect master and three great reverends would never have allowed me to continue to live."

"It is as you say." Tong Jihua's expression was bitter.

"There really is no true fairness," Cheng Ping sighed softly.

"I've also seen through this—you can say that I've come to a true understanding. That's also why no matter what I say to the sect master of three great reverends, I will be perfectly fine in Armament Sect in the future." Qin Lie stood still. At this moment, he had walked over to the twelve spirit pattern pillars in the plaza, lifted his up towards one of them, and suddenly declared, "From here on out, I will be able to do anything I want in Armament Sect! Do you believe me?"

Tong Jihua and Cheng Ping looked stunned.

"Just because Liang Shaoyang was able to cause a reaction in one of the spirit pattern pillars, he turned from a normal outer sect disciple to a 'heaven-blessed child' in the eyes of the sect master and three great reverends." Qin Lie shook his head and let out a cynical look. "It was just one spirit pattern pillar, and yet the sect master and three great reverends placed all their bets on him. What a joke!"

"There are only twenty seven people in the nine hundred years of Armament Sect's existence who could read the diagrams on the spirit pattern pillars and cause a reaction." Tong Jihua said

seriously, “The spirit pattern pillars don’t lie, and the fact is all twenty seven people have become the pride of Armament Sect in their respective generations. Liang Shaoyang is the twentieth eighth person, and if he didn’t die, then he would become a great master artificer in the future as well. There is no mistaking this point.”

“You are sure the spirit pattern pillars won’t lie?” Qin Lie laughed coldly.

“They know better than anyone who is the future of Armament Sect, which is why the sect master and three great reverends descended the mountain together after a spirit pattern pillar was lit up.” Cheng Ping continued calmly, “The light of the spirit pattern pillar is the fire and hope of Armament Sect. Once a spirit pattern pillar has lit up, it means that Armament Sect has given birth to a new artifact forging genius.”

“Then what if I light them all up for you?” Qin Lie suddenly sat down in the middle of the twelve spirit pattern pillars.

Chapter 167: Beyond Miracles!

Qin Lie sat cross legged at the center of the plaza where the twelve pattern pillars stood at the foot of the mountain of Armament Sect.

There were many exquisite diagrams and patterns sculpted on the bodies of the spirit pattern pillars such as birds and beasts, mountains and lakes, monsters and demons, ancient trees and fresh flowers, and so on.

Every one of the spirit pattern pillars had a different diagram and pattern. They all contained a different kind of magic and hid within them a mysterious spirit diagram.

In the nine hundred years of Armament Sect's existence, there were only twenty seven people who had cracked the wonders of a spirit pattern pillar. These twenty seven people were all the beloved child of their generation, and they had all become a great master artificer and leader of their time.

Today, Qin Lie sat down on this spot and looked towards the first spirit pattern pillar.

Cheng Ping and Tong Jihua's expressions were as strange as one could imagine. They just looked at Qin Lie, wanting to see how arrogant he could possibly be.

Light up all twelve spirit pattern pillars?

The two of them shook their heads. If it was that easy to trigger a reaction from the spirit pattern pillars, then there wouldn't be only twenty seven people who were able to see through the wonders contained inside it.

There were many people who were able to gain insight and realize the magic of only a single spirit pattern pillars in their lifetime, such as Liang Shaoyang and Mo Hai.

Whereas Qin Lie was so arrogant that he said he would light up all twelve spirit pattern pillars!

Pang Feng, Tian Jianhao, Ouyang Jingjing, and the others had also arrived at the edges of the plaza from outside and saw Qin Lie sitting down at the center.

Qin Lie looked at a spirit pattern pillar directly in front of him. There were monsters and demons inscribed on that spirit pattern pillars—it was exactly the one Liang Shaoyang had completely grasped!

He had purposely picked this one to start with!

As if a light had shone from the center of his forehead, he intently gazed at the spirit pattern pillar.

Ten minutes later, the sharp fangs and talons of the demons on that spirit pattern pillar suddenly moved!

Everyone had seen it clearly with their eyes!

“Number one!” Qin Lie yelled in a low tone.

The moment he said this, the monsters and demons of the spirit pattern pillar suddenly began to struggle madly like coiling black demonic flames, wanting break out from the pillar’s shackles.

Many colorful spirit lines suddenly shot out from the pillar and intersected to form a grand, tightly woven web that trapped all of the otherworldly creatures!

The spirit pattern pillar abruptly lit up!

It was just as Qin Lie had said, the first spirit pattern pillar had been lit up. The monsters within it raged and snapped, but they were firmly shackled by the huge web!

A terrifying aura that would extinguish one’s heart and leaked evil continuously spread out from those monsters and demons that almost looked like they had solid bodies.

All the people in the area felt their souls shiver as they experienced a kind of fear where their bodies were being dragged downward, falling to the depths of hell.

“Heavens above!”

“He actually did it!”

Tong Jihua and Cheng Ping were shocked to the core. As they stared at the madly struggling demons, they felt like their hearts would explode.

“Pang, Pang Feng! Report to the sect master immediately!” Tong Jihua said with his voice quivering.

Pang Feng was also thoroughly shocked as he stared dumbfoundedly at the brightened spirit pattern pillar. It was only until Tong Jihua had loudly yelled at him for the second time that he shook and finally regained his senses before running to the entrance as fast as he could.

“Bang!”

Like a huge metallic stone that had fallen down abruptly, Pang Feng smashed the stone slab at the entrance to smithereens, and with one leg knelt within the stone chips, he yelled, “Qin Bing has caused a change in the spirit pattern pillars!”

At the entrance, Ying Xingran and the three great reverends were still vexed about Qin Lie’s lack of appreciation for their kindness. They were still discussing about how to deal with Qin Lie.

Tang Siqi and Lian Rou were still whispering with each other about Qin Lie, worrying for him and thinking of how to persuade

Qin Lie to give in.

Mo Hai and Tan Dongling were still listening to Ying Xingran speaking.

Wu Tuo and many other heads of the other forces were still chatting with the outer sect elders while their eyes constantly hovered over Ying Xingran and the three reverends, measuring their expressions.

Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong hadn't left yet...

Every person, every action, every sound had stopped because of this one line from Pang Feng.

Silence suddenly descended upon Armament Sect's entrance. In an instant, everyone had lost their ability to speak.

The only thing that seemed to be reverberating in the skies, deafening their ears, was Pang Feng's shout...

"Qin Bing has caused a change in the spirit pattern pillars!"

"Qin Bing has caused a change in the spirit pattern pillars!"

"Qin Bing has caused a change in the spirit pattern pillars!"

A few seconds later, Ying Xingran's body abruptly trembled. With an unhealthy red flushing onto his pale white face and a shuddering voice, he glared straight at Pang Feng and said, "What did you say? S-say it again!"

"Qin Bing has caused a change in the spirit pattern pillars!" Pang Feng repeated.

"Cough cough cough!"

Ying Xingran suddenly coughed out a mouthful of fresh blood, but his spirit was as high as if he had been injected with stimulants. With the light that shone in his eyes, no one dared to meet them.

Without a second word and with staggering footsteps, he ran as fast as he could manage towards the plaza at the back.

The deep wrinkles on the faces of reverends Luo Zhichang, Fang Qi and Jiang Hao who had a foot in the grave abruptly smoothened at this moment as if they had turned many years younger. They also rushed towards the backyard, filled with energy.

"I thought so. My eyes weren't wrong. He truly has that talent..." Mo Hai muttered as his eyes slowly brightened. He also followed behind the sect master and three great reverends.

Previously, he had Qin Lie inscribe a Materialization spirit diagram and was extremely shocked by the results. He had

assumed that Qin Lie was an unprecedented genius in Armament Sect's history.

But Ying Xingran had not thought much of it and assumed that he had exaggerated. He also thought that Qin Lie had learned how to inscribe the Materialization spirit diagram before.

This was also why he had never treated Qin Lie as a seed and did not think that Qin Lie could bring a Armament Sect to new heights.

"If he was truly talented, then why did the spirit pattern pillars not light up for him?" These were Ying Xingran's thoughts at the time.

But today, after Qin Lie had triggered a world-altering phenomenon with his concept, he had once again triggered a reaction from a spirit pattern pillar!

He had shocked everyone to the core!

Sect Master Ying Xingran, the three great reverends, the seven inner sect elders, all the outer sect elders, Yi Yuan, Tang Siqi, Lian Rou, and more—anyone who had even the slightest status in Armament Sect—let out shocked expressions as they rushed in unison towards the plaza at the back.

Very soon, there was no longer any of Armament Sect's actual leaders at the entrance.

Outside the door, the heads who had come from the various forces, such as Wu Tuo, Xie Jingxuan, Liang Zhong, and so on, watched all the influential officials of Armament Sect rushing inside and could not cover the shock on their faces as well. After hesitating for a moment, the people began to forcefully barge inside without regard for Armament Sect's rules.

The influential members and experts of Armament Sect were all in a hurry to reach the plaza, so no one bothered with the commotion happening behind them.

The few guards that were left behind could not stop this crazy crowd at all. While yelling, they realized that the situation was gradually spinning out of control as more and more martial practitioners had rushed in and charged to Armament Sect's plaza at the back.

Therefore, they gave up trying to stop them and rushed towards the back with great amazement.

"The second! The second spirit pattern pillar has lit up!"

When Ying Xingran had reached the midway point, Ouyang Jingjing's shrill cries suddenly pierced through the air from the direction of the plaza.

Ying Xingran's footsteps abruptly stopped, and he actually fell down onto the ground. While unceremoniously lying on the floor, his eyes shone with a terrifying light as he questioned, his voice

trembling , “A-are the gods blessing our Armament Sect?”

Both Luo Zhichang and Fang Qi also had tremors running through them as they hurriedly helped Ying Xingran onto his feet and declared with excitement, “The sect’s future is bright!”

“For the past thirty years, Tang Siqi is the only one who had caused a reaction in two spirit pattern pillars. It was a p-pity that she was a girl,” Third Reverend Jianghao said tremblingly.

At the back, Mo Hai and the others were also as anxious as if they had been lit on fire, but they could only wait behind Ying Xingran, Luo Zhichang, and the others, not daring to overtake them.

When he heard that the second spirit pattern pillar had also lit up, Mo Hai sucked in a deep breath and yelled in a low tone, “There is no mistake! He truly has an extraordinary talent in artifact forging!”

Tan Dongling and the other inner sect elders had also widely opened their eyes and stared at the plaza at the back like they could burn holes into it.

It was at this moment that they had begun to hate Ying Xingran and Luo Zhichang for being too slow and possessing a higher status than them and hence not being able to overtake them!

“The second pillar has also lit up!” Further at the back, Lian Rou and the others also cried out.

“Quick! Quick! Give me a lift quickly!” Ying Xingran turned around and waved at a martial practitioner dressed in blood red clothes. “Send me over there quickly!”

The Blood Spear martial practitioner quickly hurried over and lifted Ying Xingran.

“Don’t forget about us!” Luo Zhichang also cried out.

Three more martial practitioner dressed in blood red respectfully lifted them upwards under the beckoning of the three great reverends.

“The third one! The third one has also lit up!” Ouyang Jingjing’s shrill cries had come once again from the plaza.

“Pwack!” Ying Xingran spat out yet another mouthful of fresh blood and felt his heart beating so fast that it was practically about to explode. He pointed in the direction of the plaza and opened his mouth to breathe deeply, unable to speak even though he was trying to say something.

“Forgive me, Sect Master!” The Blood Spear martial practitioner who was carrying him extended a hand and pressed down onto Ying Xingran’s chest. A turbulent but gentle energy was instantly transferred into his body, aiding him to calm his terribly excited feelings at this moment.

Then, without further ado, the few Blood Spear martial practitioners turned into beams of bloody light and flew towards the plaza.

Mo Hai, Tan Dongling, and the others' footsteps were no longer sluggish, and they finally quickly sped towards the plaza.

Many more people hurriedly followed from them from behind and, like locusts, they gathered at the plaza at the foot of the mountain of Flame Volcano, looking towards the spirit pattern pillars.

Before long, the crowd had arrived at all once!

At this moment, there were three spirit pattern pillars that were brimming with great power and glowing with amazing lights!

One spirit pattern pillar had floating demons howling at the sky, wanting to escape the bindings of the pillar but were firmly shackled by a huge web.

Another spirit pattern pillar was like an ancient tree, radiating with life, and had actually transformed into an incredibly giant tree. Countless green leaves were formed, and there was a peaceful and fresh aura of nature that drifted into the surrounding area.

The last spirit pattern pillar had billowing rivers inside it as the sound of flowing water came roaring out from it.

It was as if there were countless great rivers pouring into the sea inside the spirit pattern pillar. Everyone could see the movements of the river and the direction the water was flowing in.

“S-Sect Master…”

Seeing that Ying Xingran had been carried over by a Blood Spear martial practitioner, both Cheng Ping and Tong Jihua’s throats were dry. They could not use words to describe the current situation.

“Is it really him?” Ying Xingran only asked one time.

Cheng Ping and Tong Jihua quickly nodded.

“The fourth one! The fourth one has lit up!” Ouyang Jingjing cried out once again.

Everyone focused their minds to look, and they discovered that a pillar inscribed with a starry sky and celestial bodies began to exude light, each constellation slowly lighting up one after another.

The stars shone with great radiance!

Just like how Qin Lie was right now!

Qin Lie was facing that pillar at this moment. His body shined

with the radiant colors of the vast stars.

"In the nine hundred year history of our sect, there has never been a person who could simultaneously light up four spirit pattern pillars other than the founder!" Luo Zhichang said tremblingly.

"Th-the fifth one! The fifth one is starting to act up as well!" Ouyang Jingjing's shrill cries rippled through the air once more.

Chapter 168: An Immortalized Spectacle!

Qin Lie looked to the fifth spirit pattern pillar.

There were tens of birds inscribed on the fifth spirit pattern pillar. Each one of them was incredibly realistic, and they were all carved in the motion of expanding their wings and flying high up in the sky.

There were multiple different species, and there were quite a few that people had never seen before. Some were like the Golden Winged Giant Roc, some were like Ninth Heaven Blue Eagle, and others were as small as sparrows...

The numerous birds and sparrows were all colorful, and they appeared rather beautiful under the bright sun, but they were originally just pictures.

However, at this moment, the bright and beautiful feathers of a palm-sized golden spirit bird somehow had magically flapped once.

Everyone's eyes blurred.

When they looked again, having renewed their focus, they suddenly realized that the golden spirit bird had already flapped its wings and flew out of the picture. It was now flying around that pillar.

"It moved! It really moved!" many people cried out.

The moment they raised their voices even more birds suddenly flapped their wings and flew out of the spirit pattern pillar one after another.

As if thinking fondly of that spirit pattern pillar, all of the colorful birds flew and danced lightly and elegantly around it.

“The fifth one!”

“The fifth spirit pattern pillar!”

“Heavens!”

The large crowd of Armament Sect’s inner and outer sect elders and disciples could not control the shock inside their hearts as they cried out in utter shock.

“No one has ever been able to trigger a change in five of the spirit pattern pillars in the history of Armament Sect. No one!”

“This is practically a miracle! This is the greatest occasion since Armament Sect came into existence, this is the symbol of the sect’s prosperity!”Jiang Hao said.

Ying Xingran and Chief Reverend Luo Zhichang were currently trembling all over as they stared dumbfoundedly at yet another spirit pattern pillar that had lit up. Their shock had already

become indescribable.

At the edges of the plaza, there were many Armament Sect disciples, elders, along with Mo Hai, Tan Dongling, Tang Siqi, Lian Rou, Tong Jihua, Cheng Ping...

All their gazes were focused on the five spirit pattern pillars that had come alive, watching the countless magical wonders of the spirit pattern pillars.

Further outside, Xie Jingxuan, Liang Zhong, and Wu Tuo had also revealed expressions of amazement on their faces.

They were here to witness this miracle together!

“Sect Master?” A Blood Spear martial practitioner reminded in a low tone, “There are too many people. If someone suddenly attacks him and kills him while he’s comprehending the spirit pattern pillars, this may be...”

Ying Xingran all of a sudden reacted and yelled out, “Forget me and go protect Qin Bing. Build up a defensive line immediately!”

Luo Zhichang, Fang Qi, and Jiang Hao were also shocked by this as they hurriedly cried out for the Blood Spear experts beside them to quickly place their attention on Qin Lie and use all they could to protect him from any malicious external influence.

Very soon, the Blood Spear martial practitioners scattered at the

edges of the plaza walked out one after another under the loud orders of the sect master and three great reverends, standing still with Qin Lie in the middle of their formation.

Seventeen people dressed in blood-red clothing who were overflowing with brutality and the stench of blood formed a human wall and surrounded Qin Lie to protect him.

Unless every hall master in Dark Asura Hall had arrived, unless every valley master in Seven Fiends Valley had arrived, no one would be able to threaten Qin Lie or harm a single hair on his head.

“If anyone dares to touch Qin Bing right now, Armament Sect will completely destroy them even if they have to die with them,” Liang Zhong suddenly said.

Xie Jingxuan nodded slightly.

She understood that Liang Shaoyang had truly died for nothing. Ying Xingran and the three great reverends would no longer hold Qin Lie responsible for anything, and they would not shut him in Fire Prison Cliff for even a day!

It was as Qin Lie had said earlier. They would all change their minds!

“Even if Dark Shadow Tower’s Dark Tower and Shadow Tower tower lords had arrived together, Armament Sect would still fight Dark Shadow Tower to the death for Qin Bing,” Xie Jingxuan said

firmly.

“Siqi, wh-what’s going on with this guy?” Lian Rou could not even speak without stuttering anymore.

“I can’t believe it, there is actually someone who can learn the wonders of five different spirit pattern pillars. If I hadn’t seen it with my own eyes, I would find it hard to believe even if you were the one who had told me...” Tang Siqi’s beautiful eyes were focused on Qin Lie as she felt shocked to the core. “I finally believe that you had never learned the Materialization spirit diagram before...”

Qin Lie, who was intently being watched by everyone with, looked surprisingly calm. His eyes were cool and brimming with wisdom.

He was analyzing the ancient glyphs on the spirit pattern pillar before him!

The twelve spirit pattern pillars had been inscribed with mountains and lakes, countless stars, beautiful flowers, lush ancient trees, gods and demons, and beasts...

This was a type of ancient language, an ancient language called Ancient Glyph, an ancient language that was branded into his mind!

The legion of birds, the ancient and mysterious stars, and the

hideous and terrifying devils were all formed from the inscribed ancient glyphs!

He had slipped his mind and consciousness inside and copied them with his soul by writing down the proper strokes of those ancient glyphs.

Then, he would be able to cause a phenomenon in the spirit pattern pillars immediately! He would be able to activate the magic sealed inside the ancient glyphs and be able to slip his soul into spirit diagram's inner world!

"Ancient Glyph is not even the most ancient language. The earthworm-like text on that enormous beast's remains beneath the Arctic Mountain Range was of an even older age. In my memories, those earthworm-like characters didn't even have a name..."

While slipping his soul into the spirit pattern pillar before him and feeling it with his mind, he grew more and more doubtful.

He discovered that he was actually very studious in regards to these special languages from ancient times. No one had even heard of Ancient Glyph in this land which was referred to as the Scarlet Tide Continent, but he remembered them all too well in his own memories.

That was also why he was able to figure out the wonders sealed inside the ancient glyphs of the spirit pattern pillars.

By copying the proper strokes of the words again with his soul consciousness, it was as if he had opened a door!

Opened a door into the spirit pattern pillar!

Everyone one of these standing spirit pattern pillars had a magical world hidden inside them—the world of a spirit diagram!

The mountains and lakes, monsters and beasts, and towering ancient trees were all the locks of the spirit diagram inside inscribed through the hieroglyphs!

Only by opening the locks could one slip their soul consciousness into the world inside the spirit pattern pillar and examine the various mysterious and unpredictable spirit diagrams.

What Qin Lie was doing now was only opening the locks...

Every time he copied the ancient glyphs inside the spirit pattern pillars with his soul consciousness, it was the equivalent of him opening a lock and lighting up a pillar.

He did not enter the spirit diagrams' worlds inside the pillars immediately.

"Let's lay down my future position in Armament Sect in one go."

Qin Lie muttered once in his mind before retracting his gaze from

the spirit pattern pillar that was inscribed with flying birds. He then turned around and looked at yet another spirit pattern pillar.

The ancient glyphs of this spirit pattern pillar had inscribed a gorgeous picture. There were cloudy mountains and many luxurious jade mansions located beneath it, looking like a paradise.

The clouds were an ancient glyph. The numerous luxurious mansions were also built from many ancient glyphs.

He slipped his soul consciousness towards the starting point and began drawing with his mind. He skillfully started on the next round of locks.

A white cloud suddenly floated into the sky!

“The sixth one! The sixth one!”

Tong Jihua was just under that spirit pattern pillar, and after he followed Qin Lie’s gaze, he suddenly cried out.

“The sixth one has reacted as well!” Cheng Ping yelled in a low tone.

The crowd’s gazes had focused in unison on the sixth spirit pattern pillar!

An hour later, this spirit pattern pillar glittered with light, and

its body was like a gigantic mountain. The jade mansions that were originally inscribed on the pillar's body were now magically floating on top of the pillar with several clouds suspended in midair. They had formed a dream-like paradise.

The crowd was shocked to the core.

"The seventh one has been lit!" An hour later someone cried out again.

"The eighth!" An hour later Lian Rou cried out while covering her mouth.

"The ninth!"

"The tenth!"

"The eleventh!"

Every hour a new spirit pattern pillar would be lit up and a new wonder would appear.

At this point, neither Ying Xingran nor Luo Zhichang and the rest of the three great reverends could say anything any longer. They simply followed Qin Lie's gaze passively and looked towards a new spirit pattern pillar.

Right now they had all thought that Qin Lie could light up all of

the spirit pattern pillars!

Qin Lie did not disappoint them either. Every time he looked at a new spirit pattern pillar, there would be a reaction after a few minutes had passed.

The ancient and magical pictures sculpted onto the spirit pattern pillar would come alive and fantastically fly around to confirm Ying Xingran and everyone else's thoughts.

The gazes of the packed crowd of other forces at the edges of the plaza had gradually turned numb.

At this point, they would feel that whatever other amazing things Qin Lie could do would simply be a matter of fact.

They had already thought that Qin Lie was omnipotent!

"There is still the last one!"

"The last spirit pattern pillar! If he can light up this final spirit pattern pillar as well, then this will be the greatest occasion of Armament Sect's nine hundred year history!"

"It will also be a grand occasion on all of Scarlet Tide!"

"This person will last through the ages! He will shock every corner of this continent with his talent and will engrave his name

in everyone's minds!"

"Will the last spirit pattern pillar light up as well?"

"I am very proud to be able to witness such a thing!"

"Only the last one is left now..."

The loud commotion from before slowly calmed down at this point. The untold eyes and gazes had all shot to the final spirit pattern pillar.

The one that was inscribed with the endless and vast earth!

Under everyone's gazes, Qin Lie looked at this spirit pattern pillar. It was only a single glance before Qin Lie's expression abruptly shuddered.

This... this endless world, these mountains that reached into the clouds, these vast and borderless rivers, this ancient and desolated aura...

This was shockingly similar to the ancient land he had seen while in a trance from learning the Records of Geocentric Magnetism!

After looking deeply at it for a moment and feeling great shock in his heart, he immediately confirmed that the picture inscribed here was a true natural wonder of ancient times!

Sucking in a deep breath, Qin Lie adjusted his mind and calmed himself down.

He then slipped out his soul consciousness and put it on this picture before him to touch the wonders of this ancient land with his soul.

“The twelve one has been lit!”

“All of them have been lit up!”

“All twelve spirit pattern pillars have been lit!”

“An immortal spectacle!”

“Today’s grand occasion will surely live through the ages!”

Chapter 169: Armament Sect Will Give You Whatever You Want!

On the plaza, the twelve standing spirit pattern pillars flashed.

The wisps of clouds that floated in the air, the tall and vast mountains that reached the clouds, and the exquisitely grand dwellings at the summit, each of these scenes were otherworldly.

A great and ancient tree seemed to touch the sky from the ground. Its leaves were thick like the layers of cloud and each bright green leaf was filled with the essence of life.

There were monsters and beasts howling while baring fangs and swiping their claws, but they were imprisoned by enormous rays of light and could not come forth.

Bright flowers at full bloom, roaring rivers, dazzling stars...

All the wondrous scenes formed a splendid picture on the plaza. The energy vibrations it exuded released rainbows of light.

“A peerless genius!” Ying Xingran was crying as he repeated the words in the plaza. “To be able to see this before death, even if I were to die this very moment, my life would have been worth living.”

Qin Lie dignifiedly sat at the center of the plaza in the middle of

the twelve spirit pattern pillars. He slowly closed his eyes.

The plaza had gone completely silent. Everyone was witnessing the occurrence of a miracle, and was astounded at the light that came from the twelve spirit pattern pillars.

A long time later.

“Clear the plaza!” Chief Reverend Luo Zhichang shouted.

A male dressed in blood-red armor and of great stature suddenly seemed to have appeared from thin air.

“Sire.”

“Sire.”

The Blood Spear martial practitioners that surrounded Qin lie hurriedly bowed when they saw this person.

This person looked as though he was in the prime of his life with tendons bulging at his neck, giving off the presence of being as imposing as a mountain.

He nodded minutely at the Blood Spear martial practitioners and then instantly stood next to Luo Zhichang. He bowed slightly, looked around at the surroundings, and then said, “Please, everyone, leave Armament Sect.”

A thick, almost tangible, presence of blood spread with this person as the source.

The looks of those who came from the surrounding factions changed at this moment. Many of those who possessed low cultivation started to tremble as they walked and fearfully retreated.

Xie Jingxuan, Lian Zhong, Wu Tuo, and the others also held shock in their eyes as they looked deeply at this person.

At this time, this person's bloody scent became even thicker, so thick that people felt it was hard to breathe.

Many people had the feeling they were situated in thick blood. Just from standing there, terror rose in their souls and they had the thought of fleeing far from this person.

"Sorry for the disturbance," Xie Jingxuan shouted. She bowed towards Ying Xingran and the three reverends with respect and then left of her own accord.

Liang Zong followed closely behind her.

"Apologies, I just wanted to come see the prosperity of Armament Sect," Wu Tuo smiled honestly.

He also walked outside, leading his group away.

“We have just come in to look and definitely do not have any malicious intentions. Please forgive us.”

“We’re going now, please forgive us for our presumptuousness.”

“Apologies.”

The people responsible from each faction became careful and wary after this person appeared, giving their apologies and bidding their farewells.

That person stood behind Luo Zhichang and did not threaten any of them verbally. However, almost everyone left of their own accord. A brief amount of time later, no martial practitioners from other forces could be seen near the plaza.

Only disciples of Armament Sect remained.

“This lowly officer will go down first.” This person saw the crowd dissipate and bowed towards Luo Zhichang before walking down alone to the rear mountains of Armament Sect.

Many Blood Spear martial practitioners had nervous expressions after he came as though there was a boulder hanging above their heads. After he left, the Blood Spear martial practitioners recovered and relaxed.

Yi Yuan and Pang Feng were standing straight like pine trees.

Since this person appeared, Yi Yuan and Pang Feng stood there, unable to move with terror in their eyes.

“He finally left...” After he left, Yi Yuan fell on his bottom. He found cold sweat was flowing down his back. Thinking back to the nightmarish days, Yi Yuan couldn’t help but shudder.

“Is that him?” Lian Rou asked Tang Siqi in a low voice.

Tang Siqi nodded fearfully and said in a light voice, “That’s him.”

Lian Rou secretly tsked, “How come he came out today?”

“The twelve spirit pattern pillars have all been lit up, as long as they are human,... they would not be able to stand the curiosity. No matter how cold-blooded and cruel he is, he is still human, and all humans would be curious,” Tang Siqi explained in a low voice. “Also, Sect Master and the three reverends are all present. There are also martial practitioners from other factions in the sect. It should be required that he worries.”

Lian Rou nodded lightly.

At this time, Qin Lie suddenly opened his eyes. He woke up from

recovering his spirit energy.

"I need time at this place to comprehend the wonders of the spirit pattern pillars." He looked at Ying Xingran and calmly said, "but if Sect Master is not willing to change your verdict, I am willing to go to Fire Prison Cliff first and be imprisoned there for one year."

Tong Jihua and Cheng Ping laughed. They awkwardly looked at Ying Xingran to see how he responded.

Mo Hai, Tan Dongling, Tang Siqi, and the others also suppressed the mirth they felt and stared at Yin Xingran.

"As long as you will stay here and comprehend the profoundness of the spirit pattern pillars, even if you want to imprison me at Fire Prison Cliff, one year, three years, a decade, or even for my entire life, I will comply!" Ying Xingran said heavily.

When these words came out, all the disciples and elders of Armament Sect shook. Their eyes were full of complex emotions.

Many people suddenly felt great respect. No one looked at him in mockery any more.

Ying Xingran might have made thousands of mistakes, might have been too prejudiced, might have possibly broken the rules of the sect and incurred the dislike and possibly the hatred of many, but no one could refute the contributions he made towards

Armament Sect.

Additionally, no one felt more towards Armament Sect than he did, and no one cared more than he did about Armament Sect's future !

Everything he did was for the prosperity of Armament Sect!

On this, none of the elders and disciples of Armament Sect were qualified to laugh at him!

Qin Lie's mind also shook. His brow creased. After a moment of silence, he said, "I need a long time to comprehend the wonders inside the spirit pattern pillars."

"Armament Sect can wait ten years, even a century is fine!" Ying Xingran shouted.

"My identity is not clear," Qin Lie said.

"No matter who you are or where you came from, as long as you are willing to stay in Armament Sect, as long as you are willing to help Armament Sect prosper, we will definitely never ask again in the future!" Luo Zhichang said.

"I have offended people in the past. If my identity is exposed in the future, it may create trouble," Qin Lie continued.

“Armament Sect will take care of it for you!” Fang Qi said resolutely.

“I also need to learn the martial way,” Qin Lie continued to speak.

“The person who was just here can personally solve the questions you have about the martial way. You can read all the martial books Armament Sect possesses!”

“I have a history with Nebula Pavilion.”

“Armament Pavilion will leave Icestone City. In the future, no martial practitioner from Nebula Pavilion will be able to buy a spirit artifact from Armament Sect!”

“Senior Sister Tang wants to leave, but I do not want her to leave. She should stay in Armament Sect.”

“We will get her to stay!”

“Pan Xuan is too overbearing, I do not like being restricted.”

“He will not be in charge of you in the future.”

“I also…”

“No problem, Armament Sect will give you whatever you want!”

Every time Qin Lie mentioned a matter, Yin Xingran, Luo Zhichang, Fang Qi, and Jiang Hao would compete to answer first, thinking on his behalf from all angles and sweeping away all obstacles.

They did not hesitate at all.

An hour later, Qin Lie could not think of any more problems. He nodded and said simply, “I will remain in Armament Sect.”

Ying Xingran and the three reverends released a breath inside and then smiled as though they had won a victory. They suddenly felt extremely comfortable.

It was as though the people who had unconditionally agreed to Qin Lie and tried to satisfy his every need was not them.

“Rest your worries and comprehend the essence of the spirit pattern pillars. Tell us anything you need, what you want to eat or drink. If you can think of it, Armament Sect will try its best to obtain it for you,” Luo Zhichang said benevolently.

“I will organize and pass the secret scriptures of the sect to you, listing out everything you need for artifact forging at your current stage,” Fang Qi said with a smile.

“You may need some spirit pills and medicine to improve your

constitution. I will take care of this and make you satisfied," Jiang Hao inserted.

"Sixteen Blood Knives, you will guard this place and protect Qin Bing with all of your strength!" Ying Xingran looked at the people dressed in blood-colored robes. "Starting from now, this plaza is temporarily closed. All other unrelated people cannot be admitted! Not even inner sect disciples!"

"Yes sir!" a martial practitioner dressed in blood-red robes shouted.

Yi Yuan, Tang Siqi, Lian Rou, and the others were shocked. They looked at Qin Lie and suddenly found the entire protocol of Armament Sect seemed to be changing based on Qin Lie and were even being reconstructed based on Qin Lie.

No one had ever... experienced this before.

"Before Qin Bing comes out of the plaza, none of you are allowed to enter this place under pain of heavy punishment!" Ying Xingran shouted.

Everyone could only grimace and nod.

Among them, Pan Xuan's expression was the most bitter. He looked at Qin Lie within the plaza and he felt as though he was ingesting the bitterest of lemons...

“I want to start studying the wonders of the spirit pattern pillars in peace now,” Qin Lie said faintly.

“Everyone, retreat from the plaza!” Ying Xingran announced. “Elder Tong, Elder Cheng, your outer sect should immediately form a defensive line and surround the plaza. Do not allow anyone in!”

“Understood,” Tong Jihua and Cheng Ping responded and then ordered others accordingly.

The plaza was quickly cleared of people. Only Sixteen Blood Knives was at the edge of the plaza, guarding Qin Lie day and night in accordance with Ying Xingran’s orders.

“Xingran, go back and rest. I will stay and watch.” Only now did Luo Zhichang remember that Ying Xingran’s body was not well and told him that in concern.

Ying Xingran, who had been in an extremely excited state and had been shooting off orders, also felt extremely exhausted. A feeling of weakness washed over his body.

“I’m going back first.” He knew his own situation and didn’t dare to force himself. He gave a few more orders before going up the mountain.

“Everyone, you can go now!” Luo Zhichang said.

Consequently, the elders and disciples of Armament Sect's inner and outer sects reluctantly left the plaza under their herding. They would turn their heads back every few steps in hopes that they could comprehend something.

At this time, silence had finally descended on the plaza. Qin Lie also started to commit himself to studying the profoundness within the spirit pattern pillars.

Chapter 170: Blood Spear Lang Xie

The news that Qin Lie had caused every single one of the twelve spirit pattern pillars to react spread like a virus. It quickly infected Dark Asura Hall, Seven Fiends Valley, Cloud Sky Mountain, Purple Mist Sea, Dark Shadow Tower, and all the nearby forces.

In these nine hundred years, master artificers had been all amazing people and led an era had first shown themselves through comprehending the spirit pattern pillars before walking down the path towards being a legend.

Even the founder of Armament Sect had only been able to cause four spirit pattern pillars to react. This action had established his status in Armament Sect.

Before Qin Lie, no one had dared to think that there would be someone in the world that was able to cause all twelve spirit pattern pillars to react.

Qin Lie managed to do it...

Black Iron forces like Dark Asura Hall and Seven Fiends Valley, and Limestone forces like Nebula Pavilion and Water Moon Sect, anywhere there were martial practitioners, they were all discussing the same person—Qin Bing!

Qin Bing’s name quickly became well-known and everyone’s main topic of discussion.

An unknown person became noted in everyone's minds in the span of a few short day, and shocked everyone.

……

In the back area of Flame Volcano the woods were shrouded in layers of bloody mist. From the sky it appeared that the forest was covered in a bloody cloud.

The outer sect of Armament Sect was at the base of Flame Volcano which was at the front of the mountain while the inner sect of Armament Sect was on the slope and peak.

But there was also a vast forest behind Flame Volcano that was only known to a few.

There were strong restrictions and barriers around that forest. Even the inner and outer sect disciples of Armament Sect were forbidden from entering this place, much less any outsiders.

This was a forbidden area.

"Sect Master."

"Sect Master."

At the entrance to the forest shrouded in blood colored clouds,

four Blood Spear martial practitioners that were half-naked, exposing the strange blood-red tattoos on their chest, abdomen, and back, suddenly appeared in four balls of bloody light when Ying Xingran had arrived.

The four respectfully bowed and disabled the defenses at the entrance, allowing Ying Xingran in.

When Ying Xingran came here, he started to cough heavily and was slightly unable to stand the thick bloody tang of this place.

He suppressed the discomfort in his abdomen and nodded. He asked, “Where is Lang Xie?”

“Sire is inside,” someone answered.

Ying Xingran walked into the forest and headed for the interior. Bloody pools slowly appeared in his field of view. These pools were just the size of a room and were scattered inside the forest in patches. Each bloody pool held a bloody liquid that bubbled thick red.

Streams of bloody smoke evaporated from these bloody pools and gathered in the air above the forest.

The bloody mist that always covered the mountain was formed from the steam coming from these bloody pools. The heavy scent of blood in the forest also came from the same source.

Quite a few martial practitioners who were naked were inside the numerous pools of blood. They included people of both sexes and various ages.

Inside the bloody pools they had extremely pained expressions. Many people howled like wild beasts. All the muscles of their bodies were tightly tensed and their tendons bulged.

Ying Xingran looked closer and found that many people's bodies were split open and that threads of the thick, bloody liquid were seeping inside their bodies.

What happened after was that the howls of these people would become even louder.

"Sect Master." The brawny man that had appeared three days ago in the plaza came out of the depths of the forest and arrived by Ying Xingran's side.

When he got there, the bloody liquid in the surroundings pools suddenly started to furiously bubble as though the liquid was beginning to boil.

The young men and womens that were immersed in them howled inhumanly.

Ying Xingran's face became cold and then he shouted, "In order to maintain the liquid of the pools of blood, Armament Sect expends spirit grasses and medicines worth thirty thousand

Profound Grade One spirit stones every month! So many people on the outside hope to step into this place and hope to immerse themselves in the blood pools. You must not fail to live up to the generosity that Armament Sect gives you!”

The people in the bloody pools bared their teeth as they nodded, shouting loudly, “We will not fail the sect!”

Ying Xingran nodded in satisfaction. His expression became normal as he ordered the brawny man, “Lang Xie, in the sect, some people have come from Dark Shadow Tower. There are also people in the city that belong to Dark Shadow Tower. I am worried that they have thoughts about the sect and are planning to killing Qin Bing at any cost. You also know that the people from Dark Shadow Tower are very skilled in killing and have endless ways to do it.”

The middle-aged male called Lang Xie nodded and then asked, “Sect Master means to?”

“I do not want any accidents to befall Qin Bing. Even if there is a possibility of an accident, I hope that it can be eliminated beforehand,” Ying Xingran said gravely.

“I know what must be done,” Lang Xie replied simply.

Ying Xingran smiled faintly and his worries disappeared. “Mn, I just came to mention this matter and hope you can take care of it well.”

“Sect Master, I have a presumptuous request,” Lang Xie suddenly said.

“Say it.’ Ying Xingran’s expression stilled.

“When Qin Bing walks out of the plaza, Sect Master, please have him come here so I can train him.” Lang Xie’s tone was cold, but his expression was extremely serious. “Blood Spear will of course protect him, but if he has some offensive ability, then Blood Spear will have a much easier time and he will be much safer.”

Ying Xingran’s brow furrowed and he seemed slightly hesitant. “He should not waste time on the martial way.”

“If it was any other person, I would definitely not request this,” Lang Xie said in a deep voice, “but he is different. With but a small amount of time, he will be able to increase his combat potential greatly here. Also, with his talent, he will encounter many difficulties and grudges in the future. He needs a certain amount of strength for self-protection.”

Ying Xingran was silent.

He knew that Lang Xie was right.

Even an idiot could see what a genius that could comprehend twelve spirit pattern pillars could bring to Armament Sect.

How could Armament Sect’s enemy factions or competitors idly

stand by and watch as Armament Sect quickly prospered?

They only needed to act early on to stop Armament Sect's growth. Only killing one person would bring that to fruition, so what choice would they make?

"Alright, when he has finished with the spirit pattern pillars, I will ask him for his opinion on this matter and if he is willing to come and stay here for a period of time," Ying Xingran nodded.

"Many thanks, Sect Master," Lang Xie said.

……

"Yesterday, when Liu Fu was forging, his smelting furnace had a big explosion and he died right there."

"Something happened to Zhao Yu when he went out two days ago. He seemed to have encountered a spirit beast that was hunting for food and was torn apart outside the city. That is what Elder Tong said. I do not know if it is true or false. It is strange. How can there be high level spirit beasts just outside of Armament City?"

"Wang Tong seems to have disappeared for five days as well."

Many disciples inside Armament Sect would mention these events in daily conversation.

Inside Armament City.

Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong were waiting for their transaction with Armament Sect to be completed. In the days they had been waiting, the two tried to not leave the city and only sent people to gather information.

“The estate that we had cleaned up has been infiltrated again by someone else. Black Shadow is dead, and that was where he died. When I went to visit, I ended up finding his corpse rotting there,” Liang Zhong reported.

Inside the room, Xie Jingxuan was silent but her cold eyes glinted.

“All the employees of a shop called Dark Orchid Pavilion in the Wind District were all killed last night. There were no survivors. According to our information, that Dark Orchid Pavilion is controlled by people from Dark Tower, but rarely interact with Shadow Tower.” Liang Zhong continued, “I have received information that there are people constantly dying inside Armament Sect for no reason. These people came from Dark Shadow Tower and their subordinate territories. Now they are dying one after another.”

Xie Jingxuan nodded lightly and said, “Blood Spear is starting a purge. No matter if it is inside the sect or inside the city, anyone who is related to Dark Shadow Tower is on the list to be cleaned out.”

“Ying Xingran is really willing to harden his heart for this Qin Bing. I heard that three inner sect disciples were directly killed. These three had been nurtured through the efforts of Armament Sect. One person was just the nephew of someone powerful in Dark Shadow Tower, he really was undeserving of this calamity,” Liang Zhong grimaced.

“He does not want to take any risk at all.” Xie Jingxuan knew what Ying Xingran thought. “For this Qin Bing, he will remove all of Dark Shadow Tower’s teeth and claws. In the future, he will not allow anyone from Dark Shadow Tower to come into Armament City. Before Liang Yangzu has stated his position and surrenders, Armament Sect will not drop their guard when it comes to Dark Shadow Tower.”

“Liang Yanzu’s most beloved son has died. I do not know what he will do, I have no idea if he will be able to restrain himself,” Liang Zhong remarked.

“If Liang Yangzu can accept this, he will not be Liang Yangzu. Ying Xingran knows his personality which is why he has not hesitated to act.” Xie Jingxuan shook her head and then concluded, “After we complete our transaction with Armament Sect, we will leave the city as soon as we can. Otherwise, we will be dragged in.”

“It seems like a storm is coming,” Liang Zhong sighed emotionally.

……

In a mountain range, there were towers and pavilions in the dark shadows between the mountains. These buildings were clearly divided into two groups.

Many martial practitioners with dark and cold eyes walked between the buildings and did not look at anyone else at all.

They would not converse.

So many towers and so many martial practitioners that were all moving around, but there was no sound. It was as though the martial practitioners of these towers were all dumb and did not know how to speak.

“Shaoyang is dead,” said Liang Yangzu to Dark Tower’s tower lord Di Shijiu after having gone from Shadow Tower to inside the secret basement of Dark Tower.

Di Shijiu was small and thin, shrunken back in the dark corner of the secret room like a remnant of a soul.

“He is your son. You can do anything you want, but it has nothing to do with me,” the lord of Dark Tower, Di Shijiu replied emotionlessly.

“You also agreed to having Shaoyang to go to Armament Sect. Now that Shaoyang is dead, you are not going to do anything?” Liang Yangzu’s eyes were deeply set with his nose unusually high. This caused him to look shadowy and dark, giving people the

feeling of viciousness and formidability. “My son has been killed. If Dark Shadow Tower does not make a sound, how can Dark Shadow Tower establish itself in this land?”

“Dark Tower and Shadow Tower have always stayed out of each other’s way. So your Shadow Tower can resolve the matter of your Shadow Tower.” Di Shijiu was unmoved.

Yet when he finished speaking, a bell by his left hand suddenly sounded.

Di Shijiu’s brow furrowed. A claw-like hand pulled the bell into his palm as he listened to the information inside the bell.

A while later, his face gradually turned dark and cold. He said to himself, “Lang Xie, you dare to move against my Dark Orchid Pavilion, are you forcing me to find you for a fight?”

Liang Yangzu’s expression shifted slightly as he looked in anticipation.

“Good, I will fulfill your wish. Let’s see if you can still defeat me after so long!” Di Shijiu said darkly.

Chapter 171: Unparalleled

At the base of Flame Volcano.

Qin Lie sat underneath a spirit pattern pillar. He raised his head to stare at the demons and monsters that were squirming on top of the pillar, watching an enormous net continuously constricting, tightly restraining those strange beings.

“Celestial Sealing Demon Diagram!”

Qin Lie shouted inwardly as a wisp of his soul consciousness quietly slipped into the inside of the spirit pattern pillar, as though it was a formless ghost flame.

As though passing through a door of light, his soul consciousness stepped right into a world where spirit lines intersected, reaching the interior of the spirit pattern pillar.

It was a world that was composed of numerous spectacular spirit lines.

It was a large-scale spirit diagram.

The thick and long spirit lines criss-crossed. They were translucent and crystalline like lightning or rainbows, twisting through the vast space.

A wisp of Qin Lie's consciousness roamed through the space and touched the spirit lines, as he felt the flow of spirit energy inside with his mind.

He held a spirit tablet of the highest quality within his palm. As he felt the Celestial Sealing Demon Diagram with his mind, he inscribed it inside the spirit tablet, wanting to imprint the Celestial Sealing Demon Diagram in it.

"Crack!"

A fine crack suddenly appeared on the surface of the spirit tablet.

The crack was minuscule at the beginning, but as Qin Lie continued to inscribe the Celestial Sealing Demon Diagram, the crack quickly expanded before spreading out with incredible speed.

"Cra-ck!"

The spirit tablet suddenly shattered, covering the floor in broken jade stones. Qin Lie could not help but halt inscribing the spirit diagram once more.

Currently, the ground around him was already completely covered with fragmented stones, shards of bones, and pieces of wood. Those were all scrapped spirit tablets.

"Qin Bing, those who had comprehended the wonders of the spirit diagram in the past were neither impatient to understand

the true meaning behind it, nor in a hurry to immediately inscribe them on a spirit tablet." Third Reverend Jiang Hao stood at the defense line outside the plaza, holding a snake-headed staff in one hand as he said warmly, "They would first commit the spirit diagram to memory and then proceed to slowly comprehend it. After a period of study and comprehension that would take multiple months, or even years of effort, only then would they slowly begin to truly understand the mysteries of the spirit diagram."

Out of all of the people in the history of Armament Sect who had caused a reaction in the spirit pattern pillars and could see the spirit diagrams inside, none of them had been in as much of a hurry as Qin Lie was.

They had all proceeded gradually, taking it step by step, slowly exploring, and used a long time to truly understand the meaning within.

There was almost no one like Qin Lie who inscribed directly into a spirit tablet and wanted to master the spirit diagrams in a short period of time.

If Qin Lie had not caused all twelve spirit pattern pillars to shine, the sect master and the three reverends definitely would not have allowed him to inscribe the spirit diagrams directly into the spirit tablets, nor would they have allowed him to copy them to the point where he forgot to eat or rest. They would not have expected him to grasp the true wonders of the spirit diagrams in a short period of time.

“I’ve always learned how to inscribe spirit diagrams this way.” Qin Lie’s expression was aloof. He took out a new spirit tablet and raised his hand to start inscribing.

“Do you want to eat something first? Do you need medicine to adjust your body and recover your mind energy?”

Jiang Hao did not persist in persuading him. He smiled kindly and stroked the spatial ring on his hand.

Fifteen or sixteen jade bottles appeared on the stone floor in front of him. Each jade bottle was filled to the brim with valuable medicinal pills. The value of each pill was extraordinary in the outside world.

In this period of time, Jiang Hao guarded Qin Lie, and when Qin Lie became tired, he would have Qin Lie use medicinal pills to recover.

All kinds of rare gourmet and medicinal food that could replenish the mind and physical energy were frequently sent to them. If Qin Lie stated which part of his body was tired, specialized food and spirit medicine would be made and supplied for his swift physical and mental recovery.

Many of Armament Sect’s medicinal masters that were skilled in dietary were working overtime for him.

“I do not need it right now.”

Qin Lie shook his head and placed his attention back on the spirit tablet in his hand. He released another wisp of mind consciousness and went into the spirit pattern pillar in front of him.

The demons and other strange monsters that had been quiet for a while detected the presence of his mind consciousness and started to struggle fiercely again.

These demonic beings that appeared vicious exuded murderous intent as though they wanted to slaughter all beings. They howled above the spirit pattern pillar and intimidated everyone on the plaza.

The Sixteen Blood Knives of Blood Spear were split up in a defensive circle around the area. Even they were frightened when they sensed the aura of those demonic beasts.

Jiang Hao's head had also shrunk back slightly. There was a different light in his eyes as his mind moved.

This was the same spirit pattern pillar that Liang Shaoyang had activated. However, Liang Shaoyang had not dared to spend long periods of time to feel the wonders inside the pillars. He had not dared to dive in with his mind consciousness into the Celestial Sealing Demon Diagram.

So while Liang Shaoyang did see the Celestial Sealing Demon Diagram, he was a long time away from truly understanding it.

On the other hand, Qin Lie had chosen to sit down under the spirit pattern pillar to comprehend its wonders in one go. This was something that Armament Sect had always forbidden and discouraged in the past.

Mainly because it was too damaging to the mind and soul. It was being too eager for results and too unrealistic.

“In the history of Armament Sect, no one could comprehend the wonders of the spirit diagram in a short period of time, but maybe you can,” Jiang Hao thought silently, “because your talent is peerless and unparalleled.”

At this time, a wisp of Qin Lie’s soul consciousness once again entered the world inside the spirit pattern pillar.

One of his fingers was touching the spirit tablet in his hand. While using his soul consciousness to observe the Celestial Sealing Demon Diagram, he inscribed using his mind and attempted to make a copy inside the spirit tablet.

“The fierce struggles of these demons and monsters are causing the true core of the spirit diagram to always be in turmoil. It is constantly changing the energy of the internal spirit lines. But this is normal. These changes happen when the spirit diagram is operating properly along with its corresponding spirit art. The external vibrations are what’s causing the internal spirit diagram to become magical and turn it into a ‘living’ diagram!”

Qin Lie looked at the viciously twisting beings on the spirit pattern pillars. His eyes slowly lit up as he came to a temporary stop.

He kept watch on the vicious beings on the spirit pattern pillars, observing them struggle as the huge, materialized net continuously constricted around them and in turn caused a reaction in the Celestial Sealing Demon Diagram within the pillar...

“I understand now. The Celestial Sealing Demon Diagram on the inside is one with the enormous net on the outside. The changes in the enormous net on the outside will cause the Celestial Sealing Demon Diagram to constantly change as well. If I cannot understand the connection between these two and capture the wondrous mutual interaction between them, then I most likely will never be able to truly comprehend the spirit diagram.”

Qin Lie’s mind shook.

He stared straight at the shouting demons, looked at the tight net on the outside, and used his mind to feel all the weak vibrations in the Celestial Sealing Demon Diagram in the inner world and tried to find the closest connection between the two.

“These two spirit lines are one line. As the line outside moves, the line inside is also pulled! These two are also one, they are one spirit line. When the spirit line on the outside is plucked, it will naturally cause a vibration on the inside. This is it!”

After a long time, Qin Lie’s eyes brightened, and the finger that

had paused on the spirit tablet suddenly pulsed with spirit energy once more.

He once again started his inscribing.

“It has been nine days, how is he?”

Chief Reverend Luo Zhichang and Second Reverend Fang Qi came together. The two of them stopped next to Jiang Hao and Luo Zhichang had been the one to ask.

“Not sure.” Jiang Hao shook his head.

“The true understanding and mastering of a spirit diagram is definitely not something that can be realized in one sitting,” Luo Zhichang sighed lightly. “Ah, there is nothing to be said about this child’s talent, but he is too eager in pursuit of results.”

“And the crux is that we’re not in the best position to advise him either,” Fang Qi grimaced.

“He should be able to do it,” Jiang Hao inserted.

Luo Zhichang and Fang Qi had shocked expressions. They looked at Jiang Hao with inquiring gazes as they waited for him to elaborate.

“He may be able to do what other people cannot. Something that

no one in Armament Sect's nine hundred years of history has done has been accomplished by him. Since he is still persisting, I believe he can do it." Jiang Hao responded like so.

Luo Zhichang and Fang Qi thought for a bit. Having been persuaded, they also nodded inwardly.

"Whoosh!"

A circle of five-colored light suddenly was released from the spirit tablet in Qin Lie's hand.

Spider-like patterns slowly floated to the surface of the spirit tablet and quickly spread to its corners!

As the five-colored light appeared and the spiderweb pattern formed, a restrictive power suddenly came from the spirit tablet!

Qin Lie suddenly closed his eyes.

The finger he pressed to the spirit tablet suddenly shook violently like the wings of a flying fly!

Dots of light sprayed out!

A dot of blinding white light lit up from his fingertip and was as eye-catching as stars in the night!

As the three reverends looked over in shock, the bright light suddenly faded and hid itself completely inside the spirit tablet.

Also at this time, Qin Lie opened his eyes. He threw the spirit tablet covered by spider web patterns towards the three reverends.

“Take a look, see if the spirit diagram inside is the true Celestial Sealing Demon Diagram,” Qin Lie said uncertainly.

The bodies of the three reverends shook slightly and their minds received a great blow. They all instinctively reached out to receive the spirit tablet that was flying at them.

However, it might have been that they were too excited or too old, so the spirit tablet fell right through the space between their three outstretched hands.

“Pak.” The spirit tablet crisply hit the ground.

None of the three were able to catch it in midair.

Fang Qi and Jiang Hao were not embarrassed at all. Their eyes were bright as they bent down simultaneously to pick up the spirit tablet. But when their hands were in midair, the two of them saw another’s hands reaching down.

The two stilled and then reacted. They took back their hands and said together, “You first.”

So Luo Zhichang picked up the spirit tablet.

His hand also trembled as he held the spirit tablet as though it weighed thousands of kilograms and was hard for him to carry.

Fang Qi and Jiang Hao stopped breathing as they stared unblinkingly at Luo Zhichang to see what he felt.

Multiple seconds later, the two saw Luo Zhichang's body, which was on the verge of rotting, suddenly shake. They saw the amazement and joy on Luo Zhichang's face.

Under their heated gazes, Luo Zhichang nodded hard, so excited that his breathing was completely erratic. "Yes, there is no mistake or flaw. It is the Celestial Sealing Demon Diagram! The true Celestial Sealing Demon Diagram!"

As these words were spoken, Fang Qi and Jiang Hao also greatly shook, their eyes letting out expressions of wild joy.

Chapter 172: The Weight Of His Words!

The Celestial Sealing Demon Diagram was just the first spirit diagram Qin Lie had learned. This diagram was simply the beginning.

While Luo Zhichang, Fang Qi, and Jiang Hao were still drowning amidst great shock and joy, fifteen days later, Qin Lie had dumped yet another spirit tablet onto the trio. “Please look through and check,is this the Nine Winding River Diagram?”

Luo Zhichang trembled and grabbed the spirit tablet lightly. After going through it for a few seconds, he shook greatly and cried out, “Yes! This is the Nine Winding River Diagram!”

Fang Qi and Jiao Hao were equally shocked.

Qin Lie nodded indifferently and retracted his gaze from the spirit pattern pillar. With that, he looked towards the third pillar.

Twenty days later, beside a mountain heap of scrapped spirit tablets and shattered jade stones, Qin Lie threw out yet another spirit tablet with bird patterns on its surface. “Check out this one.”

“Soaring Sky Birds Diagram! It’s the Soaring Sky Birds Diagram!” Luo Zhichang was mad with joy as if he had just received a wonderful treasure.

Seventeen days later, Qin Lie threw out yet another spirit tablet.

“Check out this one as well.”

“Radiant Galaxy Diagram! It’s the Radiant Galaxy Diagram!” Luo Zhichang trembled all over.

……

Today Armament Sect’s Sect Master Ying Xingran had come to the plaza as well.

“Masters, how is Qin Bing’s progress?” Ying Xingran’s expression was tired. His face was riddle with exhaustion, but his eyes were filled with expectations.

“Have a look yourself.” Luo Zhichang stroked his white beard, chuckled, and threw seven spirit tablets over to him.

After freezing for a moment, Ying Xingran accepted the seven spirit tablets and focused his attention on examining their internal magics.

“Celestial Sealing Demon Diagram!”

”Nine Winding River Diagram!”

“Soaring Sky Birds Diagram!”

“Radiant Galaxy Diagram!”

“Hundred Flowers Chainmail Diagram!”

“Ancient Wood Resurrection Diagram!”

“Falling Mansion Diagram!”

Every time he perceived the workings of a spirit tablet Ying Xingran would cry out. His expression grew impossibly excited, and the exhaustion from before was completely swept away.

“Were these all inscribed by him?” Ying Xingran confirmed one final time.

Luo Zhichang nodded smilingly and gave his affirmation, “They are all inscribed by him!”

Ying Xingran sucked in a deep breath with a strange light shining from his eyes. “For him, it will be worth it even if we lose more people!”

The moment he said those words, Luo Zhichang’s expression turned heavy as he finally pulled the conversation to the situation as of late. “How is it?”

Fang Qi and Jiang Hao’s expressions were also serious as they pulled away their gazes from Qin Lie and looked deeply at Ying

Xingran.

"It's not optimistic."

Ying Xingran's expression was dark, "Recently, the spirit artifacts cargos that we've sent to all Armament Pavilions have been intercepted by Dark Shadow Tower. We have lost thirty six men and lost seven Profound Grade One spirit artifacts, fifteen Common Grade Seven spirit artifacts, thirty five..."

He outlined Armament Sect's losses as of late in detail.

The three great reverends' eyes had all turned cold.

"Many foreign delegates who come in and out of Armament City have also been attacked. Dark Shadow Tower's men should've arrived outside the city already," Ying Xingran added.

"It's best if we don't venture outside for the moment," Luo Zhichang said solemnly.

"Tell the inner and outer sect disciples not to go outside and look for spirit materials for now. Do not send spirit artifacts to the Armament Pavilions either. Also, have Lang Xie prepare and look out for as many Dark Shadow Tower bases outside the city as possible and destroy them first, so we can force Dark Shadow Tower to keep sending people over," Fang Qi said.

"It will definitely not be easy for us to attack Dark Shadow

Tower's headquarters. We can only force them to come to us," Jiang Hao interrupted.

"That is also Lang Xie's opinion," Ying Xingran nodded.

"Dark Shadow Tower is good at killing people in all sorts of situations, and they are very good at using complex terrains. Their headquarters is even more heavily guarded and have death traps and obstacles setup everywhere. To attack them will only do more harm than good." He continued, "Lang Xie also wants Dark Shadow Tower's tower lord to attack us. Let them gather their men and lose them continuously so we can slowly attract their attention of their higher-ups."

"Dark Tower has also moved?" Luo Zhichang asked.

"Yes," Ying Xingran answered.

"Di Shijiu is even more difficult than Liang Yangzu. We will have to be more careful if he has joined in as well." Fang Qi's expression was heavy.

"As long as Qin Bing is fine, tens of years later, Armament Sect's structure will definitely be changed!" Ying Xingran exclaimed resolutely while touching the seven spirit tablets in his hands. "Even if every great force has joined their powers to attack Armament City, it will be worth investing all our wealth and manpower on him, let alone just Dark Shadow Tower!"

“Don’t worry, Dark Shadow Tower will definitely not fight us to the death.” Luo Zhichang laughed coldly, “It’s not like his son was the one who died. He will definitely not throw everything away and go crazy and commit everything. Even Liang Yangzu would not sacrifice Shadow Tower just for his one son.”

“The reason they wanted revenge was for us to give in. They want to force us to give a justification for Liang Shaoyang’s death.” Ying Xingran nodded, “I know what they want.”

“Take a look at this spirit tablet.” It was at this moment when Qin Lie opened his mouth from beneath another spirit pattern pillar and flung over a spirit tablet.

Ying Xingran extended a hand out to grab it and focused his mind to sense before yelling, “Six Cycle Bewitching Diagram!”

Luo Zhichang and the three great reverends were moved once more.

This time the inscription of the spirit diagram only took six days. This meant that Qin Lie’s understanding of the spirit diagrams inside the spirit pattern pillar was getting faster and faster.

This also meant that Qin Lie’s recognition of spirit diagrams was growing deeper as well. He should have digested all the experiences from before completely.

“Good job!” Luo Zhichang yelled loudly.

Qin Lie stood up and said towards Jiang Hao while shaking his neck and moving his limbs, “I want something to eat. Something that recovers stamina, spirit energy, and soul consciousness. I need them all.”

“I’ll arrange someone to prepare them immediately.” Jiang Hao yelled out, “Cheng Ping!”

Not far away, Cheng Ping answered once, “I’ll get it done right now!”

Qin Lie calmed down his mind and stood at the plaza looking at the surroundings. He stared at the scenery of Flame Volcano to relax his mind, eyes, and tightened nerves.

A figure suddenly entered his vision from far away. It was a group of outer sect foreign delegates that were casually dressed.

Those foreign delegates had walked out of Tong Jihua’s place and were just heading outside through Armament Sect’s entrance.

Many of them had joyful looks as if they had achieved some kind of objective. There were also those who had dim looks as if their hopes had been dashed.

Among them Qin Lie saw a familiar figure—it was Han Qingrui.

“Brother Han, stop being dejected. You were just unlucky this time. Maybe you’ll get lucky in the future.” A thin and tall martial practitioner beside Han Qingrui consoled him, not-so-wholeheartedly, barely holding back the joy in his eyes.

Han Qingrui bitterly laughed and shook his head. “I’m afraid I don’t have the time to wait for the future.”

The main duty of Armament Sect’s foreign delegates was to help Armament Sect transport spirit artifacts to each Armament Pavilion. They were to help Armament Sect to seek out specific spirit materials, head to various large forces to purchase rare spirit stones and metals, patrol inside and outside the city to relieve some of the burden from Blood Spear, or perform some jobs for inner sect disciples such as running errands and so on.

The status of an outer sect foreign delegate could not be compared even to an outer sect disciple. They had to listen to an outer sect elder’s arrangements and dispatches.

After leaving Nebula Pavilion, Han Qingrui and Kang Hui had arrived at Armament Sect to work as their foreign delegates under Pan Jueming’s recommendation.

Previously, they had been responsible in assisting Armament Sect with escorting some special spirit materials between the surrounding great forces and run some errands and odd jobs.

They had hoped to enter Armament City and find a place to stay inside the city, and also had hoped that they would gain Tong

Jihua's favor.

This wish had grown more urgent after Armament Sect and Dark Shadow Tower had soured their relationship.

This was because many outer sect foreign delegates that were operating outside the city had gradually returned with news of their demise in the wild. Everyone knew that it was Dark Shadow Tower who killed them, and they knew that Dark Shadow Tower's assassins were powerful.

Blood Spear had not mobilized yet. These Dark Shadow Tower assassins were everywhere outside the city, and this caused the outer sect foreign delegates to be terrified and grow increasingly anxious.

Just now, Tong Jihua had summoned these outer sect foreign delegates to have part of them retreat into the city. They would no longer have to perform duties outside.

There were also a portion who would continue to operate outside the city as bait so they could lure Dark Shadow Tower's martial practitioners to attempt to kill them in cooperation with Blood Spear martial practitioners to uncover the bases outside Dark Shadow Tower.

Han Qingrui was unlucky, and he would go out of the city to perform an additional duty as bait.

Kang Hui, Han Feng, and Kang Zhi, plus those subordinates that had left Nebula Pavilion with them would join him to face this danger together.

Han Qingrui was very anxious. This was because he knew that this trip would be extremely dangerous. He had a bad feeling about it.

That was why he looked terrible. No matter how the people around him consoled him, the worry on his face would not fade.

“Elder Cheng, please come over for a second,” Qin Lie suddenly beckoned.

Cheng Ping was just about to order some food for Qin Lie when he heard him and froze. He hadn’t gotten very far yet, so he looked to Ying Xingran for instructions.

“If he asks for you, then go!” Ying Xingran said impatiently.

Therefore, Cheng Ping arrived beside Qin Lie and smiled, “What business do you have looking for me?”

“What’s going on over there?” Qin Lie pointed at the outer sect foreign delegates heading outside.

Cheng Ping knew about this matter very well, so when he heard his question, he began to explain to Qin Lie the circumstances they currently faced in detail. He told him that Tong Jihua had just

arranged those people's future.

Qin Lie listened seriously, and after Cheng Ping had finished, he suddenly pointed at Han Qingrui and said, "I do not wish for that person wearing gray clothes with worry all over his face and the people around him to come into harm. I want him to stay alive."

"You know him?" Cheng Ping asked surprised.

Qin Lie stayed quiet.

Cheng Ping glanced at him once and did not ask any further. He nodded and said, "A small matter." He then retreated.

Not long after, Cheng Ping had caught up with the departing group of foreign delegates and coughed in front of the crowd.

All the outer sect foreign delegates including Han Qingrui bowed respectfully the moment he appeared and said in unison, "Elder Cheng."

Cheng Ping nodded and pointed at Han Qingrui amidst the crowd, "What is your name?"

"Han Qingrui."

"Alright. Han Qingrui, from now on, your current mission will be made invalid. You will bring your men over tomorrow morning.

I have a task to gather information inside the city to pass onto you. Oh, also, I will arrange a new place for you to stay. If you guys were staying outside the city, then you will move inside the city in the future," Cheng Ping said casually.

Han Qingrui's expression quaked once as a disbelieving light shone out of his eyes. He said excitedly, "Elder Cheng, why me?"

Everyone knew the meaning behind his words.

They all knew that with Cheng Ping's words, Han Qingrui and the people around him would immediately be freed from the fate of becoming bait and would be able to live safely inside the city.

—This was the treatment that every foreign delegate who was responsible as bait wanted at the moment.

"What kind of luck has befallen Old Han?" Every outer sect foreign delegate was in doubt.

"There is a benefactor who wishes to protect you, which is why it'll be hard even if you want to die," Cheng Ping smiled.

"Benefactor. Which benefactor?" Han Qingrui cried out softly as incredible color began to appear on his face. It was the color of joy of a man who had just escaped danger.

"The person whose words carry the most weight in Armament Sect at the moment." Cheng Ping gazed over these outer sect

foreign delegates and looked in the direction of the plaza far away before saying, “His words carry even more weight than the sect master’s own words right now. Who do you think your benefactor is?”

Chapter 173: Turn Of The Tides

Three months later, it was late autumn, and the weather slowly turned cold.

Beneath Flame Volcano, the plaza where twelve spirit pattern pillars were situated was still locked down.

Other than the personnel that normally catered to Qin Lie's needs and Jiang Hao ,who brought him various spirit medicine and spirit tablets, all the other disciple, whether they were in the inner sect or outer sect, were strictly forbidden from taking even a step inside.

Sect Master Ying Xingran and three great reverends often took turns to check in on Qin Lie's progress.

For the past three months, Armament Sect and Dark Shadow Tower's clashes had become more and more frequent. Dark Shadow Tower's Dark Tower and Shadow Tower experts continuously appeared outside Armament City to rob and kill all Armament Sect members who went in and out Armament City.

Armament Sect and Dark Shadow Tower's conflicts caused a lot of martial practitioners from small forces who had come to Armament City for business to grow wary about entering the city.

Only the four great forces, Dark Asura Hall, Seven Fiends Valley, Cloud Sky Mountain, and Purple Mist Sea dared to continue trading as normal with Armament Sect with even with Dark

Shadow Tower patrolling outside the city.

Because Dark Shadow Tower's martial practitioners had appeared frequently outside Armament City, this directly caused how often spirit artifacts were transported to each Armament Pavilion to become less frequent, to the point where it even completely stopped at the end.

This directly affected Armament Sect's business and caused their income to decrease greatly.

Ying Xingran's health was growing worse as of late, and many leaders of the great forces had guessed that he only had a few years left.

Some of these people were worried for Armament Sect's state. There were also some people who were quietly gloating and could not wait for Armament Sect to decline so they could divide their artificers amongst themselves.

"Xingran, you should stop visiting for a while and rest properly. Don't worry too much."

On the plaza Jiang Hao sighed softly at the bottom of his heart when he saw Ying Xingran coming over once more. He advised him in hopes that he would pay more attention to his body and not overwork himself.

"There are too many troublesome matters, and this is the only

place I can grow excited, watching him learn the spirit pattern pillars one after another."

Ying Xingran stared at Qin Lie with a somewhat bitter smile on his face. He suddenly said, "I may not last three years."

Jiang Hao grew quiet. After a long time, he shook his head and sighed, "You are too obsessed with artifact forging and did not spent a more time in the martial way, so your realm could never increase, causing both your body and soul to fail to ascend, hence the damage to your mind and soul can never be really healed. Sigh..."

No matter how high an artificer's attainment, if their mind and soul were severely damaged, then they would not be able to recover through artifacts.

Only by breaking through to the next realm or acquiring a huge breakthrough in the martial way could one's soul become strong and be able to fight against the damage to one's mind and soul.

Ying Xingran had spent his entire life on artifact forging and never really spent much time to study the martial way. This caused his realm to be at the latter stage of the Manifestation Realm only, and he was never able to break through the final obstacle to enter the Netherpassage Realm.

This was also why even Jiang Hao could do nothing after he damaged his mind and soul.

“Mn, it’s too late for me, but I will learn from this lesson.” Ying Xingran’s eyes were gloomy. It was as if a sliver of life would be detached from his body everyday. He looked at Qin Lie and said, “If I’m dead, then I’m dead. It’s not like I’m of much use anyway even when I’m alive right now. But I will have Lang Xie teach him personally after Qin Bing has completely learned all of the spirit diagrams, so he may have an exceptional achievement in the martial way.”

Jiang Hao nodded his head, “Sigh. If you would’ve known this earlier, you will not have fallen to your current state.”

Ying Xingran’s expression was downcast as he shook his head with a bitter smile. He also felt regret in his heart.

While the duo was speaking, Qin Lie closed his eyes and sat straight beneath the spirit pattern pillar inscribed with the wondrous scene of the ancient world. He was sensing it with his soul consciousness.

There was a floor of discarded spirit tablets and many shattered jade bottles scattered beside him.

For the past three months he had long since successfully inscribed the remaining three spirit diagrams onto the spirit tablets.

After the Dragon Snake Coiling Sky Diagram, Three Disciplines Four Divisions Diagram, and Yin Yang Intersection Diagram were inscribed, he had failed his first attempt when he tried to break

into the last spirit pattern pillar. He then temporarily put down the task and began reinscribing the eleven spirit diagrams from before.

He had truly used all he had to learn the diagrams and inscribed them countless times, carving them deep into his mind so he could recall them whenever necessary.

This process had taken him more than two months.

Only then did he focus on the last spirit diagram and attempt to break through it once more.

“This is already the last spirit pattern pillar, but why is it that I can never enter inside. It should be unlocked already...” Feeling unsure, he once again copied the ancient glyphs with his soul consciousness and attacked the interior of the pillar.

“Bang!”

As if slamming into a thick membrane, his soul consciousness was bounced back. His head had also hurt suddenly.

“Not working, it’s still not working! It seems like there’s a seal inside, and it feels a little similar to the enchantment inside the Soul Suppressing Orb.” He opened his eyes and stared at the final spirit pattern pillar. “Even if I can unlock it, I still have to break through the barrier. This requires a certain level of soul energy. Perhaps the spirit diagram inside the spirit pattern pillar here is a

little special, and only a strong soul can fathom it. That's why there is this additional obstacle..."

He could only console himself this way.

For the past three days he had been continuously attacking it, attempting to enter into the world in the final spirit pattern pillar, but failed continuously.

No matter how much soul consciousness he accumulated or if he was in tip top condition, he was unable to breach the world inside the pillar with his soul to see the final spirit diagram.

He finally understood that it was because his realm wasn't high enough and his soul wasn't strong enough.

And so, he had no choice but to give up.

He stood up and walked to Ying Xingran and Jiang Hao's side. Under their astonished gazes he said, "I'm done here."

"You're done?" Jiang Hao looked dumbfounded. "But you haven't inscribed the spirit diagram inside the final spirit pattern pillar and passed it to me to be checked yet?"

Surprisingly, Yin Xingran didn't mind it. "Eleven spirit diagrams. Originally, we had only mastered six of them, but thanks to you, we now have five more spirit diagrams to use. The last diagram really is hard... so it's fine to give up temporarily.

Maybe you'll find your fortune in the future and be able to learn it then."

Jiang Hao also smiled and said, "I have been too greedy."

"It's not that I can't learn it, but that I can't enter it. My realm isn't high enough." Qin Lie frowned and explained solemnly, "The last spirit pattern pillar has an enchantment inside, and I need sufficient soul energy to be able to break through it. My cultivation of the martial way is only at the Natal Opening Realm after all."

The moment he said this, Ying Xingran and Jiang Hao understood what he meant and grew even more relaxed.

"No worries, as long as you're willing to stay at Armament Sect, you have nothing to worry about your Realm at all. Spirit medicine, precious treasures, and all kinds of spirit arts will be open to you! Moreover, you are already able to comprehend a concept by yourself and can cause a world changing phenomenon with it. Your talent in the martial way is just as outstanding as your talent in artifact forging, so why would you need to worry about ascending your realm?"

Qin Lie nodded, "Alright."

Ying Xingran finally relaxed as a smile bloomed on his face as he said, "Follow me. I will lead you to the back of the mountain to Blood Spear's cultivation area. Lang Xie is also coincidentally around today, he wants to teach you personally."

“Lang Xie?” Qin Lie looked slightly dumbfounded.

“Heh heh, you know him. Once you see him, you’ll understand,” Jiang Hao also smiled.

Therefore, the plaza that had been locked down for almost seven months had finally been reopened. The twelve spirit pattern pillars had also returned to their original state.

Armament Sect’s outer and inner sect disciples who bore thoughts about the spirit pattern pillars could finally enter this place. They could also take the opportunity to learn the wonders of the spirit pattern pillars, seeing if the magics on the spirit pattern pillar would be easier to decipher after the huge change Qin Lie had wrought.

Even Lian Rou, Pang Shishi, Pan Xuan, and the rest of the inner sect disciples had hurried over after hearing that it had been opened.

They also wanted catch some of Qin Lie’s glory and learn something from the spirit pattern pillar so they could increase their own recognition of the spirit diagrams.

Yi Yuan was also mixed amidst the crowd, looking inside at the surface of a spirit pattern pillar with Ouyang Jingjing and a bunch of outer sect disciples surrounding it.

“Yi Yuan, I heard that you are quite familiar with Qin Bing?” The

normally arrogant Ouyang Jingjing talked to Yi Yuan on her own.

"Mn, in the past we were quite okay, but I'm not sure how it is now." Yi Yuan smiled gently, "You also know that Qin Bing's status in the sect is incomparable to anyone else's right now. I can't say if he'll still treat me as his friend like in the past either. Why bring this up?"

"I have a friend who'll be coming to Armament City in a while. She will bring her two juniors to look for an artificer at Armament Sect to help forge two tailor-made spirit artifacts." Ouyang Jingjing appeared a bit embarrassed. "As you know, the sect is recently in conflict with Dark Shadow Tower. The outer sect is busy dealing with Dark Shadow Tower and the inner sect elders are busy working with Qin Lie to convert the new spirit diagrams he had learned into the sect's secret scriptures. They may not have much time..."

"It's Lu Li and the Ling Family sisters, is it?"

Yi Yuan was very familiar with the latest news from all the large forces, so after he revealed that he understood the meaning behind her words, he said, "I know that your relationship with Dark Fiend Valley's Lu Li is quite good. But at this time, there's probably no one in the sect who has the energy to deal with such trivial matters."

"That's why I'm asking you to help me bring it up to Qin Bing. I believe that if he gives the word, then this matter will definitely succeed." Ouyang Jingjing begged, "The task is mainly to help the Ling Family sisters to forge artifacts. I had agreed to help Lu Li a

long time ago, but I didn't expect the sect to come into conflict with Dark Shadow Tower, you know?"

"What can you give me?" Yi Yuan narrowed his eyes, "I definitely won't help you for free."

"Lian Rou's family isn't far away from our Profound Fiend Valley and is close to Dark Fiend Valley as well. We have two mines that originally belonged to Senior Lian Rou's family," Ouyang Jingjing's voice lifted slightly.

On the other side, Lian Rou's figure shook slightly and she abruptly looked over.

Ouyang Jingjing pursed her lips and smiled.

Lian Rou sucked in a breath and moved away from the area where the inner sect disciples were gathered on her own. She arrived next to Ouyang Jingjing and seriously asked, "Jingjing, you're saying that if Qin Bing agrees to help and ask the inner sect elders to help forge artifacts for the Ling Family sisters, then you will then concede the mines that your family has seized from us?"

"You can't call it seizing, can you?" Ouyang Jingjing's expression was cunning. "You're the ones who discovered the spirit mines, sure, but those two locations originally belonged to us in the first place. We're just taking them back per normal."

"Let's talk about those things later. I'm asking you if you're

serious—do you really have the authority to make such a deal?!" Lian Rou exclaimed softly.

"If I didn't, then I wouldn't have brought it up," Ouyang Jingjing proudly claimed.

"Yi Yuan! Go and deal with Qin Bing!" exclaimed Lian Rou in a clear cut manner as she suddenly glared at Yi Yuan after a moment of thought.

Chapter 174: Blood Pool Body Refinement

The woods behind Armament Sect were shrouded in clouds of blood.

There were pools of blood of various sizes divided among the parts of the forest. The blood in the pools was thick as they bubbled and produced a noxious bloody mist.

There were martial practitioners of different cultivation stages in each pool of blood. There were males and females, and gender didn't seem to matter.

Under the guidance of Ying Xingran, Qin Lie stepped into Bloody Spear's high-level grounds and was shocked by the pervasive stench of blood.

The expressions of everyone in the pools were terrifyingly twisted as they resisted the corrosion of the blood as their eyes exuded lunacy.

Many martial practitioners in blood-colored robes were laughing strangely with cruel smiles on their faces.

When they found that Ying Xingran had come in, these people suppressed their expressions of cruelty and became respectful. They bowed, "Greetings, Sect Master."

"I'm looking for Lang Xie," Ying Xingran said simply.

“Sire is inside,” a person respectfully answered, bowing and leading Ying Xingran and Qin Lie deeper.

Along the way, many Blood Spear martial practitioners and the people in the pools of blood showed shock when they saw Qin Lie here.

This person quickly led Ying Xingran and Qin Lie to a place filled with white bones. This was deep in the woods, and shattered bones littered the area. Some skeletons were transparent and glowing, and others still had splotches of blood on them.

At this time, a Rank Three Metal Wing Golden Horn Lizard was trapped in a cage and had just been stabbed to death by two Blood Spear martial practitioners.

Blood swelled from the abdomen of that Metal Wing Golden Horn Lizard and flowed into a large wooden bucket. The large bucket was filled with thick blood that gave off a strong and nauseating odor.

At the side, there were six pools of blood. Each pool of blood was the size of a room.

The two Blood Spear martial practitioners that were bleeding out the lizard would change buckets once a large bucket was filled and pour the bright blood into one of the pools.

When the blood inside the pools came into contact with Rank Three spirit beast blood, it gave off astonishing heat as though it was boiling water.

Lang Xie was silently sitting between the six pools of blood.

Beside him was someone else that Qin Lie was familiar with—Feng Rong

Qin Lie had seen Feng Rong at Mo Hai's bamboo house before. Unlike the other females that were naked, Feng Rong was wearing skin-hugging leather clothing as she was immersed in one of the pools and seemed to be cultivating.

At this time she heard the steps of Ying Xingran and Qin Lie as they came closer and opened her eyes.

"Greetings, Sect Master, Greetings... Future Sect Master," Feng Rong smiled at Qin Lie.

"Lang Xie, I've brought him to you," Ying Xingran shouted in a low voice.

Lang Xie finally opened his eyes. He bowed towards Ying Xingran and then looked deeply at Qin Lie.

A thick, blood-thirsty aura suddenly swept over Qin Lie like a flooding river!

The terrifying aura seemed to take over the world. Qin Lie's eyes showed shock, and he felt like he was within the bloody maw of a vicious beast and terrified like he was situated in an endless sea of blood.

Forcibly suppressing the shaking of his body, Qin Lie used his resilient strength of mind to channel his Frost Arts and used the frost concept to resist the aura's impact.

Ice quickly formed over his body. His eyes became silvery white, and his face became expressionless as he displayed his absolute cold and emotionless state.

Yet the vicious aura and the noxious bloody tang seemed to pass through his body and straight into his mind and the deepest part of his soul

It seemed that no matter how he tried to defend or resist, he would be corroded in mind and body by the waves of blood and become a pile of bones.

He tried to focus his mind and form layers of defenses inside his mind to try his best to resist the attack from the bloody presence as he painfully fought back...

Suddenly, the bloody and vicious presence that had instantly flooded over him retreated like the tide and instantly disappeared.

Qin Lie's entire body was frozen as though he had gone through centuries of torture. Concentrating his mind, he found that the his blood was not flowing smoothly, his limbs had gone numb, and his body was completely exhausted.

He looked with shock at Lang Xie and thought, "So powerful!"

Just the intrusion of a single wisp of blood energy made him unable to resist, as though he was drowning in an endless sea of blood and was unable to break free.

This feeling of terror caused him to recognize his weakness and understand that his present strength and cultivation realm was nothing in front of someone who was truly strong.

"Lang Xie, how is he? Am I right?" Feng Rong asked with a smile.

"Not bad?" Lang Xie nodded and then pointed at one of the pools of blood nearby. He ordered Qin Lie, "Strip bare and soak in that blood pool."

"Bare?" Qin Lie raised an eyebrow.

Lang Xie nodded indifferently.

Feng Rong giggled and then said teasingly as she covered her mouth, "I've stayed for more than three decades in Blood Spear and have seen too many naked bodies. You won't have something extra that no one else doesn't, so don't be embarrassed and just

listen to his orders.”

Qin Lie looked at Ying Xingran.

Ying Xingran appeared awkward. “Don’t look at me. At the rear of the mountain below the blood clouds, even I listen to Lang Xie.”

Qin Lie did not speak and stripped out of his clothing in front of everyone. Before they could react, he jumped into the pool of blood that Lang Xie had pointed to.

“Glug glug!”

The blood inside the pool of blood suddenly boiled. It also rippled as it released astounding heat.

“Mn?” Qin Lie’s expression changed slightly.

The blood entered all the pores in his body and suddenly became billions of small insects that chewed on his flesh and drank the blood inside his body, causing him to feel sore all over, making him felt like he was being slowly consumed.

The sore pain was weak in the beginning and gradually deepened. After several minutes, Qin Lie felt as though billions of insects had entered his bones and vessels and had started chewing on his organs. There wasn’t a place on his body that he didn’t feel pain.

His brow was tightly creased. Under the eyes of Lang Xie, Feng Rong, and Ying Xingran, he silently experienced the enormous pain his body felt, but his eyes did not change.

Pain of this degree was much weaker than the thunder from the Ninth Heaven.

With his Heavenly Thunder Sacred Body, it was not a very difficult matter to tolerate pain of this degree.

Especially when he felt that there seemed to be some kind of heat inside the blood when he was experiencing the pain that was being slowly absorbed by his flesh.

He quickly understood that this blood was very beneficial for him.

So he had no worries and focused his mind to have his physical body take in more of this beneficial fluid from the blood.

“What is the thickness of the spirit blood in this pool? What level of martial practitioners is it for?” Ying Xingran observed for a while and suddenly inquired.

Because he found that, as time passed, Lang Xie and Feng Rong’s gazes gradually turned to looks of slight surprise as they looked at Qin Lie.

“The spirit blood thickness is not high, it is for the late stages of

the Natal Opening Realm, for new entrants like Pang Feng and Yi Yuan," Feng Rong explained.

Ying Xingran was shocked. "It has not been diluted?"

"No." Feng Rong shook her head and said seriously, "No dilution, I didn't adjust the thickness of the spirit blood for him. Pang Feng and Yi Yuan had come here nine days ago. Yi Yuan had cried and wailed in this pool of blood while Pang Feng underwent this without a sound."

"Pang Feng comes from Cloud Sky Mountain and practices the Golden Stone Art. It emphasizes the refinement of the body, so how can Qin Bing compare to him?"

Ying Xingran's expression suddenly changed as he shouted, "Qin Bing! Don't push yourself! The blood in the pools are primarily composed of spirit beast blood and has been mixed with more than seventy types of medicinal liquids. It can rapidly strengthen the body, but it is not something that an average person can quickly adjust to. It's better if you go slowly!"

"Come out," Lang Xie said.

Qin Lie was slightly unwilling, but he still walked out from the pool and stood naked in front of him.

Ying Xingran sighed in relief.

“I underestimated you,” Lang Xie said. “It is not suitable for you to use pools with low spirit blood thickness. Go to that pool.”

He once again pointed to a pool that was even brighter.

Before Ying Xingran could shout in shock, Qin Lie jumped again into the pool that Lang Xie pointed at.

When he entered the pool, enormous pain that was more than three times stronger swept through his body almost instantaneously!

That terrifying pain caused Qin Lie to feel as though there were wild beasts tearing at his flesh and that he was about to be torn shreds and swallowed in pieces.

Qin Lie’s pupils contracted. He took a deep breath and forcibly suppressed the wail that was going to come out of his mouth.

Blood pools with more spirit blood held even more heat in the blood. The threads that contained a strange power burrowed into his bones, muscles, veins, and organs.

He could feel a fiery piercing pain and the discomfort of his heart and lungs, but he also had a wondrous feeling of being nurtured.

He started to grit his teeth and endure. Just as though he was cultivating Heavenly Thunder Eradication, he had a serious attitude and tried to use his mental strength to resist the piercing

pain within his body.

Time passed in seconds.

Ying Xingran's face was dark as he switched between looking at Qin Lie and Lang Xie. He said, "I've given him to you, but I feel you can treat him with kindness. I do not want any accidents to happen to him!"

"Sect Master's body is becoming increasingly weak, and your tolerance is becoming weak with it. If Sect Master cannot maintain your peace of mind, please return to the sect." Feng Rong's tone was concerned as she said sincerely, "Do not worry, I will look after him. Nothing will happen, I guarantee it."

"Give him to you?" Ying Xingran's expression changed, "Instructor Feng! Has the number of people who died in your hands been a small number? If you did not change your personality suddenly and got close to A'Hai, there would be even more these trainees that would die under your watch!"

Feng Rong giggled, "I'm different now. I rarely dose trainees with strong medicines anymore. Also, those that died under my training were picked from the delegates. Since Sect Master doesn't care about their lives, in order to quickly pick out the people most suitable for Blood Spear, we can't do anything about a few people dying."

"But Qin Bing definitely cannot be under your care!" Ying Xingran snorted coldly. He clearly did not believe Feng Rong's

guarantee.

"Qin Bing, come out." At this time, Lang Xie spoke again and pointed at another pool of blood. He said, "Try this one. This time, do not force yourself. If you can't bear it, you can jump out without needing any permission from me."

Once these words were spoken, Feng Rong and Ying Xingran's expressions both changed. Even the expressions of the two Blood Spear martial practitioners that were bleeding out spirit beast blood had changed.

Before they could react, Qin Lie shouted and jumped into the pool of blood that Lang Xie was pointing at.

Chapter 175: The Body As The Artifact!

“ARGH!”

The moment Qin Lie fell into the pool of blood, he instantly let out a terribly shrill scream. It was like the cries of a dying wild beast, struggling defiantly against its fate.

“Glub glub! Glub glub”

Blood bubbles the size of fists popped up continuously from inside the pool. They quickly popped as wisps of thick crimson mist also spread out.

The thick stench of blood spread around the pool, causing the air they breathed in to feel as if it was mixed with blood foams.

Qin Lie’s entire body had turned red as his muscles shook continuously. Green veins popped on his neck, forehead, and arms, causing him to look extremely hideous and terrifying.

“AAAO!”

Like a demonic beast at the final end of its ropes, Qin Lie roared madly while a breathtaking blood red appeared within the deep ends of his pupils. It was like a man devouring demon who was peeking into the human land from the depths of hell.

“What’s this?” Ying Xingran stared in shock at Feng Rong.

Feng Rong was also shocked. Under Ying Xingran’s gaze, she said in slight excitement, “This is a pool of blood created specifically for martial practitioners at the middle stage of the Manifestation Realm! The density of spirit blood is incredibly high. Normally speaking, only those who are at the middle stage of the Manifestation realm and have soaked in the previous pools for three to five years would be allowed to cultivate in this type of pool.”

“Then what are you waiting for? Get him out already!” Ying Xingran roared angrily at her and Lang Xie.

“I’ve said it before. If he thinks he can’t take it, then he can walk out himself.” Lang Xie was expressionless. He even ignored Ying Xingran’s orders and simply stared deeply at Qin Lie.

“He’s even slightly stronger than Pang Feng. Not even Pang Feng dared to enter this pool. His powerful body was tempered by the Golden Stone Art, but even he could not hang on for more than a moment. Pang Feng was the most talented person among this group of newbies too. This Qin Bing is even scarier than I had imagined,” Feng Rong thought quietly.

“If anything happens to him, then Armament Sect will not have a future!” Ying Xingran was as anxious as he was on fire.

Lang Xie continued to stay silent.

Feng Rong also pretended that she didn't hear him.

Qin Lie was now experiencing the most terrifying tempering in his life as he resisted the pool of blood's terrifying corrosion with his body.

He felt as if he had been thrown into a pool of lava and was being drowned by the volcano's turbulent magma. The heat inside these boiling pools of blood was enough to instantly cook a normal person and would melt any metal or stone which had low melting points.

There was even an unspeakable corrosive power inside the terrifying heat. This very power could seep right into a person's flesh and blood.

He could clearly feel that the fibers in his flesh and cells were swiftly decomposing, as if there were invisible explosions happening inside his flesh and blood!

Amidst this faint-inducing pain was also another warm energy that would restructure his cells and join them back together after the corrosion and explosions...

His consciousness slowly blurred, and he had the very strange feeling that he was first being smashed into smithereens by a massive hammer or grinded to dust by a huge mountain. Then, he was reformed and glued back together bit by bit.

After that, he would then be smashed to smithereens again before being pieced back together once more.

Again and again.

This kind of pain was much more terrifying, much more frightening than being struck by thunder and lightning!

That was why he was constantly crying out in pain and roaring at the top of his lungs. That was why he was giving it everything he got!

“Soul shift!”

As his mind worked, wisps of his soul consciousness turned into beams of light that fell into the Soul Suppressing Orb like meteors.

He had entered the state of Thoughtless Tranquility.

Pain continued to shoot from every bone, every nerve and every piece of flesh and blood inside his body. Even in the state of Thoughtless Tranquility it was as if he could still feel that unforgettable pain.

However, compared to before his resistance against pain had increased massively.

His soul was at a strange state. To be able to look at his body with

his mind and greatly decrease his sensory towards his body was the magic of Thoughtless Tranquility. This was also the key to his success in cultivating Heavenly Thunder Eradication.

His bloodcurdling cries gradually calmed down as he entered the state of Thoughtless Tranquility.

Ying Xingran, who had been tense this entire time, was afraid that Qin Lie would be burned alive. He suddenly turned deathly pale when he saw that Qin Lie had turned quiet. “Has, has he lost it?” Ying Xingran’s gaze immediately turned into one of complete disbelief and terror as if a demon was about to be unleashed from inside him. His emotions were clearly going to go out of control.

“He’s fine.” Lang Xie was also surprised on the inside as he took the initiative and answered, “He has gotten used to this blood pool.”

“Gotten used to it?” Ying Xingran looked dumbfounded.

Lang Xie nodded under Feng Rong and Ying Xingran’s shocked gazes and responded, “Not only does he learn incredibly quickly, even the tempering of his body is equally outstanding. Even Pang Feng is two or three levels weaker compared to him.”

After having paused for a moment, Lang Xie exclaimed solemnly, “Sect Master, if you’re willing to give him to me, in fifteen years at the latest, he’ll be able to take over Blood Spear from me. In thirty years, he will exceed me with a seventy percent chance of breaking through to the Fulfillment Realm!”

Feng Rong and the two Blood Spear martial practitioners suddenly looked at Qin Lie with incredibly passionate gazes after hearing that.

“Give him to you?” Ying Xingran humphed coldly, “Don’t even think about it!”

“His talent in artifact forging has exceeded even the founding sect master several times over! He is a person who can truly lead Armament Sect to become a Copper force. It is practically a reckless waste of God’s gifts for him to waste his efforts on the martial way!”

Once finished, Ying Xingran had waved his sleeves and left. He did not give Lang Xie the opportunity to persuade him.

“It’s nearly impossible for you to get Qin Bing,” Feng Rong suddenly said.

Lang Xie frowned, “There’s no one more suitable than him to take over Blood Spear. Not even Pang Feng or Yi Yuan will be enough. This can be seen from the fact that he was willing to ignore all risks to kill Liang Shaoyang.”

“The sect master won’t give him to you,” Feng Rong said again.

Lang Xie nodded and did not discuss this topic any further. “Liang Yangzu should have arrived outside the city. I will go out

for a moment while you watch over Qin Bing."

"No problem," Feng Rong gladly replied.

With that, Lang Xie left.

"Both of you, go get a fresh bucket of Metal Wing Golden Horn Lizard spirit blood and add it into Qin Bing's pool. Lang Xie had just left, and Feng Rong was already cheerfully ordering the two Blood Spear martial practitioners about.

The duo's faces changed slightly as one of them asked, "Won't that be an overdose?"

"He won't die, I'm here aren't I? Stop wasting time!" Feng Rong's expression turned cold and the color of blood slowly appeared in her eyes. Her temperament had changed unexpectedly.

"Got it." The two Blood Spear martial practitioners bowed their heads and immediately began working as she had ordered. They didn't dare to speak another word.

A bucket of freshly filled Metal Wing Golden Horn Lizard spirit blood—still hot—was poured right into the pool in which Qin Lie was cultivating. The moment it was poured in, Qin Lie, who was still in the state of Thoughtless Tranquility immediately felt that even his soul had been submerged in terrible pain.

It was like countless golden, metallic needles had stabbed straight

into his mind and deep into his soul.

"Boom!"

Under the great shock, he actually could not hold onto the state of Thoughtless Tranquility. His soul immediately scattered and returned to his body.

Then, a pain twice as terrible as the one before immediately wracked his entire body.

Just as he was about to roar out in pain, Feng Rong cheerfully interrupted, "After observing you for a while, I realized that you actually have not channeled your spirit art to resist the pool of blood's power. It looks like your potential has not been completely unleashed yet, so I had no choice but to add some fire for you."

Qin Lie abruptly reacted.

Spirit art! That's right, he should channel his spirit art to resist this!

With a thought, he first channeled the Frost Arts and cultivated the frost energy inside his ice ball Natal Palace.

"Prak prak prak prak!"

The frost energy seeped out from his pores and continuously

clashed with the bloodwater's energy seeping in from his pores. They actually clashed against each other in a strange manner.

Inside the pool of blood, it was as if Qin Lie had firecrackers strewn on him as explosive sounds rang all over his body. This caused Feng Rong and both blood guards to be shocked.

"Qin Bing, your entire body isn't exploding, is it?" Feng Rong quickly said, "If your innards are also exploding, then... maybe you can stop for a while. You don't need to rush it."

Even she was a little anxious, but her words still revealed the madness in her heart.

The two blood guards' faces couldn't help but twitch a little.

"Who else can survive after their innards have exploded? This is Instructor Feng alright. No wonder she's the only one senior Blood Spear who can stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Sire..." both of them inwardly thought.

"I'm fine, I'm fine!" Inside the pool of blood Qin Lie grit his teeth with a hideous expression before madly channeling his spirit art.

He had switched from his Frost Arts to Heavenly Thunder Eradication.

"Boom boom boom boom boom boom!"

Lightning intersected, and the sounds of thunder rumbling were even more powerful than before!

Every bone in his body was about to explode!

His expression changed as he yet again switched his spirit art from Heavenly Thunder Eradication to Records of Geocentric Magnetism.

The moment the spirit art was channeled, the continuous explosions inside his body immediately calmed down. The turbulent and powerful energy inside the pool had also surprisingly calmed down.

Another immense and turbulent force surged little by little from beneath his feet!

“The power of earth?” Qin Lie thought. He could actually clearly sense the changes going on underground. He could sense a hot aura from it.

His gaze turned to one of shock as he suddenly asked, “What’s beneath this blood pool? Can, can it be that the reason the blood pool is so hot is because there’s fire burning from underneath it?”

“What are you talking about, If there wasn’t fire, then how can the blood pool be so hot?” Feng Rong scorned his ignorance and said in a matter of fact tone, “If the temperature of the bloodwater

isn't high enough, then how can the spirit blood and dozens of medicines and spirit herbs mix together nicely? And you call yourself an artificer, don't you know that, without boiling hot temperature, the energy inside the bloodwater cannot seep into your flesh and bones at all?"

"That's not right! The fire underneath is too great! Th-this is geocentric fire!" Qin Lie was shocked greatly.

He finally understood, through the miraculous reaction of Records of Geocentric Magnetism, what kind of fire was burning underneath the pool of blood.

The earthfire of Flame Volcano was used to heat the furnace and temper spirit artifacts!

And these people actually used it to burn the pools of blood!

No wonder the bloodwater inside the pool was so hot that it was practically unheard of. No wonder even he almost failed to endure it.

"Now you're showing some sensibility. You actually guessed that we're burning the pool of blood with geocentric fire. Hmm, you're not too stupid I guess." Feng Rong chuckled, "This method of tempering a martial practitioner's body with a pool of blood was actually thought up by the sect master a few generations ago.

"In fact, this is also a method of forging artifacts. They're

artificers after all, aren't they?

"The blood pool is just like a furnace, with the geocentric fire as the fire source, your body as the main material, and the spirit blood and tens of medicines and spirit water as the supplement materials. Naturally, the supplement materials are to be merged into the main material, that is to say, they should be absorbed into your flesh and bones inside your body.

Feng Rong let out a very carefree laugh, "Qin Bing, oh Qin Bing. You are also a man who will become an artificer, you can't just forge only artifacts, you know? Won't you regret the rest of your life if you don't try turning your body into an 'artifact' and experience the feeling of being 'forged' by someone else?"

She chuckled, "The reason I have come specifically from A'Hai's place was to leave you no regrets. I have purposely came to 'forge' you."

Qin Lie suddenly had a bad feeling about this.

Chapter 176: Beauties Entering The City

“This is Armament City.”

Lu Li stood at the entrance to the city and looked at the closed gates. Her pretty eyebrows were slightly furrowed.

Ling Yushi wore a long, blue skirt. A light purple ribbon was tied around her thin waist, and her left arm was holding an exquisite beastskin handbag. Her beautiful face looked worn out, and she was looking upwards at the Armament Sect martial practitioners standing on top of the city walls.

Ling Xuanxuan had worn a fiery red leather skirt. The skirt covered only up to her thighs, and her two snow-white legs were shining with an attractive luster.

One of the sisters was simple and elegant, the other hot and lovely. They had attracted the attention of many Armament Sect martial practitioners on top of the city wall after they had appeared at the entrance.

“I am Dark Fiend Valley’s Lu Li. Please open the city gates.” Below, Lu Li’s voice coldly sounded out.

If this was in the past, then none of Armament City’s gates would be closed. All martial practitioners who came would be free to enter.

But since Armament Sect had come into conflict with Dark Shadow Tower and fought against each other frequently outside the city as of late, all the city gates had been closed to prevent Dark Shadow Tower martial practitioners from slipping inside.

Every person who wanted to enter the gate must be inspected closely to verify their identity before they were allowed to enter the city.

“Seven Fiends Valley? What proof do you have?” a person yelled out from above the city gates.

“Proof?” Lu Li’s eyes were cold, “Since when is Armament Sect so cautious? It’s not the first time I’ve come to Armament City, and it was never this troublesome before.”

“I’m sorry, but this is how it is right now.” The martial practitioner above the city wasn’t of Dark Fiend Valley and acted casually.

Lu Li’s expression had turned even colder.

This was the first time Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan had arrived at such a huge city. Their expressions were still a little cautious, and they did not even dare to answer from below.

“Ling Xuanxuan!” It was at this moment a cry came from above the city walls.

Han Qingrui's head popped up as he glanced downwards from above before hurriedly explaining to the people beside him, "I know this girl. She definitely someone from Dark Fiend Valley, there's no mistake."

"You know her, Old Han?" someone cried out.

"Yes, she is Granny Jiu's disciple. Her identity is definitely fine," Han Qingrui answered.

After Han Qingrui escaped danger last time, he had been assigned a new task by Cheng Ping, to get an update of the situation at each of the city's major gates and report back to the sect posthaste.

This was a simple errand and could be done within the city. There would be no risk of danger.

"Elder Han? Are you Elder Han from Nebula Pavilion?" When Ling Xuanxuan suddenly saw Han Qingrui at Armament City from below, she had also become surprised.

"Looks like you really know each other." A person on the city walls smiled and ordered, "Open the door and let them in."

And so, Lu Li, Ling Yushi, and Ling Xuanxuan were finally allowed to enter the city.

"Elder Han, why are you at Armament City?" After Ling Xuanxuan had come in and saw Han Qingrui walking down from

the wall, she hurriedly walked over and asked that.

“It’s hard to explain it all at once,” Han Qingrui smiled bitterly.

“Elder Han. I heard that Qin Lie respects you the most out of everyone back at Nebula Pavilion. Do you know where he is right now?” A gray hue covered Ling Yushi’s bright eyes as she looked at him expectantly. “If you know his whereabouts then please, you must tell me. I just want to see him and know how he’s doing.”

Ever since Qin Lie had gone missing, she had gone against Dark Fiend Valley’s rules and quietly sneaked out of the valley to search around Icestone City and Ling Town for two months.

She had checked out many places that Qin Lie might have showed up and even gone to the natural stone forest outside Icestone City, the Arctic Mountain Range, ventured for a time into the deep forest, and even went to Celestial Wolf Mountain.

After she came back, while she passed by Herb Mountain, she had even attempted to open the cave blocked by rocks.

She thought that Qin Lie would be hiding inside Herb Mountain...

Unfortunately, her realm wasn’t enough, and she did not have the strength to destroy the obstacles. Therefore, she couldn’t enter the sealed part of Herb Mountain.

She had searched everywhere around Ling Town and Icestone City for Qin Lie's whereabouts, but in the end, it was futile.

"No one knows where Qin Lie is. Ever since he left Icestone City with Li Mu, he has gone completely missing. I heard that Dark Asura Hall and other Black Iron forces are also searching for him, but unfortunately, they couldn't find him either," Han Qingrui smiled bitterly.

As of late, he had also used his power to check on this matter since he was responsible for relaying information within the city.

Just like Ling Yushi, he also could not find any information regarding Qin Lie. He slowly gave up as well.

"Don't worry, he'll be fine." Lu Li said indifferently with a cold expression, "That shop owner of Li's Shop could make even Yuan Tianya afraid of going against him. As long as they are cautious and don't look for trouble in the sacred grounds of this continent's two Copper forces, it's almost impossible that they would run into any danger."

"Mn, Qin Lie should be fine. You do not have to worry," Han Qingrui also consoled her.

"Let's go. We will go to Armament Sect's entrance and ask Jingjing about that matter," Lu Li said impatiently.

Ling Xuanxuan was slightly more afraid of her and did not dare

to reminisce about old times with Han Qingrui. She followed behind Lu Li with Ling Yushi beside her, and the trio walked on Armament Sect's streets while looking at the dazzling number of shops on their way to Armament Sect.

Two hours later, the trio arrived at Armament Sect's entrance.

The guards' eyes at the entrance lit up when they saw the three beautiful girls of excellent disposition standing right before them. They immediately turn spirited.

"I want to see Ouyang Jingjing," Lu Li said coldly.

"I'll go and report this." One of them was still rational as he hurriedly headed to the yard.

The rest of the guards chuckled and gazed up and down their bodies wantonly.

Lu Li's expression was cold as she narrowed her eyes and ignored their gazes. Ling Yushi was as elegant and calm as water, standing there leisurely. Ling Xuanxuan had suffered humiliation at Nebula Pavilion's entrance before and didn't dared to say anything. She simply pursed her lips and kept quiet.

After a while Ouyang Jingjing walked over cheerfully and cried out from afar, "Senior Sister Lu, Ling Family's sisters, you're finally here. Come, let's talk inside."

“You can’t.” A guard stopped them at the entrance with an apologetic look. He bowed slightly and explained, “You can talk with them outside, but you cannot take them into the sect. This is the rule set by the elders.”

“They are my friends!” Ouyang Jingjing’s expression turned to one of displeasure.

“You really can’t.” The guard smiled bitterly with a helpless expression, “Even inner sect disciples aren’t allowed to bring their personal friends in and out of the sect as of late.”

“That damnable Qin Bing!” Ouyang Jingjing humphed coldly, “Because of him, the sect rules have changed again and again. In the sect master and three great reverends’ eyes, it’s as if he’s more important than Armament Sect itself!”

“I’m sorry. This is our duty.” The guard bowed.

“Let’s go, we’ll talk outside.” Lu Li herself didn’t mind.

“Give me a moment.” Ouyang Jingjing left behind these words before swiftly entering the inner yard again. She went all the way until a stone building beside the plaza and yelled out beneath Yi Yuan’s building, “Yi Yuan!”

Yi Yuan’s head popped out of the window as he smiled gently, “Yes?”

“My friends are here. How’s that business of yours?” Ouyang Jingjing humphed.

Yi Yuan’s expression turned bitter, “Qin Bing is at Blood Spear’s cultivation land at the back of the mountain. Recently, he hasn’t come out, so I don’t have the time to talk with him.”

“Aren’t you part of Blood Spear as well?” Ouyang Jingjing smiled coldly, “If you can’t get this done soon, then let’s abolish our deal!”

“D-don’t! My dear grandaunt, just give me three more days. Three days later I’ll be able to enter that area and see Qin Bing again. I will definitely treat this matter seriously,” Yi Yuan quickly begged.

“Alright, I’ll give you three more days. Three days later I want to bring them into the sect. Have this arranged as well!”

“I’ll do my best, I’ll do my best to arrange it. Sigh, what a headache, I really don’t want to go to the back of the mountain.

……

Inside a blood pool.

Qin Lie’s entire body was red. Many green veins that were like earthworms twisted and coiled on the surface of his body, causing him to look incredibly hideous.

“Gurgle gurgle!”

The fist-sized blood bubbles exploded as wisps of bloody red air floated to the surface and formed a thick, bloody mist around him.

The immense and heavy energy of the earth mingled with the geocentric flames and emerged from beneath the blood pool. They merged into the bloodwater itself and slowly slipped into his body and his dantian’s spirit sea.

Inside his spirit sea, the earthen-yellow Natal Palace, consisting of the energy of geocentric magnetism, was swiftly forming.

While Records of Geocentric Magnetism was channeled, a bright yellow film faintly formed on the surface of Qin Lie’s body . The film caused Qin Lie’s flesh to grow more flexible and to be able to endure the spirit blood’s invasion in the blood pool.

Compared to a few days before, the bloodwater inside the pool had grown much thinner.

The essence of the spirit blood inside had been absorbed by him bit by bit and merged into his flesh, muscles, veins, and bones as of late.

“Add another bucket of Blue-eyed Toad blood!” Feng Rong suddenly cried out.

On the side, a Rank Three Blue-eyed Toad was shackled by a silver rope. Its neck was stabbed with a blood spear, and its crimson blood flowed down the spear into the wooden bucket as blood slowly filled the bucket to the brim.

Hearing Feng Rong's instructions, the two blood guards' expression tightened as they looked pitifully at Qin Lie before pouring the spirit blood into Qin Lie's blood pool.

Qin Lie, who was gritting his teeth and holding on, suddenly quivered immensely as a blood red light shone from within his eyes.

A bloody aura that was so thick that it could be solid abruptly exploded from Qin Lie's body, causing the two blood guards' expressions to change.

"Holy shit, what a lunatic!" both of them muttered under their breaths.

"Instructor Feng, today is the day new members will return to soak in the blood pool. Lord Lang Xie is not around, so we need to you take charge." A blood guard cried from the outside, "Also, there's a guy called Yi Yuan who said he wants to see Qin Bing. He says that he has something important to tell him."

"Yi Yuan?" Feng Rong kept a straight face, "I forbid it!"

"I want to see him," exclaimed Qin Lie as he was inside the blood

pool while baring his teeth and trembling all over.

“Then you can tell Yi Yuan that he can see Qin Bing, but he must soak for six more hours inside the blood pool.” Feng Rong said.

The person nodded and left.

Ten minutes later, he brought a distressed-looking Yi Yuan over and said, “He’s here.”

Seeing Yi Yuan’s expression, Feng Rong could not help but chuckle before pointing at the blood pool Qin Lie had soaked in. Then she said, “Jump in yourself.”

Yi Yuan grit his teeth, and under Feng Rong’s gloating gaze jumped helplessly into the blood pool. Then, he immediately began to howl like a demon.

“Hehe, what a happy day. The two of you shall stay here like good boys, okay?” Feng Rong smiled cheerfully and walked out, a feeling of coziness soaking her bones. Then, she went out and tortured the new members outside.

Chapter 177: I Will Do It Myself!

“UWAHH!”

Yi Yuan’s terrible cries sounded like a slaughtered pig or goat on their final stand. Even Qin Lie was a little scared listening to it.

“Dammit. I don’t know if I’ll be able to leave here alive if I have to soak in this for six more hours.” Yi Yuan bared his teeth with a red face, looking like he was about to suffocate to death.

Qin Lie’s expression was indifferent, but there was a bit of a smile in his eyes. He quietly channeled Records of Geocentric Magnetism and continuously gathered the immense energy of the earth into a membranous wall while absorbing the spirit blood essence inside the pool. He casually asked, “What is so important that you’re willing to soak in this blood pool for six hours to see me?”

“Sigh, for who else but that wife of mine, Lian Rou?” Yi Yuan shuddered from time to time while gritting his teeth as he briefly explained the matter.

“What did you say?!” Qin Lie suddenly interrupted Yi Yuan with amazing light shining out of his eyes as he exclaimed, “Dark Fiend Valley’s Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan are now in Armament City? They have come here to have Armament Sect help them forge two suitable spirit artifacts?”

“What are you so excited about?” Yi Yuan was a little confused.

Qin Lie immediately realized that he had lost his cool. He sucked in a deep breath and quickly adjusted himself to calm himself down.

“Three years. We haven’t met in three years…” Turbulent tides were surging inside his heart.

Three years ago, Jiu Liuyu had an interest in the Ling Town sisters’ special constitution when she passed by Ling Town and consulted Ling Chengye about accepting them as her disciples.

Lieng Chengye was terribly flattered and he immediately accepted at once. He had even stayed at the town entrance and begged Qin Lie to relinquish his engagement with Ling Yushi himself so Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan could successfully enter under her tutelage.

He could still clearly remember Ling Yushi’s anguished look inside the small house. The day he pushed Ling Yushi away, the day he made her a promise, he could still clearly remember Lu Li’s arrogance and her taunts at the time…

And all this time, Dark Fiend Valley’s valley master had sat arrogantly in that luxurious carriage of hers from beginning to end without ever setting a foot on the ground.

During that year, he did not even have the qualification to meet Jiu Liuyu once.

Three years had passed, and now he was Armament Sect's peerless, thousand year genius and the appointed future sect master. His one word could change many people's lives.

For his sake, Armament Sect was battling against Dark Shadow Tower. Both sides had already lost many men.

Whereas Lu Li was still that Lu Li. She was still a disciple under Dark Fiend Valley's Granny Jiu. Her status still hadn't changed.

Today, she had brought Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan to Armament Sect to beg him for his approval, so that they could achieve their objective.

Life was really ephemeral.

For a moment, he was overwhelmed with various emotions.

"Brother Qin! Brother Qin!" Yi Yuan cried out repeatedly.

Qin Lie's jumbled thoughts rejoined as one as he frowned, "What did you say?"

"I want you to help me and bring it up to any inner sect elder so they can accept this task." Yi Yuan begged, "Brother Qin, this is the first time I, Yi Yuan, have begged you for something. You must promise me this. My Lian Rou has personally ordered me to

accomplish this.”

Qin Lie pondered and did not answer immediately.

“The Ling Town sisters are only at the Natal Opening Realm. The elder sister is at the late stage of the Natal Opening Realm and the younger sister is at the middle stage of the Natal Opening Realm. With their cultivationss at this level, they will only need a Profound Grade One spirit artifact.” Yi Yuan cupped his hands inside the blood pool. “It can easily be done by any of the elders. Please allow me some face and talk to them about this matter.”

Qin Lie continued to keep silent.

Yi Yuan suddenly stopped begging as a trace of bitterness appeared on his face. He thought, “That’s right, things are no longer what they were in the past. Today’s Qin Bing is no longer yesterday’s Qin Bing. He might not necessarily have thought much about our relationship at all…”

“There is no need to trouble the elders about this matter,” Qin Lie answered in a serious manner.

“I thought so. This guy is such a realist, I’ve misjudged him,” Yi Yuan smiled bitterly on the inside, thinking that Qin Lie had put him down gently.

“I will do it myself!” Qin Lie exclaimed

Yi Yuan's expression shivered as he stared at him with incredible shock. "You, you will do it yourself? Do you really know how to forge artifacts?"

He didn't quite understand what Qin Lie meant. He didn't know if this was Qin Lie's excuse to not help because, as far as he knew, Qin Lie had not truly forged a complete spirit artifact after entering Armament Sect.

"Of course I know how to forge artifacts, it's just that I haven't done much in the past." Qin Lie consoled him, "Don't worry. I may not be too familiar with it, but right now, forging artifacts should not be a problem. I will treat the Ling Town sisters' two spirit artifacts as the first spirit artifacts I forge in Armament Sect. I will treat this matter seriously."

"But..." Yi Yuan smiled bitterly, "They're looking for an elder, you know?"

"You don't have to worry about this." Qin Lie thought for a bit and then said, "Later on, you will look for Elder Tong or Elder Cheng. Say that it's something that I want to do. Three days later, you will bring the Ling Family sisters to the outer sect's 'Artifact Requesting Hall.' I will go then and specifically question them about their needs."

Yi Yuan was perturbed. He wasn't sure himself if this counted as achieving Ouyang Jingjing's request. But since Qin Lie had given his word, there was nothing else he could do, so he had no choice but to accept it. "Alright. After I get out, I'll look for Ouyang Jingjing and explain the matter. I will also talk with Elder Tong for

a little.”

“Mn,” Qin Lie nodded. “Oh, right, you only need to bring the Ling Family sisters to the ‘Artifact Requesting Hall.’ That Lu Li… she is not allowed to enter the sect.”

Yi Yuan was stunned yet again. He thought the Qin Lie he had met today was acting a little strange. He realized that he could not figure out Qin Lie’s thoughts no matter what.

“Alright, I will tell Ouyang Jingjing about this and guarantee that Lu Li will not take even a single step into the sect,” Yi Yuan promised.

After that, the two of the began a deep discussion about tempering one’s body with the blood pool for a while. For the most part it was Yi Yuan explaining the wonders of these pools to Qin Lie.

After Yi Yuan had finished and realized that the pool Qin Lie was soaking in was actually geared towards those who were at the middle stage of the Manifestation Realm, his eyeballs nearly fell out of his sockets.

“Holy shit, and here I thought Pang Feng was abnormal. I didn’t think you would be even crazier than him!

“Pang Feng is at the late stage of the Natal Opening Realm, and he is able to endure bloodwater meant for those in the early stage

of the Manifestation Realm. He is already a madman among our group, but I can't believe that you would dare to soak in a blood pool made for the middle stage of the Manifestation Realm with just your cultivation which is only in the middle stage of the Natal Opening Realm. A madman! You are a madman!"

.....

The cold and clear moonlight shone on the thick clouds of blood. Clumps of scarlet light pierced through the mist and fell onto the forest below.

At a glance, it was as if the entire forest had blood spilled on it. A cruel, scary, and bloody hue covered the whole place.

Qin Lie was still soaking inside the blood pool under the night sky. The thick bloodwater inside the blood pool had turned thin once more.

Meanwhile, Qin Lie was gradually getting used to the corrosive effects of the bloodwater. All of his pores were filled with droplets of the blood that were sucking in a huge amount of blood energy.

A tremendous wave of life energy slowly surged while Qin Lie channeled the energy of geocentric magnetism.

"Shaa shaa shaa!"

The large trees nearby violently shook , and the leaves began to

drop to the ground like stones.

Their branches also bowed down to the ground as if they had turned into bowing willows that were shackled by countless ropes, pulling them underground.

Lang Xie walked over from afar between the forest. He arrived underneath one of the trees.

On top of a continuously shaking tree, Feng Rong's eyes were bright as she watched Qin Lie inside the blood pool from above.

When Lang Xie had arrived, Feng Rong suddenly said, "He has even cultivated the energy of the earth. He use the effects of geocentric magnetism and increase the gravity around him several times over. When the gravity field appears, the tree leaves, branches, and all other solid objects are pulled towards the earth's core. In addition, he can also force the magnetic field to twist and become chaotic."

"When he killed Liang Shaoyang, he suddenly increased the pull of gravity to drag Liang Shaoyang from the sky down to the ground." Lang Xie said indifferently.

"You knew about it?" Feng Rong was surprised.

Lang Xie nodded, "From the moment you told me that there was an inner sect disciple whose body was tougher than even Pang Feng's, I have paid attention to him. Before he attacked Liang

Shaoyang, I was originally next to him. I witnessed Dark Asura Hall's Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong leading their men to destroy Dark Shadow Tower's base and also saw them killing Gray Shadow. I even saw Liang Shaoyang sacrifice his subordinates' life to grasp at a chance at life."

"That means you even know that Dark Asura Hall had attempted to kill Liang Shaoyang?" Feng Rong grew more and more surprised.

"There are very few things that escape my notice in Armament Sect. From the moment Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong started to trace Liang Shaoyang's tracks, I knew what they were planning," Lang Xie said offhandedly.

"Why didn't you stop them?" Feng Rong frowned, "Liang Shaoyang was still an inner sect disciple at the time and was the sect's hope. You just watched him being hunted down?"

"Didn't he make it to the entrance safely?" Lang Xie countered, "What does Dark Shadow Tower and Dark Asura Hall's deathmatch have anything to do with me? Whether Gray Shadow and Black Shadow died or how many Dark Asura Hall men were killed has nothing to do with me. In truth, I was hoping that they would eliminate each other completely. Why would I need to act before Liang Shaoyang was in real danger?

"After that, Liang Shaoyang successfully broke through to the entrance, and Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong had given up on the hunt. It was at this moment that Qin Bing had initiated his surprise attack, and after that, it was a battle between inner sect

disciples. I care even less about the conflicts inside the sect. The only thing that surprised me was that Qin Bing. He was actually able to kill Liang Shaoyang, who was at the late stage of the Natal Opening Realm and was also armed to the teeth with spirit artifacts, even though he was only at the middle stage of the same realm.

"That frost concept definitely allowed his strength to shoot up, causing his frost energy to move as if it had gained sentience."

Lang Xie paused for a moment and stared at Qin Lie from afar. Finally, he said, "At the time, I had made the decision to protect this disciple who had learned a concept even if the sect master and three great reverends wanted to kill him. But Xie Jingxuan's words also woke up the sect master at an appropriate time, so I didn't need to personally intervene. And after that, his ability to light up all twelve spirit pattern pillars surprised me even more..."

Feng Rong flew down from the tree and stood beside Lang Xie. After staying quiet for a moment, she said, "You are acting more and more like Master."

"Are you praising or criticizing me?" Lang Xie's expression changed slightly.

"I don't know myself." Feng Rong's expression was complicated. "Master has never seen us as people. Everything he did is based on self-interest, and to achieve his objectives he will sacrifice anyone. You're just like him. This is a good thing for Armament Sect because you will be able to achieve great things like this. But for the people around you, that may not necessarily be a good thing."

Lang Xie's eyes turned dark.

"You killed Master, took his life with your very hands specifically because you hated his way of doing things back then." Feng Rong sighed, "But now you are acting more and more like him. You are getting better at scheming and considering everything from a point of interest by the day."

Lang Xie grew quiet.

Chapter 178: The Seventh Natal Palace

Inside the blood pool.

Qin Lie's body started to violently shake.

Earth energy, as heavy as mountains, seemed to shoot out from beneath the earth itself and latch onto Qin Lie's body.

Both Feng Rong and Lang Xie had the feeling that they were about to bend their knees and sink deep into the earth. They matched each other's eyes and immediately noticed that the gravity in the area had once again increased by a great degree.

The gravity field had turned stronger, causing man, trees, and leaves alike to all fall to the ground. Even the branches that were as thick as an arm had snapped off .

—All of this was caused by the incredible suction power.

At this moment, the spirit sea of Qin Lie's dantian had countless streaks of yellow light intersecting each other, all forming into a glittering yellow ball of light.

The ball of light unleashed a powerful magnetic field, faintly resonating with geocentric magnetism which continuously enhanced the gravity field.

A new Natal Palace was about to be formed!

Qin Lie focused his entire mind and consciousness into the spirit sea. While madly channeling Records of Geocentric Magnetism and absorbing the blood pool's amazing bloodwater, he continued to temper his body thoroughly.

His naked body suddenly shone with a yellow luster. The luster had a metallic tint and gave of the feeling of a cold, hard texture.

"Prak prak prak!"

Dull explosion sounds continuously rumbled out from inside his body. The rumbling was so powerful that the bloodwater surged and spilled out of the pool.

"The seventh Natal Palace!"

Qin Lie exclaimed in his mind. While channeling Records of the Geocentric Magnetism he extracted traces of immense and refined earth energy from the earthfire beneath the blood pool.

The earth energy that was originally a bright yellow film formed a strange barrier on the surface of his body.

At this moment, the "film" had suddenly melted and turned into thick and immense earth energy. Like many little streams, they madly rushed into his dantian's spirit sea and gathered together at the yellow Natal Palace above.

It was like his body had turned into a sponge, swiftly absorbing every last drop of liquid inside the blood pool.

In just a very short time, his bare body had turned blood red while a thick bloodthirsty and ruthless aura uncontrollably erupted from his body!

Lang Xie's eyes lit up as he exclaimed, "Very good!"

Feng Rong was also surprised. "Back then, we took much longer to digest the bloodwater's energy and unleash that aura."

"His foundation is far more solid than ours." Lang Xie nodded, "Although his realm is slightly low, he has put a lot more effort into tempering his body than Pang Feng. I'm not sure what kind of method he used to temper his body, but I am sure that this spirit art is far stronger than Cloud Sky Mountain's Golden Stone Art!"

"Of course." Feng Rong also nodded.

While the duo was speaking, the earthen yellow light on Qin Lie brightly erupted. Yet another scarlet blood aura rose to the sky directly above his head like a cruel, crimson dragon.

"AOO!"

Qin Lie howled once as a surge of maddening and explosive

energy engulfed the entire blood pool like a huge tidal wave.

“Prak prak prak!”

Severe explosions occurred inside the blood pool, causing the jade stone around him to shatter while streaks of bloodwater flew in his direction.

“Boom!”

The pool completely shattered, and the bloodwater completely spilled out of it. The blood pool quickly dried up.

The stone ground beneath the blood pool was as red as searing iron. The crimson color it possessed was considerably terrifying.

Meanwhile, Qin Lie was sitting right on top of that very stone ground, being burned by earthfire while his entire body shone with a glaring bright yellow light.

Traces of yellow air currents gushed out of the earth and slowly covered Qin Lie.

Soon, a layer of earth armor covered Qin Lie’s body like dried mud. The earth energy had formed into natural armor, and it even had very obvious cracks on it.

The earth sphere was like a huge cocoon that had surrounded Qin

Lie, stopping people from seeing inside it.

"What is this spirit art?" Feng Rong was shocked.

A strange light appeared in Lang Xie's eyes. "While he was channeling that spirit art, it was as if he resonated with the earth's magnetic field. He was able to attract the earth's energy from its core."

"Flame Volcano is a volcano that reaches straight underground in the first place. The earthfire comes from below there..." Feng Rong was also moved on the inside as she said, "It looks like this place has huge benefits for Qin Lie's cultivation then!"

The duo was quietly surprised.

The huge earthen yellow ball covered Qin Lie tightly. It was as if he was sealed inside.

There were still more earthen yellow streams of air coming from below and gathering to that yellow earth ball above, causing it to grow bigger and thicker non-stop.

At the same time, a huge earthen yellow ball was also growing thicker and more solid inside of the spirit sea in Qin Lie's dantian.

This was his seventh Natal Palace!

Only by breaking through to the late stage of the Natal Opening Realm could one form the seventh Natal Palace. The formation of this Natal Palace also meant that Qin Lie's realm had taken yet another step forward!

Inside the big earthen ball, Qin Lie concentrated on channeling Records of Geocentric Magnetism and built his seventh Natal Palace.

……

"Elder Tong, I'm going to bring two friends to the Artifact Requesting Hall. Qin Bing wants to assist them by forging their artifacts himself. He asked me to tell you this." Yi Yuan found Tong Jihua and explained his purpose and Qin Lie's objective.

Tong Jihua frowned, "Are those really Qin Bing's instructions?"

Yi Yuan smiled bitterly, "Of course it's him. Otherwise, I would not dare to go against the sect's rules and lead someone in on my own."

"Alright, then you will bring those people to the Artifact Requesting Hall in three days. As long as Qin Bing appears, then it will have no relation with you," Tong Jihua nodded.

Yi Yuan let out a sigh of relief.

Three days later.

Yi Yuan arrived at Armament Sect's entrance and found that Ouyang Jingjing had been waiting with Lu Li, Ling Yushi, and Ling Xuanxuan for a long while now.

"Yi Yuan, how is the matter?" Ouyang Jingjing asked.

"No problem. You can bring Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan in. I will lead you all to the Artifact Requesting Hall. Qin Bing will come over himself," Yi Yuan said.

"Qin Bing's coming himself?" Ouyang Jingjing looked surprised. "What is he here for?"

"Hhe's going to help the Ling Family sisters by forging the artifacts himself." Yi Yuan's smile was awkward.

"Him?" Ouyang Jingjing's expression turned cold, "I admit that his talents are extraordinary, but has he actually forged artifacts before? We entered Armament Sect together, and for the past year, he has only assisted Senior Sister Tang in the process. He may be the best artificer of the sect in the future, but how is he qualified now?"

"Urk. Anyway that's what he told me," Yi Yuan looked helpless.

He was just as confused at Qin Lie's instructions. With Qin Lie's current status, he could easily have an inner sect elder to solve the Ling family sisters' matter with a single word. Why would he need

to take over the matter himself? Why must he do this?

Yi Yuan did not understand.

“Never mind, I will ask him to personally request for an inner sect elder to forge artifacts later when I see him.” Ouyang Jingjing didn’t look too good. “As for him? Forget about it. At the very least, I don’t believe in his current skill in artifact forging!”

Yi Yuan smiled bitterly.

And so, Ouyang Jingjing led Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan through the entrance. Lu Li had also followed after closely.

The guards at the front gate had been instructed by Tong Jihua long ago, so no one dared to stop them this time. They all quietly let them through the gate.

“I’m sorry.” Yi Yuan suddenly stood in front of Lu Li and said embarrassedly, “The Ling Family sisters can pass through the entrance, but Lu Li cannot. She is not allowed to take a single step into the sect.”

The moment he said this, Ouyang Jingjing turned furious. “Yi Yuan! What the hell are you doing? Was I not being clear earlier? Did I not explain things clearly to you? Did you not tell Qin Bing that three people should enter the sect?”

Lu Li’s expression had also turned frosty.

She was Jiu Liuyu's direct disciple. Her status was distinguished at Dark Fiend Valley, and very few people would provoke her, even in the entirety of Seven Fiends Valley.

For the longest time, she was the only one who faced everyone else with arrogance. Very few people would dare to shut her out.

Armament Sect had already refused her once, but she didn't expect them to refuse her again today. This caused Lu Li to be extremely angry.

"I have brought this up with Qin Bing." Yi Yuan said forcefully, "It was exactly Qin Bing's intention to not allow Lu Li into the sect. He had even specifically instructed me in this. I really can't help you."

"So it was an order by the future sect master." The Armament Sect guards' expressions at the entrance quivered slightly upon hearing his words.

Therefore, the two men had also grown serious and stood at the entrance. They carefully stared at Lu Li as one man said, "The miss over there, in this case, we really can't let you in. Otherwise, the future sect master will know that we have failed our duty, and we cannot take responsibility for that. Therefore, we can only apologize to you."

They expressed their attitude. It was obvious that they did not dare to offend Qin Lie, and so, they could only bar Lu Li from

entering the sect.

“Have I offended that Qin Bing before?” Anger was written all over Lu Li’s cold and proud face. She said coldly, “There should not be such a character in my memories. I would really like to know why he is targeting me specifically?”

“Yi Yuan! Are you doing this intentionally?” Ouyang Jingjing was also furious.

“It really isn’t me.” Yi Yuan’s smile was as bitter as one could imagine, “You can ask him yourself after you meet Qin Bing. This really is what he instructed!”

“He doesn’t even know Senior Sister Lu Li, why would he do this?” Ouyang Jingjing exclaimed.

“I really don’t know,” Yi Yuan claimed injustice.

“You guys go. I’ll wait on the outside for your news.” Lu Li sucked in a deep breath. The slight shudder of her firm breasts showed exactly how agitated she was. Her face was also full of iciness, but there was a trace of helplessness in her eyes as well. “Do ask that Qin Bing while you’re there if I’ve killed his entire family or cut off his five limbs?”

“Five limbs?” Yi Yuan was dumbfounded.

Lu Li’s icy sharp gaze suddenly swept down at Yi Yuan’s groin

area.

Yi Yuan immediately understood where the fifth limb she mentioned was. His entire body shuddered as he subconsciously pressed his legs together. His expression had turned incredibly ugly.

“Just get in already, stop blocking the entrance!” the guards said impatiently.

“Let’s go. I must ask Qin Bing what the meaning of this is!”

Ouyang Jingjing’s expression was cold and terrible. She cursed every one of his ancestors before proceeding together with Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan to the outer sect’s Artifact Requesting Hall.

Yi Yuan frowned. He was also doubtful about the matter and wanted to know why Qin Lie had done this.

“Qin Bing, Qin Bing. Another one of those ‘Qin’s’!”

Lu Li’s face was icy cold as she muttered in her heart at the Armament Sect entrance under the gaze of the guards.

A chilly light was brimming inside her cold eyes, causing many martial practitioners entering and exiting the sect to be surprised and curious as to who had offended such a cold but beautiful woman.

Chapter 179: Reunion

The Artifact Requesting Hall was just next to outer sect's martial field.

Every martial practitioner who came to Armament Sect to request a tailor made spirit artifact had to explain in detail what their specific needs were to the Artifact Requesting Hall.

What their realm was, their height, weight, how their spirit art worked, and even their palm size. Every specification needed to be explained with absolute clarity. Then, the artificer would forge a spirit artifact very specifically geared towards many aspects of the requester.

During this process, many martial practitioners would reveal their secrets, such as the way their spirit art channels spirit energy, the techniques they use in life threatening situations, the trump cards the have to overturn dangerous circumstances...

In order to forge a spirit artifact that would be one hundred percent compatible , an artifact requester would often relinquish all of their secrets.

Some of these secrets must never be revealed to outsiders.

That was also why the Artifact Requesting Hall was separated into many private rooms so that the artifact requesters' secrets would not be leaked to outsiders.

In one such private room Yi Yuan, Ouyang Jingjing, and the Ling sisters were all seated in a soft chair, waiting for Qin Lie's arrival.

Time passed slowly, but Qin Lie still hadn't shown up. This caused Ouyang Jingjing's face to turn uglier and uglier.

She finally could not suppress the dissatisfaction in her heart and yelled at Yi Yuan, "Did you really communicate this with Qin Bing properly?"

"I did, he said he would come," Yi Yuan laughed awkwardly.

"Then where is he?" Ouyang Jingjing angrily demanded.

"Give it a moment, just give it a while longer. Maybe he'll shown up soon." Yi Yuan looked extremely embarrassed.

"If Qin Bing goes against the deal, then our deal will be off as well. Lian Rou's family will also never acquire the ownership of those mines!" Ouyang Jingjing said with a cold expression.

Yi Yuan could only smile.

"This is the ninth private room, is it?" Tang Siqi's voice came from outside.

"Yeah, Yi Yuan told me that it was the ninth private room and

that Qin Bing will come over today," Lian Rou answered.

Over the previous six months, Qin Lie had stayed at the plaza where the twelve spirit pattern pillars were to understand the magic of the spirit diagrams. Since the plaza was sealed off previously, not even Tang Siqi and Lian Rou could meet him.

After he came out of the plaza, he was then immediately guided by Ying Xingran to the back of Flame Volcano to Blood Spear's training ground.

The back of the mountain was forbidden grounds for outer and inner sect disciples, so not even Tang Siqi could enter the area easily. That was why she had not been able to meet Qin Lie all this time.

She finally learned from Lian Rou that Qin Lie would come to the Artifact Requesting Hall today, so she immediately put down every trivial matter on her hands and rushed over with Lian Rou.

Hearing Lian Rou and Tang Siqi, Yi Yuan's expression shook. It was as if he had seen rays of hope shining down. He hurriedly opened the private room and let the two girls in.

"Where's Qin Bing?" Lian Rou swept her gaze around the room but did not find Qin Lie. She couldn't help but frown on the inside. "Yi Yuan, did he really promise you that he would come?"

"Of course he did," Yi Yuan smiled bitterly.

“I don’t care anyway. If Qin Bing doesn’t give me an explanation today, then don’t even think about taking back those two mines of yours!”

Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan quickly saluted politely with slightly formal expressions when they saw that inner sect disciples had come over.

They had come from Ling Town, a force that wasn’t even a Limestone force. Although they had leaped into a whole new level and entered Dark Fiend Valley, there was still a trace of wariness in their bones when facing against the core disciples of such a large force. This caused them to be somewhat anxious and not as free as Ouyang Jingjing.

“How about letting Siqi help forge your artifacts?” Lian Rou’s eyes turned as she said hurriedly, “Siqi can also forge Profound Grade spirit artifacts. The artifacts of Dark Asura Hall’s commander were all forged by her. She may be slightly less proficient than an inner sect elder, but no one’s attainments in artifact forging can exceed Siqi’s among the inner sect disciples.”

After a pause, Lian Rou emphasized, “Not even the current Qin Bing!”

“I had promised Lu Li that I would definitely get an inner sect elder to forget their artifacts. Senior Sister Tang may be great, but she still can’t compare to an elder.” Ouyang Jingjing was actually moved by the idea, but her attitude was still harsh, “Of course,

Senior Sister Tang is pretty good, but it was still a little different from what I had envisioned earlier. Moreover, I also want to get an explanation out of Qin Bing!”

“You want to get an explanation out of Qin Bing?” Tang Siqi was ready to agree for Lian Rou’s sake, but the moment she heard that Ouyang Jingjing was going to get an explanation out of Qin Bing, her beautiful eyes could not help but narrow. “Ouyang Jingjing, is it? I know that you’re the daughter of Mystical Fiend Valley’s valley master, but you have to remember that this is Armament Sect, not your Mystical Fiend Valley!”

Ouyang Jingjing’s expression changed.

“Liang Shaoyang’s status isn’t lower than yours, is he? And where is he now?” Tang Siqi lifted her eyebrows and said coldly, “He is Liang Yangzu’s son. Not long ago, he was the focus of everyone’s attention and the future successor in the sect master and three great reverends’ eyes. His status, talent, and realm were all greater than yours. And now he’s dead and that’s it. Did anything happen to Qin Bing?”

“Senior Sister Tang, I didn’t mean that. It’s just, I just thought that he shouldn’t break his promise,” Ouyang Jingjing stuttered.

“So what? Even if he breaks his promise, with his current status and identity, even the sect master and three great reverends themselves will have to wait for him. And you can’t even wait for a moment?” Tang Siqi gave her no quarter.

Ouyang Jingjing no longer said anything. She simply glared at Yi Yuan in a harsh manner once before turning quiet again with the Ling sisters.

The wait lasted for a whole day. In the end, Qin Lie did not show up.

Tang Siqi was also waiting for him.

The next day, not even Lian Rou could endure it any longer as she angrily glared and scolded Yi Yuan, “Did you really make sure of the time?”

“The promise was yesterday,” Yi Yuan’s said dispiritedly.

“Then go to the back of the mountain and ask Qin Bing again,” Lian Rou ordered.

Yi Yuan’s expression turned bitter as he shook his head and responded, “It’s not time yet. The next training session in the back of the mountain is still half a month away. During this period, those who are still in the observation period like us cannot enter the training ground whenever we want, so even I don’t have a way to see Qin Bing.”

“Senior Sister Tang, Senior Sister Lian Rou, we’ll be leaving then.” Ouyang Jingjing stood up.

Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan also helplessly stood up and were

about to leave along with Ouyang Jingjing.

It was at this moment that a cold aura suddenly seeped through from outside the walls of the private room. It was as if frigid ice had suddenly appeared.

Everyone inside the room suddenly felt chilled in their hearts. They felt the room's temperature had plummeted several times!

But Yi Yuan's eyes abruptly lit up.

Tang Siqi and Lian Rou were also moved. They immediately realized that Qin Lie had come over and hurriedly winked at Yi Yuan for him to open the door.

"Senior Sister Tang, Senior Sister Lian Rou, Yi Yuan, and Ouyang Jingjing, please come out for a moment." At the entrance of the private room came Qin Bing's chilly voice, "I want to talk with the two artifact requesters alone and confirm their specific needs. Some of them may not be convenient for you to hear."

As if given a huge pardon, Yi Yuan was the first to rush out of the room.

Tang Siqi and Lian Rou matched each other's eyes once before exiting the private room as well. They stood in front of Qin Lie side by side.

After such a long time, Qin Lie was still as chilly as ever. Anyone

who stood beside him would feel like they had suddenly been dropped into a frozen lake and would feel uncomfortable all over.

"Qin Bing, there is something I'd like to talk to you about," Tang Siqi smiled seductively.

"Alright, we'll talk later." Qin Lie nodded.

Ouyang Jingjing had also walked out. Without even the slightest pleasantries, she asked directly, "Do you know how to forge artifacts?"

"I do," Qin Lie answered.

"And can you forge them better than the inner sect elders?" Ouyang Jingjing snorted once.

"I don't know. But I think I can do it. Moreover, the reason I came here is to test my skill. Whether it succeeds or not, the cost of the spirit materials needed to forge their artifacts will be borne by me. I will not accept any compensation either," Qin Lie expressed his thoughts.

The moment he said those words, Tang Siqi, Lian Rou, and Yi Yuan all wore shocked looks on their faces. Even Ouyang Jingjing was stunned.

"Are you for real? You will bear the cost of all the spirit materials? And you won't accept any compensation either?"

Ouyang Jingjing asked uncertainly.

"That's correct. I will continue even if I fail. All the materials will be paid by the sect. I will forge them until it succeeds so I can build a solid foundation for my first true artifact forging!" Qin Lie confirmed.

Ouyang Jingjing was surprised. She nodded her head and without saying anything else, allowing Qin Lie to enter the private room.

Qin Lie closed the stone door from inside the ninth private room. Then, he touched a stone ball and swiveled it.

"Kachik! Kachik!" A stone passage leading towards the underground suddenly appeared on the private room's stone ground.

Qin Lie pointed at the stone path and said, "Let's go in there and talk. Only the underground private room can completely isolate any sound so that no one can hear what we say."

Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan followed his words and entered the stone path.

Qin Lie, Ling Yushi, and Ling Xuanxuan sat on top of a cushion respectively. Inside the completely sealed underground stone room, he looked deeply at Ling Yushi as the coldness melted away slowly from his eyes.

It had been three years, and Ling Yushi was still as attractive and elegant as ever. There was even a trace of maturity on her beautiful face that caused her disposition to be even more outstanding than three years ago.

The long blue skirt also complemented her well endowed body perfectly. It fitted very well with her temperament that was as cool as water.

Her bright and gentle pair of eyes were like rippling water as they moved around, causing Qin Lie's heart to grow excited, so much so that he was having trouble controlling his feelings.

"Qin Bing, to think that he also has the surname 'Qin.' But he is completely different from Qin Lie. This kind of cold and icy aura was definitely not something Qin Lie would have. But his eyes are staring at me a little strangely..." Ling Yushi's expression was indifferent. She frowned slightly under his gaze and felt that he was being overly wanton.

But due to Qin Lie's honorable status, she did not express it on her face, nor did she voice out the opinion.

"So you're that peerless genius Qin Bing who caused all twelve spirit pattern pillars to react, and after learning the frost concept, used it to cause the world itself to change?" Ling Yushi did not say anything, but Ling Xuanxuan was the one who led the conversation with a soft exclamation. She stared straight at Qin Lie with actual admiration in her eyes, "Are you really the person who

did all that?”

Qin Lie woke up from his reminiscing and shifted his gaze from Ling Yushi to her. He nodded, “That’s me.”

“Would you really forge our artifacts? We all heard what you said outside. You’re serious, aren’t you?” Ling Xuanxuan said happily, “Although we brought our own spirit materials as well, to be honest, we were quite anxious about the whole thing. If it were to fail, we won’t have enough spirit materials for another attempt. But you just said that you would bear the cost of all of the spirit materials, right?”

“Yes,” Qin Lie nodded again.

“Why have you given us special treatment?” Ling Xuanxuan’s face was a bit red, “I heard from Sister Jingjing that as long as you give the nod, you can make the inner sect elders help us to forge the artifacts. But you have insisted that you would do it yourself. Why?”

She wore a slight blush on her face, yet still continued to ask questions.

Chapter 180: A Familiar Feeling...

Ling Xuanxuan kept questioning Qin Lie non-stop while expressing great interest in him with a small blush.

To understand a concept and cause a world phenomenon in addition to an unprecedented act of lighting up all twelve of Armament Sect's spirit pattern pillars... naturally, such a peerless genius would attract the attention of a girl.

Qin Lie just froze there without interrupting at all. He was still wondering if he should reveal his true identity to the duo.

After meeting Ling Yushi again after three years, he really wanted to embrace her. He had a million things to say to her.

The promise he made three years ago was still vivid in his mind and he also distinctively remembered the mournful figure of Ling Yushi when she walked out of the small house...

He had a million things to say, but the moment he thought of the current situation, he hesitated again.

His situation really wasn't too good right now.

He was sure that the moment his identity was leaked, Dark Asura Hall's Yuan Tianya would definitely not sit by and do nothing.

Of course, Armament Sect would do everything in their power to protect him, but with Dark Shadow Tower as their enemy right now and them in the height of battle, if Dark Asura Hall were to join into the mix...

He didn't know if Armament Sect could handle the pressure.

If Armament Sect really faltered under Dark Asura Hall and Dark Shadow Tower's pressure or the entrance was breached by the enemy, then he would immediately fall into a plight.

"Yushi may be able to keep a secret, but this Ling Xuanxuan has always been blabbermouth. If she knows my identity, then I may be revealed really soon. It looks like I'll have to endure it for a while longer, at least until the fight between Armament Sect and Dark Shadow Tower ends and I've established my foundation. Then, I won't be afraid to expose my identity."

Seeing Ling Xuanxuan chattering non-stop, Qin Lie quietly decided not to divulge anything at this point in time.

Once his mind was set, he then channeled Frost Arts quietly and caused a freezing and alienating aura before saying coldly, "I think it's better if we start talking about business."

The moment his words came out, Ling Xuanxuan's torrent of questions abruptly cut short.

Ling Yushi stared rebukingly at her before scolding lightly, "Sis,

less questions please.”

“Oh,” Ling Xuanxuan turned obedient.

“There is a brush and paper before you. Write down your height, weight, palm and arm size, which hand you prefer in combat, the spirit art you cultivate and its characteristics, your trump cards, and so on.” Qin Lie’s expression was cool as he said indifferently, “I want to know everything. I can only forge a spirit artifact that will perfectly satisfy you if I understand your situation completely.”

“Okay.”

The moment the subject of spirit artifacts was brought up, their eyes all lit up in unison. They hurriedly lowered their heads, took up the brush, and began writing in detail on the paper before them.

At times, they would frown and think deeply; at others, they would communicate and exchange opinions with each other. After spending an entire hour, they had finally written down every detail that they considered to be important. Then, with slight reverence, they passed over the papers filled with small, tightly packed words.

Qin Lie accepted it and gave it a glance before saying again, “Let me have a look at your spirit arts.”

Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan glanced at each other once before standing up together and channelling their spirit arts.

A blue wave appeared inside Ling Yushi's eyes as ripples emanated from her entire body. The rippling patterns were like huge tidal waves that spread out to the surroundings layer after layer, causing an extremely powerful compressive force.

The numerous crystalline droplets formed from pure water spirit energy were transparent and bright. They were like an array of diamonds floating around her.

As her spirit art changed, the diamond-like water droplets suddenly began to spin rapidly, causing an extremely powerful pressure.

Meanwhile, Ling Xuanxuan had began dancing on the same spot as clumps of fire flew out from her body. The flames were like clouds or red lanterns. They emanated great heat and burned until the stone walls were bright red.

Amidst the flames, Ling Xuanxuan was like a fiery elf whose dance moves were hot and enchanting. There was a seductive charm to them.

Unbelievably, Ling Yushis diamond like water droplets and surging waves did not conflict with the clumps of fire Ling Xuanxuan had released.

On the contrary, the sisters' watery and fiery energies seemed to be able to enhance each other's powers.

Qin Lie noticed that when Ling Xuanxuan began to dance, not only were the water droplets around Ling Yushi not canceled out by the flames, they became brighter and more transparent. It was as if the water spirit energy within had been enhanced.

"Not only do the spirit arts we cultivate—water and fire—not cancel each other out, we are also able to merge them together," Ling Yushi explained seriously.

Qin Lie nodded inwardly and continued watching for a moment. Then, he said, "That's enough."

With that, the two sisters withdrew their spirit energy and sat in front of him once more. They looked deeply at him and waited for him to speak.

"What kind of artifact do you normally prefer?" Qin Lie asked.

"Hoops. I like hoops, preferably more than two circular hoops," Ling Yushi said.

Qin Lie had guessed it. The spirit artifact she used in the past was the Twin Heart Hoops. When she wielded the two hoops, she looked incredibly attractive. It looked like her favorite hadn't changed.

“I like hammers!” Ling Xuanxuan exclaimed.

“Got it.” Qin Lie thought for a moment and said, “You will stay in Armament City and wait for me to forge your artifacts. I will try my best not to keep you waiting.”

“Thank you,” Ling Yushi thanked him sincerely.

Qin Lie’s expression was cold, but his gaze fumbled. Resisting the huge turmoil in his heart, he stood up and said indifferently, “You may leave now.” He left first.

“Sis, this person is quite the character. He’s even cooler and prouder than Senior Sister Lu. Do you think that he had purposely prevented Senior Sister Lu from coming through the entrance because he had heard about her temper?” Ling Xuanxuan’s little head twirled as she said, “It must be because of this. I heard that those whose character are cool and proud could not stand to see someone even prouder than them. He must have disliked Senior Sister Lu!”

Ling Yushi smiled lightly and shook her head, saying, “What kind of nonsense are you saying? Either he recognizes Senior Sister Lu, or Senior Sister Lu has offended him somehow. Otherwise, he would not treat Senior Sister Lu like this.”

“Mn, that’s possible too. Not even the people of the seven valleys can stand Senior Sister Lu’s terrible temper. Qin Bing must have done this because his friends or relatives were angered by Senior Sister Lu in the past.” While Ling Xuanxuan spoke, the duo also

walked towards outside.

"This Qin Bing gives me a somewhat strange feeling..." Ling Yushi suddenly said.

"Strange? What's so strange?" Ling Xuanxuan asked.

"I don't know myself. I just feel that his gaze makes me feel a little disturbed." Ling Yushi frowned, "It's a really strange feeling. I don't know why, but I keep feeling that he looks a little familiar."

"Maybe it's because he looks a little like Senior Sister Lu? That's why we feel that he's familiar. They're both icy cold and just as hard to socialize with," Ling Xuanxuan suggested.

"Maybe." Ling Yushi couldn't figure it out either, so she didn't think much about it and went out with her.

Outside the private room.

Tang Siqi and the rest of the group was waiting quietly.

"Does Qin Bin actually know the Ling sisters?" Yi Yuan rubbed his chin and whispered quietly, "That can't be right. There's no way he would know those two girls. But why is he so generous then? To have the sect bear the cost of the spirit materials, and no matter how many times he fails, the cost of the spirit materials will still be incurred by the sect. Isn't he being a little too good to the two sisters?"

This was also the point that confused Tang Siqi, Lian Rou, and Ouyang Jingjing.

Normally speaking, not only did an artifact requester who was looking for an Armament Sect artificer to forge artifacts need to prepare their own spirit materials, they also had to pay a sizable fee. Even if the artificer fails to forge the spirit artifacts in the end, they will at best promise to help reforge the weapons next time.

There were almost no artificers like Qin Lie who would supply their own spirit materials, not accept payment, and even guarantee its success.

“Strange. Maybe he doesn’t know the rules of the artifact forging society?” Lian Rou also shook her head on the inside.

“Or maybe he fancied the two sisters…” Yi Yuan’s smile suddenly turned dubious as he chuckled, “If that’s the case, then everything can be explained. He’s a man after all, the moment he sees someone he likes, he will very easily lose his rationality.”

The moment the words came out, Lian Rou’s face froze, Ouyang Jingjing’s eyes darkened, and Tang Siqi frowned slightly.

“Oh shit.” When Yi Yuan saw their expressions, he suddenly noticed that he might have screwed up.

It was at this moment Qin Lie had walked out of the private

room. Ouyang Jingjing humphed coldly, “Qin Bing! Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan are the direct disciples of Dark Fiend Valley’s valley master. Don’t even think about wooing them! Artifact forging is one thing, but if you dare bring up any improper requirements, then I will never forgive you!”

There was also a trace of doubt in Lian Rou’s eyes. She suspected that Qin Lie had something else in his mind as well.

Tang Siqi, who at first had planned to discuss something with Qin Lie let out a low hmph at this point, rolled her eyes at Qin Lie, turned her head, and actually left.

“What’s going on?” Qin Lie was confused.

“Brother Qin, about that, it’s all because of my blabbermouth!” Yi Yuan scolded himself loudly.

Ouyang Jingjing glared at Qin Lie once before she suddenly entered the private room and stared seriously at Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan. She asked, “Did that bastard ask for any improper requirements or anything? Did he, did he do anything improper towards you while you’re inside the private room?”

Both sisters were surprised as they shook their heads at once and said in unison, “No.”

Only then did Ouyang Jingjing let out a sigh of relief. “You have explained everything clearly?”

“Mn,” the two girls nodded.

“Alright. Lu Li may have gotten impatient while she waited outside. Let us leave first.” Ouyang Jingjing nodded and led the two sisters out of the private rooms. When she passed by Qin Lie, she warned him in a low tone again, “They belong to Seven Fiends Valley. You have better not get any funny ideas, or don’t blame me for not going easy on you!”

“Qin Bing, I would like to know why you’ve given special treatment to the two sisters.” Lian Rou also questioned.

“It’s nothing. I just want to forge a spirit artifact seriously for someone to test out my recent understanding towards spirit diagrams. That’s all,” Qin Lie frowned.

“Like hell I’ll believe you!” Lian Rou hmphed once, turned her head, and walked away.

“Yi Yuan, what did you say to them?” Qin Lie’s expression turned cold as he suddenly realized that the women’s strange reactions probably had something to do with Yi Yuan.

“Oh it’s nothing. I just said that you probably fancy the two sisters. We’re all men right, I get you.” Yi Yuan looked a bit embarrassed as he laughed lamely, “Those two sisters are pretty good-looking. Their temperament is extraordinary and their appearances are beautiful. It’s only natural that you would be attracted by them. I’m just considering this matter from a normal

man’s point of view. After all, you are being too generous, so it’s really easy for people to think that way.”

Qin Lie’s expression darkened.

Chapter 181: Profound Heaven Alliance And Eight Extreme Sanctuary

At Armament Sect's Wind District.

Ouyang Jingjing, Lu Li, and the Ling sisters entered a house completely built from green stones / lapis lazuli.

The house was about three thousand and three hundred square meters wide. It was situated at the Wind Districts near the streets where Wind Agents often appeared. In a city like Armament City where every inch of earth was gold, such a wide house wasn't often seen.

This land was Seven Fiends Valley's base at Armament Sect—Seven Fiend Pavilion.

The four girls walked all the way to the pavilion center. There was an old man with a head full of red hair inside the wide hall laughing together with Cloud Sky Mountain's Wu Tuo. When he saw them coming in, the old man laughed and said loudly, "You girls, how's business at Armament Sect?"

"Old Brother Shi, I'll be leaving first and won't disturb your conversation." Wu Tuo stood up with a smile.

"Alright." Shi Jingyun had also stood up and walked Wu Tuo all the way to the entrance. Then he said, "We'll talk about that matter next time."

“Mn. Just keep an eye out, old brother,” Wu Tuo smiled and left Seven Fiend Pavilion.

“Uncle Shi, is that Cloud Sky Mountain’s Wu Tuo?” Lu Li was slightly moved.

“It is.” Shi Jingyun continued to smile heartily despite his messy red hair, “He is no simple man. Back when Cloud Sky Mountain and Dark Asura Hall fought against each other, when Wu Tuo’s younger brother had died at the hands of the late Fifth Hall Master, without saying a word and ignoring even the orders of Cloud Sky Mountain mountain lord, he charged straight to Dark Asura Hall and killed the late Fifth Hall Master during the his victory celebration.”

“When Cloud Sky Mountain’s mountain lord had learned about the matter, he had gathered every one of his best men and headed straight towards Dark Asura Hall. Meanwhile, after killing the hall master, Wu Tuo had fought his way out of Dark Asura Hall’s pursuit, looking like he was bathed in blood. I heard that every great hall master had left Dark Asura Hall to hunt down this Wu Tuo, but he still managed to escape and endure until he met up with Cloud Sky Mountain’s mountain lord.”

Lu Li and Ouyang Jingjing had vaguely heard about this story in the past. Now that Shi Jingyun had mentioned it, they immediately recalled it once more.

“But he didn’t look all that fierce?” Ouyang Jingjing exclaimed in

surprise.

“Hehe, that’s because you are not his enemy, so there’s no reason for him to bare his fangs at you.” Shi Jingyun gave a smile and said, “Jingjing, when you left Mystic Fiend Valley, you promised your father that you will obediently return to the valley and continue cultivating in the martial way if you still have not become an inner sect disciple in Armament Sect after a year.”

“You should have gone back a long time ago.” Lu Li was as cool as ever. “You were fine cultivating in the martial way, but you just had to do it out of spite against your dad and go learn that whatever artifact forging. You even claimed that your talents are extraordinary and that you can learn the magic of Armament Sect’s spirit pattern pillars. Now a year is up, and you still haven’t gained anything, have you? From what I can tell you’re just wasting your time.”

“Stop nagging, that’s so annoying. I’m ready to go back to the valley once this matter is done,” Ouyang Jingjing said impatiently.

“How was it?” Shi Jingyun smiled at Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan, “Did that Qin Bing promise to have the inner sect elders forge artifacts for you?”

“He wants to do it himself.” Ouyang Jingjing scoffed and explained the matter briefly. Then she said, “That guy’s even more cocky than Lu Li and cold all over. I just feel uncomfortable looking at him.”

“You don’t have to bother with him. You won’t be staying at Armament Sect for very long anyway, so there’s no need to worry about him.” Shi Jingyun touched his chin, paused for a moment, and said, “Try your best not to get too involved with the people of Armament Sect. Also, Jingjing, it will be best if you can leave Armament Sect as quickly as possible. Little Shi and Xuanxuan, once you get your spirit artifacts, I will arrange for you to leave Armament City.”

Once he said this, all four girls were stunned as they looked at him in surprise.

Shi Jingyun had withdrawn his smile as his expression turned serious. He said solemnly, “Armament Sect is in deep trouble this time.”

“What’s going on?” Lu Li frowned.

After pondering for a moment, Shi Jingyun finally explained.

“There are two dominant Copper forces on this Scarlet Tide Continent beneath us: Profound Heaven Alliance and Eight Extreme Sanctuary. They are the true overlords and masters of this land. Dark Asura Hall and Dark Shadow Tower belongs to Profound Heaven Alliance, and Cloud Sky Mountain and Purple Mist Sea are subordinates to Eight Extreme Sanctuary,” Shi Jingyun said seriously.

“What about Armament Sect? Which side do they belong to?” Ling Xuanxuan asked.

“That’s the problem.” Shi Jingyun frowned, “Armament Sect is also a Black Iron force, but it does not belong to either Profound Heaven Alliance or Eight Extreme Sanctuary. This force formed by artificers is an independent and free force on this continent.”

“Why did Profound Heaven Alliance and Eight Extreme Sanctuary not attack them?” Ling Yushi interrupted, “I believe that any highly ranked forces would hope to have Armament Sect as a subordinate force. This artificer’s force should be an attractive piece of meat in their eyes, right?”

“They are extremely attractive alright, and both Profound Heaven Alliance and Eight Extreme Sanctuary have always wanted to swallow them whole.” Shi Jingyun nodded, “But it is said that there is someone powerful who is sheltering Armament Sect, which is why Profound Heaven Alliance and Eight Extreme Sanctuary did not dare to touch them and allowed Armament Sect to stay independent all these years.”

“Who is that powerful character?” Lu Li asked.

Shi Jingyun shook his head and smiled bitterly, “I don’t know either. I simply heard that the reason Armament Sect could stay independent on Scarlet Tide Continent and not invaded be by Profound Heaven Alliance or Eight Extreme Sanctuary was because someone is sheltering them.”

“And now?” Lu Li asked again.

“I heard that powerful character has not come to Scarlet Tide Continent for a very, very long time. It was so long that Profound Heaven Alliance and Eight Extreme Sanctuary’s people suspected that that person had passed away.” Shi Jingyun lowered his voice, “Moreover, Qin Bing caused too big of a commotion this time. He has shown peerless talent by causing all twelve spirit pattern pillars to experience an extraordinary change. Armament Sect’s Blood Spear has also been steadily growing stronger for the past few years and is beginning to turn into a very powerful force. This caused both Profound Heaven Alliance and Eight Extreme Sanctuary to be wary of them…”

Shi Jingyun paused for a moment and continued, “There are people who do not wish to see Armament Sect turning into Scarlet Tide Continent’s third copper ranked force. That was why they had silently allowed their subordinates forces to act and see if that powerful character of the past will react towards it. They’re waiting to see if they would appear after Armament Sect had notified him.”

At this point, Shi Jingyun had turned silent and stared quietly at the four girls.

They weren’t stupid. They gradually understood after listening up to this point.

After a while, Lu Li asked, “So the reason Wu Tuo had come was to discuss about this matter? Is Seven Fiends Valley and Cloud Sky Mountain ready to act against Armament Sect?”

“He consulted me to find out Seven Fiends Valley’s attitude. He

also wants to know Profound Heaven Alliance's true position and find out if Dark Shadow Tower's actions were decided singularly by themselves or if they had acted due to Profound Heaven Alliance's orders," Shi Jingyun said.

"Then what is our stance?" Ouyang Jingjing asked.

"I am still waiting for your father..." He looked at Ouyang Jingjing first, then he looked at Lu Li and Ling Yushi, "and your masters to come out with a resolution. Once all the valley masters have decided, only then would I know what to do."

"So you're saying that Armament Sect is in deep trouble this time?" Lu Li smiled coldly.

Shi Jingyun nodded, "If Armament Sect can't handle this properly, if they can't ask that powerful character to act, then it is very likely that their sect will be... eliminated."

"Eliminated?" The four girls were shocked.

"The sect will be eliminated, Blood Spear will be wiped out, and the artificers will be imprisoned before they are divided among the large forces." Shi Jingyun's tone was firm, "And this is their best case scenario."

The four girls trembled listening to his words.

.....

At Armament Sect's plaza beneath the twelve spirit pattern pillars, Qin Lie had once again focused his soul consciousness and rushed into the inner world inside the final spirit pattern pillar.

"Bang!"

His soul consciousness once again bounced off an invisible barrier, and his head was so filled with pain that his soul returned to its original place.

The excuse he gave Feng Rong to come out of the back forest was that he had broken through to the late stage of the Natal Opening Realm, so he wanted to try breaking through the spirit pattern pillar's barrier.

His seventh Natal Palace was formed and his mind was now in tiptop condition, but he still failed yet again.

"It's alright. Once you've broken through to the Manifestation and the Netherpassage Realm, you should be able to open the barrier inside it." Ying Xingran coughed lightly and came over with the Chief Reverend Luo Zhichang.

He hadn't seen him a few days, and Ying Xingran's face was growing paler and paler. The spirit in his eyes was also gone as his condition grew worse and worse.

"I'm giving this spatial ring to you. Inside it are the sect's secret

scriptures, all kinds of rare pills and medicine, plus the records of Armament Sect's coming."

Luo Zhichang walked before Qin Lie and passed over an exquisite, dark green ring. "You must keep this ring safe and never lose it. There are a few detailed explanations of spirit diagrams inside there, and they are the core collections of Armament Sect. It must not fall into an outsider's hands."

Spatial ring!

Qin Lie's eyes lit up and he received the dark green ring with hidden excitement.

Back at Icestone City he had dreamed of owning a spatial ring. He had even thought of forging Spirit Gathering Boards for three years to sell for spirit stones to buy a spatial ring.

Unfortunately, his wishes had not come true in the end.

And today, Luo Zhichang had gifted him a spatial ring on his own. There were even Armament Sect's secret scriptures and many other rare pills and medicine inside it...

Qin Lie sucked in a deep breath and thanked them seriously before finally putting the spatial ring on his finger.

"How do I use it?" he asked Luo Zhichang.

“It’s the same as inscribing a spirit diagram. Put a wisp of mind consciousness inside it and you’ll be able to see the interior space. Just wrap your soul consciousness around anything you want to take out and it will be done…” Luo Zhichang explained.

Qin Lie immediately tried it.

As he entered a wisp of consciousness into the ring, he suddenly entered an empty small space. This feeling was somewhat like entering the Soul Suppressing Orb, except that this space was much smaller and was only two rooms wide. There were a lot of cupboards and jade tables inside this small space, and the pills and scriptures were placed on top of one of those tables.

He did not inspect the items one by one. He randomly locked onto a book with his mind consciousness, and when he moved his thoughts, he realized that he had returned to his body.

Meanwhile, that book was pulled straight out from inside the spatial ring and landed firmly in his hands.

“This really is a good item!” Qin Lie was shaken on the inside and, under Luo Zhichang and Ying Xingran’s smiles, played around and tested the spatial ring admiringly again and again.

Chapter 182: Danger

Qin Lie's soul consciousness went in and out of the spatial ring continuously. There was distinct excitement in his eyes; it was obvious that he loved this ring a lot.

Smiles appeared on Luo Zhichang and Ying Xingran's faces.

After a while, Qin Lie gradually calmed down, and with one hand still rubbing the ring's surface, he suddenly said, "I've promised to forge two spirit artifacts. I hope that the sect can provide the necessary spirit materials."

"No problem. Put them on a list and I will send someone to bring them to your cavern," Ying Xingran promised him instantly.

"I need both water and fire type spirit materials and supplementary materials..." Qin Lie thought for a moment and began requesting everything that he required.

Ying Xingran and Luo Zhichang nodded repeatedly.

"I have remembered what you told me. I will make arrangements and make sure that the spirit materials sent to you are satisfactory," Luo Zhichang smiled and said.

Qin Lie relaxed and thanked them seriously once more. Afterwards, he told them again to notify Feng Rong that he would return to the back of the mountain to soak in a blood pool after he

had forged the two spirit artifacts.

Luo Zhichang and Ying Xingran agreed to all of his requests and cooperated with him in every aspect.

“Then I will be returning to the cavern first.” Qin Lie bowed and headed up Flame Volcano.

While passing by Tang Siqi’s cave, Qin Lie’s footsteps paused for a moment as he looked towards the closed entrance.

His expression was a little complicated. He wanted to call out to her and explain matters, but if he thought about it carefully, he did give Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan generous help for Ling Yushi’s sake…

One could say that Tang Siqi and Lian Rou did not misunderstand him.

After hesitating for a moment, in the end, he did not knock on the door nor explain himself. He quietly returned to his own cavern.

Inside Tang Siqi’s cavern.

Both Lian Rou and her sat on top of the cushion. Both pair of eyes were focused at the cave entrance as if they were waiting for something.

In the end they heard Qin Lie's footsteps growing distant.

Tang Siqi's expression was downcast and she sighed in her heart and felt resentful.

"Siqi, don't think too much about it. Based on the fact that Qin Bing did everything in his power to kill Liang Shaoyang for you alone, we can say he does hold you in his heart." Seeing that she was depressed, Lian Rou couldn't help but console her, "Maybe it is really as he says, the reason he was so generous to the Ling sisters was because he wanted to seriously attempt to forge a spirit artifact. After all, he has never forged an actual spirit artifact since he entered the sect after all. He may just be trying to prove himself with this."

"Of course I won't think much of it." Tang Siqi hmphed once and curled her lips, "Even if he did think of the Ling sisters, it has nothing to do with me. My relationship with him is only one between a senior sister and junior brother."

Lian Rou smiled gently, "That will be for the best. I hoped that you would not fall for him as well. He is quite strange and his identity is unknown as well. I keep having the feeling that he is very dangerous."

Tang Siqi kept quiet and did not say anything.

Around noon.

Qin Lie put the wooden sculpture, the Eye of Frost and other items into the spatial ring inside the cave. He continued to analyze the magic of the spatial ring.

Suddenly, Tong Jihua's voice came from outside, "Is Qin Bing in there? I have a letter for you."

Qin Lie opened the stone door and saw Tong Jihua at the entrance. A letter was passed over to him. "This was sent by Liang Zhong of Dark Asura Hall. He had asked someone from Dark Asura Hall to send it over. He made it clear that you were the recipient," Tong Jihua said.

"Liang Zhong?" Qin Lie's expression was doubtful.

"Yes, Liang Zhong from Dark Asura Hall's Department of Internal Affairs. You should have seen him last time the sect entrance." Tong Jihua explained, "I'm not sure why he sent you a letter either."

"Thank you Elder Tong," Qin Lie nodded and accepted the letter.

Tong Jihua bid him goodbye and left.

After closing the stone door again, Qin Lie opened the letter and read its contents. In just a glance his expression had already changed.

“Shadow Tower’s Blood Shadow has entered Armament City. He is coming for you. Blood Shadow is far more fearsome than Gray Shadow and Black Shadow combined, you must be careful. The reason I informed you of this is because you have killed Liang Shaoyang, and Liang Shaoyang was also on our kill list. You helped us take care of a huge problem.

“Also, it is best if you leave Armament Sect immediately. The current Armament Sect is not safe. Dark Shadow Tower isn’t the only one, Dark Asura Hall, Seven Fiends Valley, and Cloud Sky Mountain also have certain plans for Armament Sect. In the future, they may combine their forces and attack Armament Sect. It is best if you can make preparations beforehand.”

“…”

Qin Lie put down the letter as his expression turned exceedingly heavy. He had just managed to relax lately, but that tension in his head was heightened once more.

“Blood Shadow has entered the city, and Armament Sect may be attacked and surrounded by enemies.” Qin Lie’s gaze slowly turned solemn.

“Is Qin Bing in there? Sect Master has asked us to send over the spirit materials.” the outer sect disciples cried out from the outside.

After burning the letter Tong Jihua had given him, only then did Qin Lie open the door once more. He could see a few outer sect

disciples carrying boxes full of spirit materials standing at the entrance while looking him with reverence.

“Bring them in,” Qin Lie said indifferently.

And so, the large boxes were moved into the cave.

“Fire Demon Stone, Water Spirit Jade, Water Fluorite...”

Seeing the boxes of spirit materials, Qin Lie’s eyes gradually brightened. He realized that most of the spirit materials here were around Profound Grade Two, and there were even a few special spirit materials that were Profound Grade Three. This was much more precious than the materials than he had for asked earlier.

The five large boxes were filled with fire and water type spirit materials. Many of these spirit materials were incredibly rare.

He believed that with so many spirit materials, even if he failed four or five times, he would still be able to help Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan forge the spirit artifacts they needed.

After locking the door, he calmed himself down and took out the spirit materials one at a time and set them down before him and gently stroked them.

He narrowed his eyes. They glittered with light. In his head he was pondering which spirit diagrams he should use to construct a compound diagram.

He quickly concentrated on the task and became fully immersed in his thoughts, wanting to finalize a plan.

In the Procedural Hall at the peak of Flame Volcano.

Ying Xingran, the three great reverends, the seven great elders including Mo Hai, Blood Spear's Lang Xie, and Feng Rong had all gathered here.

"The reason I've gathered everyone over was because the situation has been changing too swiftly. There is a need to get everyone up to speed." Ying Xingran coughed once and looked at Feng Rong, saying, "Please explain."

The people's gazes were focused onto Feng Rong.

"We have gained the upper hand since we have started the battle against Dark Shadow Tower. Blood Spear has killed seventy eight Dark Shadow Tower martial practitioners outside Armament City, and among them, fifteen people was in the Manifestation Realm and one was in Netherpassage Realm. On the other hand, Blood Spear has only lost nine people!" Feng Rong's expression was full of pride.

The three great reverends and seven inner sect elders were all nodding.

"If it was just Dark Shadow Tower, we believe that Blood Spear

can handle this easily. Even if Di Shijiu and Liang Yangju had arrived themselves, they would not be able to overturn their defeat." Feng Rong's tone then took a turn as her bright eyes became clouded by worry, "But recently, Dark Asura Hall and Cloud Sky Mountain, have slowly stopped trading with Armament Sect on their own. Many of Dark Asura Hall and Cloud Sky Mountain's low level martial practitioners have also evacuated from Armament City."

The moment she said this, many of their expressions changed.

"Blood Spear has found out that the valley masters of Seven Fiends Valley were meeting frequently as of late. It's as if they are discussing highly classified matters. Even Purple Mist Sea seems to be eager to move, and there are martial practitioners roaming around the Armament Pavilion we have opened at Purple Mist Sea very often, looking like they want to do something," Feng Rong further explained.

Dark Asura Hall, Cloud Sky Mountain, Seven Fiends Valley, Purple Mist Sea, in addition to the Dark Shadow Tower they were fighting right now. The little tricks these Black Iron forces were pulling caused everyone in the hall to feel worried.

The crowd all grew silent.

"For what reason have they done this?" Second Elder Tang Dongling, asked softly.

"Qin Bing's sudden appearance has caused many people to feel

uncomfortable. They are worried that Armament Sect will grow stronger and stronger and be harder and harder to deal with." Luo Zhichang's expression was bitter, "Not only is Qin Bing a genius in artifact forging, he has also learned a concept and with it caused a world phenomenon. Regardless of artifact forging or the martial way, he will definitely achieve great things in the future.

"Armament Sect has grown stronger and stronger in recent years. Blood Spear's strength has also caused a lot of people to feel pressured," Jiang Hao added.

"Dark Shadow Tower's swift defeat and seventy eight casualties has caused even more people to be fearful of us," Feng Rong also mentioned.

"If the five forces join as one, can Armament Sect withstand the pressure?" Third Elder Wei Qing asked.

Ying Xingran, the three great reverends, and even Feng Rong smiled bitterly when they heard him.

The answer was obvious.

Armament Sect could still handle Dark Shadow Tower easily by itself. Even if Dark Asura Hall was added into the mix, they might still be able to contend against them, just barely. But there was no chance of victory if they were to clash against all five forces at once.

“This Qin Bing is Armament Sect’s treasure and scourge.” Wei Qing lamented, “Before he came, Armament Sect was stable and peaceful. And now, because of his radiance, all five forces have grown uncomfortable. Sigh, there’s no telling if Qin Bing’s appearance is good or bad for us.”

“Whether or not Qin Bing is around, this was something Armament Sect would have to face eventually. Those two forces above us have yearned for Armament Sect for the longest time. It was only a matter of time before they would act. Qin Bing’s appearance has only hastened this matter.” Luo Zhichang pointed above him and sighed, “It’s not the first time they wanted to takedown Armament Sect. In the past, it was thanks to that person that they did not dare to act carelessly. Now that he has not returned to Scarlet Tide Continent for a very, very long time, they have begun to think some more.”

“Chief Reverend, can you contact that person?” Second Elder Tan Dongling asked seriously.

Inside the Procedural Hall, everyone’s gazes were focused onto Luo Zhichang. Their eyes were filled with great expectation.

“It’s been far too long since we’ve contacted each other, so long that I’m not even sure if he is still alive. Even if he is, I’m not sure if he’ll still help Armament Sect. After all, the one who had built a relationship with him was the sect master from two generations ago. At the time I was still just a boy,” Luo Zhichang smiled bitterly.

“You still have that item that can be used to contact him, right?”

Ying Xingran asked worriedly.

“It’s here. I just don’t know if it can be used or not.” Luo Zhichang touched his spatial ring, pondered for a moment, and said, “Moreover, things have not gone over to that point yet. Right now we are just fighting against forces of our own rank. It may be a little too soon to find him now.”

Chapter 183: Moved

Inside the cavern, Qin Lie held a spirit tablet and focused on inscribing the spirit diagram.

His finger abruptly shivered.

“Crack!” The spirit tablet instantly shattered.

“No, that’s not right. The amplification method of the Nine Winding River Diagram isn’t too right. I need to try again with a different method.” Qin Lie’s eyes glittered with motes of light as he picked up a new spirit tablet and tried yet again.

The shattered pieces of spirit tablets beside him had already formed a small mountain. At least a hundred and more spirit tablets had exploded.

He was constructing a compound diagram, familiarizing himself with the process inside the spirit tablet to confirm that the spirit tablet could endure the conflict of the compound diagram.

This was going to be the first time he himself forged an artifact.

Ling Yushi wanted a hoop-shaped artifact forged, and she cultivated a water spirit art. In order to make a spirit artifact that was perfectly compatible with her spirit art, he needed to construct a special compound spirit diagram so both the spirit weapon and spirit art could unleash their full potential.

The main diagram Qin Lie chose was the Nine Winding River Diagram.

The spirit diagram he had learned from this spirit pattern pillar was like many flowing long rivers with nine curves and eighteen bends.

Therefore, not only was the Nine Winding River Diagram suitable for a water spirit art, it could even enhance the hoop-shaped spirit artifact's flying maneuverability and also allow the hoop to suddenly curve and twist and turn like a river which possessed the very nine curves and eighteen bends while flying.

After confirming that the Nine Winding River Diagram would be the main diagram, he also needed to combine the basic Amplification, Spirit Gathering, Spirit Storage and Strengthening diagrams with the main diagram to enhance the Nine Winding River Diagram's power.

As for Ling Xuanxuan, since she was cultivating a fire spirit art and the spirit artifact she wanted was a fire hammer, Qin Lie had chosen the Soaring Sky Birds Diagram as the main diagram.

Inscribing the Soaring Sky Birds Diagram inside the hammer would reduce the weight of the hammer and cause the flames to float out of it. It could form the shape of a spirit bird and greatly enhance the fire's power.

Qin Lie believed that the Soaring Sky Birds Diagram was most suitable for the current Ling Xuanxuan. It would allow her to

unleash her true power.

But before he actually started forging the artifact, he needed to construct the two compound spirit diagrams to confirm that there were no issues. Only then he would be able to truly start.

However, it was not an easy task to construct a compound spirit diagram. It required repeated analysis and continuous experimentation.

He first needed to inscribe it successfully inside the spirit tablet and confirm that there were no issues at all. Only then would there be a chance of success when he did the same on the spirit artifact.

Therefore, the first step was to successfully inscribe the compound diagram inside the spirit tablet.

He tried it again and again in attempt to construct the two compound diagrams, trying to imprint them inside the spirit tablet with no issues.

But this time, the inscription of the spirit diagrams was significantly more difficult. Every one of his ideas would fail when he actually attempted to inscribe them.

He continuously adjusted it and used the spirit tablets to confirm his thoughts and then sought out the problem amidst countless exploding spirit tablets.

He improved one step at a time as he failed time and time again. Slowly, his recognition of compound spirit diagrams grew deeper, and he gradually began to get the hang of it.

Nine days later.

Inside the dark cave, a spirit diagram in Qin Lie's hands abruptly flew up, suspended midair. There, it unleashed a bright light while twisting and bending.

Qin Lie's looks were haggard and his face had dust covering it. But his eyes were filled with high spirits.

"I took nine days to successfully construct the first compound diagram. Not too bad." He slowly got excited, lifted a hand, and retrieved that spirit tablet back into his palm.

"There is still Ling Xuanxuan's left." He lowered his head and began seriously inscribing again.

Qin Lie lost himself in the work.

Outside the cave, a beautiful figure stood there as a complex look appeared on her beautiful face. Her heart wrenching eyes were clouded with a trace of resentment.

That figure, of course, was Tang Siqi. She had been standing outside Qin Lie's cavern for a while now.

She had been waiting, waiting for Qin Lie to hear her footsteps and open the door himself. She was waiting for him to come out and meet her.

Unfortunately though, Qin Lie did not open the door...

As if a bottle with various flavors were spilled over her heart, all kinds of emotions welled up inside her chest, causing her to feel a little suffocated.

Ten days ago, at the entrance of the ninth private room, she had said that she wanted to talk about some matters with Qin Lie. After that, because she couldn't stand Qin Lie giving the Ling Sisters special treatment, she had turned her head and walked away.

In her mind, Qin Lie would automatically seek her out, come to her cavern, and apologize before inquiring what she wanted to discuss before.

And Qin Lie did go to her cave and stand there for a moment, but just when she thought that Qin Lie would knock on the door, he had suddenly turned around and left.

At the time, she was inflicted with a terrible sense of loss.

For the longest time she was heaven's precious child. Be it Armament Sect or anywhere else, she was always the focus of everyone's eyes, the partner every man sought out.

She had long gotten used to being pampered and carefully loved by someone else. She had never been give the cold shoulder before.

Her current feelings towards Qin Lie were growing weirder and weirder. She was slowly losing control of her own heart...

A year ago, she had played a trick on Qin Lie, thinking that he would be distracted just like Liang Shaoyang.

As a result, Qin Lie had used the fire sparks to shoo her away. Since she had never imagined that a man would treat her this way. She wasn't careful, and thus, her clothes were lit with fire.

From that, she was met with a most embarrassing situation.

At first she had hated Qin Lie right down to the bones, which was why she had chosen Qin Lie as her assistant out of the many outer sect disciples.

Naturally, she had ill intentions towards him.

After that, she had arranged many difficult tasks to embarrass Qin Lie, to make him realize the consequences of offending her.

But to her surprise, Qin Lie was always able to complete the difficult tasks she gave him on time, without cutting corners.

Moreover, everything Qin Lie did was scrupulous, so scrupulous that she could not even find the slightest flaw to complain about. It far exceeded her expectations.

After that she had asked Qin Lie to assist her in forging artifacts as her assistant, to help her along the way and handle some trivial matters.

She realized that she and Qin Lie actually had an incredible tacit understanding with one another. More often than not she only needed a glance to make Qin Lie understand what she wanted and how to satisfy her. He was always able to reasonably carry out her ideas on time.

Qin Lie was able to perfectly cooperate with her in every aspect.

That was why she was getting more and more comfortable with Qin Lie...

Liang Shaoyang's appearance had caused her to feel a hint of danger. While she was still used to the past, Liang Shaoyang had repeatedly attacked and forced her into an awkward situation. He had nearly succeeded in forcing her out of Armament Sect in the end.

At this moment, Qin Lie had suddenly appeared and promised take back everything that was hers.

And he really did it. He ignored Armament Sect's rules, ignored

Liang Shaoyang's status and identity in the sect, and killed Liang Shaoyang at the entrance in front of countless martial practitioners!

Qin Lie had fulfilled his promise.

When Qin Lie's Frost Blade had pierced through Liang Shaoyang's heart, her heart was shaken to the core.

It was at this moment that how she viewed Qin Lie had undergone a massive change!

It was also at that moment that she no longer viewed Qin Lie in the same light. From that moment onwards, there was a cold and chilly figure etched inside her heart...

She had thought that these beautiful days would continue forever, that everything Qin Lie did was because he had a special place for her in his heart.

But now she thought that it might just be her one-sided delusion. Qin Lie was just the same as ever; he was just as chilly towards people.

She had never felt anything odd from Qin Lie's body language or his eyes.

"Maybe I am just deluding myself. Maybe it is all just wishful thinking," Tang Siqi whispered to herself in her heart as a trace of

bitterness appeared at the corner of her lips. “If you think nothing of me, then why did you throw away everything to kill Liang Shaoyang. Why did you let me see that incredible moment when you killed him, why did you stir my heart...”

“Siqi,” Lian Rou’s voice came softly not too far away.

Tang Siqi turned around. The smile on her beautiful face appeared a bit forceful. “Sister Lian Rou. How long have you been here?”

“I’ve been here for a while now.” Lian Rou sighed softly, “Oh, you. You have never fallen for anyone for so many years nor have you ever thought of any man seriously. Why have you suddenly grown obsessed?”

“Sister Lian Rou, what are you saying?” Tang Siqi curled her lips and feigned a natural expression, saying, “I am here to look for Qin Bing, but he seemed to be forging artifacts, so I hesitated for a moment.”

“Never mind, you know what I was referring to.” Lian Rou did not expose her either, “When it comes to relationships, those who act first will almost always become the one who is acted against later. Whoever was moved first, whoever put in the most emotions would also suffer the most in the end... I would advise you to get over it. Don’t think of Qin Bing. Just act however you wanted just like in the past. Only then are you truly Tang Siqi, the eye-catching genius girl.”

After pausing for a moment, Lian Rou said softly, “The current you is looking less and less like you right now. You have changed to the point that I’m slightly disappointed by you right now.”

“Is that so…” Tang Siqi murmured once before a smile appeared on her face once more. “I understand. Thank you, Sister Lian Rou. I will become better. You are right. I’ve been too obsessed about a certain matter during this period of time. I myself hate the way I am right now.”

“If you can understand then it’ll be great.” Lian Rou smiled and said, “Let’s go. Let’s go shopping today and relax a little.”

“Mn!” Tang Siqi also smiled brightly.

The two girls then descended down Flame Volcano and went out of Armament Sect. They went, side-by side, to Free Trade Street.

Free Trade Street was just as lively as ever. It appeared that they weren’t affected by Dark Shadow Tower and Armament Sect’s war. It was just as crowded as ever.

However, just as Tang Siqi and Lian Rou entered Free Trade Street, they immediately felt an almost solid, ruthless aura focused directly on them.

A crimson cloud carrying the immense aura of murder descended onto them from above.

The two of them could not move.

Beneath the cloud, an incredibly thin and small man wearing a blood red mask slowly became visible.

There were many martial practitioners at Free Trade Street, but the moment the crimson cloud and that man appeared, everyone's expressions turned to ones of shock as they withdrew subconsciously.

"Who are you?" Lian Rou cried out.

"I come from Shadow Tower. I am Blood Shadow. I will use the two of you and exchange your lives for that Qin Bing's." The thin and small man's voice was raspy as he slowly walked towards the duo.

A dark green snake flew out of his sleeves and tied itself around Tang Siqi and Lian Rou's waists like a rope.

With that, Blood Shadow walked forward as the snake began to twist, causing Tang Siqi and Lian Rou to follow his footsteps against their will towards a secluded alley.

Chapter 184: I Want Them Alive!

Evening.

Holding a bloody cloth and watching the bloody words written on it, Tong Jihua's face slowly turned icy.

"Call Yi Yuan over." After thinking for a moment, Tong Jihua exclaimed that softly towards his subordinate outside and called him to perform the task.

Ten minutes later, Yi Yuan stood respectfully in front of Tong Jihua. "Elder Tong, are you looking for me?"

Tong Jihua passed the blood stained cloth to him. "An hour ago Tang Siqi and Lian Rou had left to Free Trade Street and was caught by Shadow Tower's Blood Shadow. This are the terms Blood Shadow has requested. He requests that we bring Qin Bing's head or Qin Bing himself to him in exchange for Tang Siqi and Lian Rou's lives."

"Lian Rou?!" Yi Yuan's normally gentle face suddenly revealed a trace of shockingly murderous intent. "Shadow Tower's Blood Shadow? One of the three shadow guards?"

"You know them too?" Tong Jihua was surprised.

Yi Yuan did not answer. Instead he asked, "What do you want me to do, having called me here, Elder Tong?"

“You?” Tong Jihua narrowed his eyes and shook his head. “It’s not like you’re Qin Bing. The reason I called you over isn’t to ask you to do anything. I just want you to pass this news to the sect master and let him decide what to do with it.”

“Why tell me to pass the news?” Light flashed across Yi Yuan’s eyes.

Anyone could send this news to the sect master. Tong Jihua had a lot of men, and the blood guards were available for him to order around for years. He didn’t need to specifically look for Yi Yuan to handle this matter at all.

Back at Purple Mist Sea, Yi Yuan had been famed for his intelligence for years. He had noticed some clues from Tong Jihua’s instructions.

“I have always liked those two girls. I don’t want them to die.” Tong Jihua fell into silence for a moment before slowly saying, “I know the sect master. I know what his decision will be. If anyone else is to send this message, then those girls will definitely end up dead.”

Yi Yuan’s expression turned cold.

“You are more familiar with Qin Bing. You can… inform Qin Bing about this.” Tong Jihua looked at him deeply. “Right now Qin Bing is the only one in the entire sect who may be able to change Sect Master’s mind. Plus, the person Blood Shadow has asked for is

him. He has the right to know."

Yi Yuan understood.

According to Tong Jihua's words, if anyone else had notified Ying Xingran of this, he would have not told Qin Lie. He would directly order the Blood Spear to kill Blood Shadow instead.

—Ying Xingran would never risk Qin Lie's life!

"I will seek out the sect master." Yi Yuan lowered his waist and bowed deeply to Tong Jihua. He left only after speaking a soft thanks.

Along the way to Flame Volcano's peak, with Tong Jihua's banner, he was questioned by several guards multiple times and spent a whole hour before he finally saw the sect master Ying Xingran at the Procedural Hall.

The explained his purpose and submitted the bloody cloth Blood Shadow had sent over.

After taking a look at the blood cloth, his expression had also turned serious. He frowned and did not say anything.

Yi Yuan waited quietly.

After a while, Ying Xingran coughed for a moment, and with a

slightly tired voice, he waved his hands and said, “You are also part of the Blood Spear, correct?”

Yi Yuan nodded.

“Alright. Then go to the back of the mountain and notify Lang Xie about this matter. Let him handle this.” Ying Xingran made the decision with difficulty. “Have Lang Xie kill that Blood Shadow. If he can rescue Tang Siqi and Lian Rou, then that would be the best outcome. If he really can’t, then, sigh, they’ll have to blame their own fates then.”

“Are we… not going to inform Qin Bing about this matter?” Yi Yuan’s heart hit rock bottom as he tried for one last time.

Ying Xingran’s expression changed as he said sternly, “Qin Bing must not know of this! I want Qin Bing to be ignorant of this matter from beginning to end!”

Yi Yuan quietly nodded as his heart slowly turned icy cold. He answered once, “Understood.”

He withdrew his usual gentle smile and walked down from Flame Volcano’s peak. At the intersection leading to the back of the mountain and the mountainside, his footsteps paused.

“No one is allowed to hurt my Lian Rou!” Yi Yuan exclaimed in a low tone before avoiding the mountain peak guards and suddenly rushed towards the mountainside.

Before long he had arrived at the cave Qin Lie was cultivating in and banged on the door heavily, exclaiming, “Qin Bing! It’s me! Yi Yuan!”

Qin Lie, who was figuring out the spirit diagrams frowned and put down the spirit tablet in his hands. He opened the door and let Yi Yuan in, saying indifferently, “What is it?”

After a pause, Qin Lie exclaimed with some surprise, “You look terrible.”

Yi Yuan was usually always cheerful, but today, his expression was dark, and there was some sort of faint madness surrounding his eyes. It caught Qin Lie off guard.

“Senior Sister Tang and Lian Rou were caught by Blood Shadow at Free Trade Street. Blood Shadow has given his terms. Either Armament Sect shows him your head immediately or they bring you to him alive so he can kill you personally.” Yi Yuan’s entire body was surrounded with a dangerous aura. “I have gone to the sect master, and the sect master has decided for Lang Xie to kill Blood Shadow. If Senior Sister Tang and Lian Rou’s lives can be saved, then it would be the best, but if they cannot, then they will abandon them.”

He looked deeply at Qin Lie and smiled coldly, “The sect master strictly forbids anyone from telling you this. He hopes that you will be kept in the dark from beginning to end!”

“Blood Shadow, Blood Shadow…” Qin Lie whispered twice and gradually understood.

The letter Liang Zhong had sent over earlier already mentioned that Blood Shadow had arrived in Armament City. He warned him to be careful.

In this period of time, he had been staying inside Armament Sect and figuring out the structure of the spirit diagrams inside his cave. Therefore, Blood Shadow could not find a chance to attack and perhaps that was why he had gotten anxious and attacked Tang Siqi and Lian Rou.

“It looks like you’ve already disobeyed the sect master’s orders. Are you not afraid?” Qin Lie gave Yi Yuan a glance.

“One reason I came to Armament Sect was to join Blood Spear and cultivate there. But my biggest reason is still Lian Rou.” Yi Yuan’s eyes were filled with murderous intent. “To me, Lian Rou is infinitely more important than joining the Blood Spear! For Lian Rou sake’s, I would even betray the sect if it is necessary, much less disobeying the sect master’s orders!”

Qin Lie’s expression shook.

He could not help but re-evaluate Yi Yuan again. At this moment, he discovered that the current Yi Yuan was completely different from usual.

The gentle smile he usually wore on his face was gone. When Yi Yuan turned dark, it was as if he could sense the same darkness and evil he usually found on Gao Yu.

He suddenly understood that this Yi Yuan was different from what he had imagined before. This guy was like a sharp blade that had been slipped into its sheath.

When a blade was sheathed, it would appear ordinary and plain. But as soon as it is unsheathed, it will immediately reveal its sharpness and true ruthlessness hidden within.

“I’ll come with you to the back of the mountain. We will meet Lord Lang Xie together.” Qin Lie stood up.

“Guess you still have some humanity in you after all.” Yi Yuan took in a deep breath. The darkness on his face subsided a little.

Two hours later.

Qin Lie and Yi Yuan arrived at the forest behind Flame Volcano. They saw Lang Xie and Feng Rong together.

“Blood Shadow?” A trace of worriness flashed across Feng Rou’s beautiful face. “This guy is an elder level expert, a death knight trained by the previous Shadow Tower tower lord, and a true bloodthirsty and crazy beast. Gray Shadow and Black Shadow are nothing compared to Blood Shadow, they’re practically just there to fill in the numbers. This Blood Shadow may be even harder to

deal with than Liang Yangzu.”

“What is are the sect master’s intentions?” Lang Xie’s tone was calm.

Yi Yuan explained Ying Xingran’s position.

Feng Rong was shocked. She looked deeply at Yi Yuan and said, “So you’ve disobeyed the sect master’s orders then? You’ve told Qin Bing about this matter. Do you not want to stay in Armament Sect any longer?”

“For me, Lian Rou’s life is more important than everything else. I can sacrifice everything for Lian Rou,” Yi Yuan said while bowing his head.

Feng Rong was secretly moved, “Kid, you’re not too impressive in other aspects, but based on the fact that you can throw away everything for the woman you love alone, I will believe that you’re a good person.”

“Thank you for your praise, Instructor Feng.” Yi Yuan bowed.

“Naturally, the reason the sect master forbade Qin Bing from learning of this is to keep him from being distracted and so he doesn’t participate in this either.” Feng Rong felt a little headache coming on. “You ignored everything and actually dared to go against the sect master’s orders. We… are actually a bit afraid of this since this matter really is a bit troublesome.”

At this point, Feng Rong, Qin Bing, and Yi Yuan couldn't help but look at Lang Xie.

They knew that Lang Xie's attitude was of the utmost importance to them. There were some things that could be done only after Lang Xie had given his approval.

"Lang Xie..." Feng Rong exclaimed softly.

"Please save Lian Rou's life, sire!" Yi Yuan knelt on one knee and begged.

"I want them alive." Qin Lie did not kneel. He only stared directly at Lang Xie.

"I cannot guarantee their survival. But if you're willing to take the risk, then I can try. Since Blood Shadow wants you alive, I can give you to him alive. As long as you can make sure that he can't kill you with one hit, then I can guarantee your survival." Lang Xie grew silent for a moment and stared deeply at Qin Lie, "If you want them to survive, then you can risk it with your own life. Are you willing to try?"

Feng Rong and Yi Yuan turned to look at Qin Lie.

"I'll go," Qin Lie nodded.

“Good.” A hint of approval appeared within Lang Xie’s eyes. “If this matter succeeds then we will not be punished by the sect master. But if any accidents occur, then we will all be facing his wrath. Therefore, you had all better be mentally prepared. Make sure that you won’t regret making your final decision.”

Feng Rong, Yi Yuan, and Qin Lie all nodded in unison.

“We will wait. We wait for nightfall. Once the day is dark, we will depart.” Lang Xie sat down. “Qin Bing, let me remind you this. Blood Shadow should be in the middle stage of the Netherpassage Realm. There shouldn’t be any Manifestation Realm martial practitioners who can survive a single strike from him, and you are only at the late stage of the Natal Opening Realm. You haven’t even reached the peak of it yet, so you had better be mentally prepared.”

“Make sure that you’ve readied all of your life saving techniques. Be ready to suffer a direct blow!” Feng Rong exclaimed.

“Brother Qin, thank you for today!” Yi Yuan said heavily.

Qin Lie nodded and sat in front of Lang Xie. He closed his eyes and quietly awaited nighttime.

“How can I survive a single hit from a martial practitioner in the middle stage of the Netherpassage Realm?” Qin Lie kept going over the problem in his mind, but he could not come up with any ideas whatsoever.

After the Natal Opening Realm, there was still the Manifestation Realm before the Netherpassage Realm. It was already hard enough to surpass a single realm, much less two.

He thought long and hard and realized that he still couldn't figure out any way to ensure his own survival. He did not stop thinking.

But time did not wait for anyone. The sky gradually turned dark.

"Qin Bing, are you ready?" After a long while, Lang Xie asked one final time.

"Let's go." Qin Lie forcefully stood up.

Chapter 185: Caught In A Trap

It was deep in the night at a secluded district in a large mansion filled with cobwebs.

This was the base Shadow Tower had set up in Armament City.

Half a year ago Xie Jingxuan and Liang Zhong had brought Dark Asura Hall's experts to this place to hunt down Liang Shaoyang. They had exterminated so many of Shadow Tower's death knights that they had essentially cleaned the place with blood.

Black Shadow also ended up being killed in this mansion by Blood Spear's experts later on.

It was now half a year later. The floor was covered with dust, and there were spiders everywhere. The mansion appeared to be deathly still under the bright moonlight.

Amidst the huge trees surrounding the yard, Blood Shadow, thin and short, sat quietly on the dusty floor with a hideous mask on his face.

Beside one of the trees, Tang Siqi and Lian Rou were tied up by a snake at their waists to the root of a tree. Cloths had been stuffed into their mouths.

Blood Shadow's closed eyes opened as he stared in the direction of the entrance. A terrifying, cold light flowed from the pair of

eyes that was as poisonous as a venomous snake.

"Sss, sss! Sss, sss!"

A great number of little crimson snakes slithered out of the dark corners of the yard. Under the bright moonlight these little snakes appeared to be incredibly colorful.

The small snakes flicked their tongues as a portion of them gathered beneath Tang Siqi and Lian Rou's legs. The other portion slithered out of the door.

Tang Siqi and Lian Rou's mouth were stuffed. Seeing the small snakes gathering towards them, horror shone out of their beautiful eyes as they let out muffled cries, bodies shaking around violently.

But no matter how hard they tried, they could not break free from the spirit snake's bind.

Under the night sky, the desolate mansion appeared somewhat dark and scary as Blood Shadow had merged completely with his surroundings. It was as if the darkness and frightening atmosphere were all caused by him.

"Half a year ago I killed Black Shadow here. Unexpected, I thought I wouldn't have to come back here anymore."

Feng Rong's expression was calm as she helplessly shook her head. It looked like she didn't like this place too much, but she was

still the first person to force herself to enter the wide courtyard.

Qin Lie and Yi Yuan followed behind her side by side.

Meanwhile, Lang Xie had hidden himself within the darkness and quietly observed the situation.

“Blood Spear’s Instructor Feng?” Blood Shadow’s raspy voice came over.

A hint of terrifying hatred flashed across his eyes filled with venom. “Very good. It’s good that you’ve brought him.”

He looked at Qin Lie and Yi Yuan before his gaze finally focused onto Qin Lie. He nodded and said, “Your life for the two girls’ lives. Have you thought well and hard about this exchange?”

Tang Siqi and Lian Rou’s eyes abruptly lit up. They had not expected that Qin Lie and Yi Yuan would actually come.

As Armament Sect’s inner sect disciples, they knew Ying Xingran’s behavior very well. They knew Ying Xingran would sacrifice himself for the prosperity of the sect, much less the two of them.

Ever since they were caught by Blood Shadow and heard that he would trade them for Qin Lie, they had thought that their lives were already lost.

That was because they knew that Ying Xingran would definitely abandon them. He would never allow Qin Lie to risk himself in this manner.

In truth, their guesses were completely correct. Ying Xingran did abandon them.

But Qin Lie had actually appeared. This greatly confused Tang Siqi and Lian Rou. It was unlikely that Ying Xingran would have acted differently, so they quickly understood that this course of action was not what Ying Xingran intended.

Therefore, they both looked towards Qin Lie.

Qin Lie did not answer. He turned around to look at Lian Rou once before walking straight to Blood Shadow.

He raised both of his hands to indicate that he had come empty handed. He even opened the clothes in front of his chest so that Blood Shadow could see that he wasn't wearing any armor, to show that he was here to die.

Blood Shadow's eyes were sinister as he let out an odd chuckle, "Brat, you don't need to do this. With your Natal Opening Realm, it doesn't matter if you're wearing armor or wielding a godly weapon. You'll be dead in the blink of an eye if I wanted to kill you."

Qin Lie did not utter a word. With an indifferent expression, he walked unhurriedly towards Blood Shadow one step at a time.

“Where is Lang Xie?” Blood Shadow suddenly asked as he looked at Feng Rong, “Lang Xie is nearby isn’t he? I know he wants to kill me. I know he will definitely be here!”

A hint of madness suddenly appeared in Blood Shadow’s eyes as he laughed hideously, “Lang Xie, I’m waiting for you to kill me!”

The moment his voice fell, hundreds of spirit snakes formed from pure spirit energy rapidly gushed out of Blood Shadow’s body.

Each of these spirit snakes were at least three to five meters long and about two fingers wide. Like rainbows or cold lightning streaking through the air, they let out a shocking whistling noise as they moved.

Out of the hundreds of snakes that were scouring the entire yard, some of them rushed at Feng Rong and Yi Yuan as well.

Of the remaining snakes, only ten spirit snakes hissed and rushed towards Qin Lie’s chest, eyes and stomach.

“Bang!”

A terrible pressure suddenly pressed down from the sky and instantly trapped Qin Lie.

That energy was like a mountain sitting on his body, causing his knees to bend and nearly forcing him to the ground in but an instant.

Under the pressure, he was unable to do anything at all. The only thing he could do was watch the ten spirit snakes flying towards him as they were about to shoot through his chest.

“Eye of Frost!” Qin Lie inwardly shouted.

Icy light suddenly surrounded Qin Lie. Before the ten spirit snakes could fly in, Qin Lie’s body suddenly exploded like a ball of ice before he disappeared along with the shattered icy light.

He had teleported to the underground area beneath the Arctic Mountain Range!

This was the solution that he had finally come up out after thinking long and hard along the way there!

If he could not take even a single blow, then he just need to not to take it at all!

The next moment, Qin Lie appeared at the area underneath the Arctic Mountain Range and vanished from Armament City. He had slipped away right under Blood Shadow’s nose.

“Hm?”

Blood Shadow’s cruel eyes froze when he looked at where Qin Lie was just a moment ago.

His expression changed as he spread out his mind consciousness and began searching the area around him.

There was not the slightest fluctuation of energy or trace of life at all!

Qin Lie had disappeared entirely!

Blood Shadow was greatly shocked. “How did he disappear without any warning? How did he suddenly teleport away? This land’s area below ground and the surrounding regions have been sealed off with barriers. How did he escape?”

Blood Shadow could not believe it.

It was at this moment Lang Xie’s voice suddenly rang out from the top of a tall building beside this house, “Feng Rong, Yi Yuan, leave this mansion and return to Armament Sect immediately!”

Shock appeared in the eyes of Feng Rong, who was holding all the spirit snakes back with the Hundred Flower Round Shield.

Lang Xie told her to retreat? Lang Xie actually told her to retreat?

She couldn’t believe it!

“Di Shijiu is here. Liang Yangzu is here. Yuan Tianya is also here.” At the tall building, Lang Xie looked down on Blood Shadow with not a trace of emotion in his voice, “They did not set up this trap for Qin Bing. They came for you and me.”

Feng Rong was shocked.

Yi Yuan was also so shocked he could faint.

“You are called Yi Yuan, correct?” A voice came from underground, “You may leave. Purple Mist Sea wants you alive, so you may live.” The voice came from Dark Asura Hall’s First Hall Master, Yuan Tianya.

“Senior Brother Lang Xie, are you really going?” All of a sudden, Blood Shadow’s raspy voice turned sharp and piercing. That voice was very strange, like iron needles scratching against the surface of a knife. It was incredibly unpleasant to listen to.

Lang Xie, who was already ready to leave abruptly paused his footsteps and turned around. He asked in a solemn manner, “Who are you?”

Chapter 186: Old Grudge

“Who are you?”

Feng Rong’s expression also changed as she coldly stared at the mask wearing Blood Shadow. Her eyes slowly turned solemn.

Under the sky of this dark night and within secluded district, this lonely mansion was filled with an extremely oppressive atmosphere.

Lang Xie had already started to leave, but because of Blood Shadow’s one sentence, he had suddenly turned around.

“Who are you?” Lang Xie asked again.

Thick hatred flowed out of Blood Shadow’s poisonous eyes. “You don’t need to know who I am, all you need to know is that I respect Master! All these years, the reason I have persisted through them was to kill you, Lang Xie, you who killed your own master!”

“Sky Lock!” Blood Shadow suddenly exclaimed.

Thick, blood colored clouds suddenly pressed down as though the sky itself were falling.

A murderous intent that would destroy a person’s soul shot out from the clouds. Amidst the bolts of bloody red light, a gigantic

hawk that looked like it had been formed from fresh blood rushed out and swooped down on Lang Xie for the kill.

At the same time, a thin and shriveled figure quietly appeared on this stone tower.

This person looked to be about sixty to seventy years old. He wore a gray brown robe, and his left hand that was like a withered claw that was carrying a long sword made from white bones.

The bone sword was only three fingers wide with not the slightest bit of luster on it. It did not appear to be eye-catching in any way.

“Di Shijiu!” However, the moment Feng Rong saw him, she instantly cried out, “Careful Lang Xie!”

“Di Shijiu!” Lang Xie exclaimed solemnly as his eyes turned blood red. A strong pungent stench of blood so thick it filled the air suddenly spread out from his body.

“Rise!” Lang Xie pointed a finger at the giant hawk.

A dot of blood red flew out of his sleeves. It instantly transformed into a bloody stained spear, and as the spear was unleashed, an extremely mournful, whistling sound suddenly rang out from space itself.

It was as if countless evil ghosts and evil spirits were crying out

and howling madly from the depths of hell's purgatory.

These whistling sounds all came from a single blood spear!

"Pwack!"

The blood spear pierced the giant hawk, and amidst the spreading stench of blood, it continued to stab at the blood cloud in the sky.

Lang Xie no longer looked on top of his head. Instead, he bit open his finger and dripped a single drop of fresh blood on his chest. From the drop, a bloody light shined like a spark that was slowly setting the the grasslands alight.

A few seconds later, the bloody light blinking at Lang Xie's chest had solidified into blood red spirit armor.

As the bloody light continued to blink, the spirit armor solidified all over his body, covering his chest, back, shoulders, arms, stomach, and thighs. In an extremely short amount of time, the blood red spirit armor had covered his entire body.

The spirit armor was like a turtle shell. Its surface was inscribed with tight and complicated yet delicate patterns. The patterns were like many veins, and in these very veins, lines of fresh blood flowed.

It took only a glance for people to know that the spirit armor was

extraordinary. It made people feel that the interior of the spirit armor must be imbued with some kind of magic.

“Lang Xie, I can’t walk away today.” Yuan Tianya’s laughter came from underground. “Blood Spear is Armament Sect’s armor. Once Blood Spear is eliminated, Armament Sect will instantly crumble. The normally distinguished artificers will instantly become the captives of all forces and be imprisoned in their cages, forging artifacts for us.”

“We had enough of the shitty tempers of those artificers!” Yuan Tianya walked out into the open while laughing.

Like a will o’ wisp, he appeared in front of Feng Rong and Yi Yuan. He even smiled leisurely at the duo before suddenly departing.

He was also headed towards Lang Xie.

“Blood Shadow, you only need to trap Blood Spear’s Instructor Feng. You can leave Lang Xie to us,” Yuan Tianya instructed.

It was at this moment that the bone sword gripped in the hands of Dark Tower’s tower lord, Di Shijiu, was suddenly swung at Lang Xie.

Like a rainbow, the sword swung down, completely unstoppable..

“Pak pak pak!”

Every stone building that was in front of the bone sword’s path, each more than ten meters tall, suddenly shattered and collapsed.

Amidst the exploding stones, there was an eerie white sword beam that billowed like an earth dragon. It rammed and shattered the stone buildings in its way, pounding straight for Lang Xie.

Meanwhile, Di Shijiu, who was swinging the sword, suddenly disappeared while the eerie white sword beam rushed forward with unstoppable power.

Surprisingly, Yuan Tianya followed right behind the eerie white sword beam, just like a will o’ wisp once more amidst a sky of stone chips. He was also heading towards Lang Xie.

“Who are you, Blood Shadow?” Feng Rong demanded coldly with a frigid expression, “I’d like to know if I should call you Junior Brother, or Senior Brother?”

Blood Shadow’s evil, snake-like eyes suddenly shone with a hint of bizarre gentleness. He looked deeply at Feng Rong before saying, “You should call me Senior Brother.”

“I know who you are now!” Feng Rong’s entire body turned cold before she shouted fiercely, “Why haven’t you died yet?”

“The master murderer, Lang Xie, hasn’t died yet, so how can I die

first?" Blood Shadow chuckled oddly, "We were all raised and taught by our Master since we were young. Not only did Lang Xie forget his kindness, he had even treacherously killed him. After being taught for so many years by Master, I do have an obligation to obtain justice for him!"

"Master deserved to die," Feng Rong snorted coldly.

The gentleness in Blood Shadow's eyes earlier completely disappeared as soon as he heard Feng Rong's one sentence. He instantly shouted in irritation, "Bitch! You deserve to die too!"

Once finished, his shadow formed under the moonlight shine suddenly started to wriggle eerily, and as if it had turned into a blood colored demon, it abruptly swooped down onto Feng Rong with killing intent.

"Blood Arts: Materialization!" Shocked, Feng Rong abruptly jumped backwards and rushed out of the courtyard.

The blurry blood colored shadow zoomed past, barely a hair away from Yi Yuan's body, and headed straight for Feng Rong.

As the blood colored shadow passed by Yi Yuan, a bloodthirsty and violent aura seemed to have seeped into Yi Yuan's body, causing him to shudder all of the sudden. The evil thoughts and murderous intent inside his heart seemed to have been activated instantly.

Yi Yuan wordlessly took out his big umbrella, opened it, and suddenly headed towards Tang Siqi and Lian Rou.

Blood Shadow still stayed inside the yard and did not pursue Feng Rong. He seemed to be very confident with the shadow he let out.

Seeing Yi Yuan approaching, Blood Shadow suddenly said eerily, “The people from Purple Mist Sea want you alive, but that is assuming that you stay obedient. If you plan to join into the fray, then I won’t give that face to Purple Mist Sea.”

“I don’t care about your grudge with Blood Spear, and I don’t care how you’re going to split Armament Sect among yourselves…” Yi Yuan stared at Blood Shadow with a surprisingly calm tone, “I only want this woman to survive!” He pointed at Lian Rou.

Blood Shadow suddenly frowned and turned around to look at Lian Rou. After a moment of thought, he asked, “Not this woman?” pointing at Tang Siqi.

“The one I want is her!” Yi Yuan’s eyes looked straight at Lian Rou. He did not spare Tang Siqi a glance.

Blood Shadow was obviously surprised for a moment before he chuckled strangely and nodded. He responded, “You relinquished the pretty girl and purposely chose the ugly one. In my opinion, you’re either blind or stupid.”

Yi Yuan scoffed once and only looked at Lian Rou.

“That ugly girl has no value to me, and I’m not interested in her either. If you want her, then take her and leave.”

Blood Shadow waved his hand. He obviously did not think anything of Lian Rou, and he did not want to kill Yi Yuan for a completely useless Lian Rou either. That was why he generously gave out Lian Rou; one could say that he was selling Purple Mist Sea some face as well.

His poisonous eyes lurked around Tang Siqi’s voluptuous body. From time to time he would chuckle.

It was obvious that the sexy and seductive Tang Siqi was his to be his true meal.

It was at this moment—

—an icy light appeared inside the yard. After the icy light had faded, Qin Lie, who had vanished earlier in a bizarre manner had once appeared again in the same manner.

Chapter 187: Explode!

The Eye of Frost could instantly teleport Qin Lie the area beneath the Arctic Mountain Range, but every time he returned, it would always be in the same place he departed from.

That was why Qin Lie had appeared on the spot where he had left earlier, the spot right in front of Yi Yuan and Blood Shadow.

Blood Shadow was obviously caught by surprise.

He was confused by Qin Lie's sudden disappearance and appearance.

But it was only for an instant. Blood Shadow instantly regained his cool and chuckled, "Brat, you're on the must kill list, so I won't let you go like Yi Yuan."

Blood Shadow softly whistled in a low tone.

There were originally many colorful snakes scattered across the various corners of the yard and beneath Tang Siqi and Lian Rou's feet.

As he started whistling their colorful and twisting bodies flicked their tongues with hissing sounds, their eyes shining with a poisonous and sinister light before immediately charging towards Qin Lie.

“Eat him,” Blood Shadow smiled nastily.

Qin Lie’s expression abruptly changed.

He did not expect to face such a scene when he came back again, nor did he think that he would have to face Blood Shadow alone.

According to his promise with Lang Xie and Feng Rong, as long as he endured a single direct blow from Blood Shadow, then Lang Xie would immediately attack Blood Shadow so that he could never attempt the next strike.

Meanwhile, Feng Rong would then seize the opportunity to rush towards Tang Siqi and Lian Rou’s side and release them.

That was the plan they had come up with earlier.

Qin Lie had gone to and from the Arctic Mountain Range and successfully avoided Blood Shadow’s attack. He had thought that once he came back Tang Siqi and Lian Rou would’ve escaped danger and that Blood Shadow would’ve been executed...

Reality had gone way out of his expectations!

“Yi Yuan! Where is Lord Lang Xie and Instructor Feng?” Qin Lie shouted.

A trace of bitterness appeared on Yi Yuan’s face, who was about

to arrive by Lian Rou's side. But still, he headed towards Lian Rou. "Lord Lang Xie has been slowed down by Di Shijiu and Yuan Tianya. If there are no accidents... there is still Liang Yangzu in hiding nearby. Instructor Feng is still around, she was just chased out by a shadow conjured from Blood Shadow's blood and left the yard before you came back."

While he was speaking, Yi Yuan had arrived beside Lian Rou.

"Ngh! Ngh!" Lian Rou shook her head repeatedly while fiercely glaring at Yi Yuan. A muffled voice kept coming out of her mouth as if she was forcing Yi Yuan to do something.

Meanwhile, the colorful strange snakes controlled by Blood Shadow slowly gathered beneath Qin Lie's feet.

Blood Shadow smiled nastily from the side. He no longer attacked Qin Lie himself. He was obviously waiting to see Qin Lie being bitten to death and devoured by the spirit snakes until not a bone was left.

"I can't help Qin Bing." Yi Yuan shook his head bitterly and looked at Tang Siqi beside him. The bitterness on his face grew thicker as he said, "I'm sorry, I can't save you as well..."

Sadness and helplessness appeared inside Tang Siqi's eyes. When she saw Yi Yuan looking at her, her left pinky finger trembled and pointed continuously at her own heart, sending some kind of signal to Yi Yuan.

There was beseechment in her eyes.

“You want me to kill you?” Yi Yuan’s body trembled.

Tang Siqi’s eyes shone with confirmation.

“Brat, take your ugly girl and leave already. You had better not cause any trouble for me.” Blood Shadow’s cruel eyes were still focused on Qin Lie. When he heard Yi Yuan’s voice from behind him, he hmphed coldly.

The beseechment inside Tang Siqi’s eyes grew thicker.

Lian Rou was also fiercely glaring at Yi Yuan.

Yi Yuan just stood there while frozen. He did not save Lian Rou, nor did he act according to Tang Siqi’s words and kill her.

He frowned deeply as his expression turned extremely heavy. He was wavering between two difficult choices.

“Sss sss!”

The colorful snakes agilely gathered over. They flicked their tongues and exposed the sharp fangs in their mouths.

With Qin Lie’s acute perception, he sensed that each spirit snake

held an incredible amount of life energy inside them.

He guessed that these spirit snakes surrounding him were all Rank Two spirit snakes. The ones that had exquisite patterns on them and even brighter colors were probably Rank Three.

Rank Three spirit beasts were the equivalent of Manifestation Realm martial practitioners. They were definitely not something he deal with right now.

His other hand hidden inside his left sleeve had tightened its grip around the Frost Eye once more. Seeing the snake slithering at his direction, he was ready to enter the land of absolute zero once more.

“The land of absolute zero! The frozen ancient giant beasts!”

When he thought of the land of absolute zero, he experienced something flashing through his head. Weren’t those terrible and fearsome giant beasts of ancient time frozen by ice as well in that cold and frigid world?

He had also learned the frost concept. If that person in the past could freeze those ancient beasts, then why couldn’t he freeze these little snakes?

When he thought of this, he suddenly sat down and even closed his eyes.

His left hand was still holding onto the Eye of Frost. His mind consciousness sank amidst the frost concept as if he had stepped into the coldest place in the world. With a cold heart, he had brought the most extreme cold to the world beneath his legs!

A terribly cold concept that would freeze the world and freeze every living being in the world solid gradually spread out with him at the center.

The maximized frost concept unleashed its true coldness, attempting to turn this land into one of ice and snow.

While sensing the frost concept and channeling Frost Arts, Qin Lie was going to unleash all of the frost energy inside his Natal Palace.

“Eh?”

His left hand gripped the Eye of Frost tightly. Just as he was entering the frost concept, a cold aura several tens of times colder than his personal aura gushed out from his body!

“Krak krak krak krak!”

The many colorful little snakes that were twisting their bodies suddenly turned rigid.

Crystalline and sparkling ice formed swiftly in mere seconds and directly froze the little snakes, turning them into exquisite little ice

sculptures.

At a glance, all the little snakes were like little trinkets frozen inside ice jades.

Not a single one of the Rank Two spirit snakes could resist it. By the time they had felt the frost concept spreading towards them, their bodies were already frozen.

The Rank Three spirit snakes on the other hand managed to realize the danger of that frost aura in time before it enveloped them and turned about to escape from the area around Qin Lie.

However, their slithering bodies obviously grew slower and slower until ice gradually appeared on their bodies.

A mere dozen or so seconds later, they too were frozen solid.

Qin Lie opened his eyes. Both of them were completely white with not a hint of emotion in them, thoroughly chilly and terrifying.

All the spirit snakes that could be seen had been frozen into ice sculptures in all sorts of poses.

The frost concept on his body had spread out and caused this yard to feel like it was in the most frigid winter since the dawn of time. There were icicles beneath the eaves, and the top of the roof had been covered with a thick sheet of ice. The stone ground

beneath their feet had also been covered...

"Shiver shiver!"

Yi Yuan had shrunk down beneath his big umbrella and was trembling all over. His teeth were chattering and his face was a little pale.

He might be slightly farther away from Qin Lie, but underneath the coverage of this terrible frost concept, he also felt uncomfortable all over. Only by using the big umbrella could he keep the frost concept from affecting him too much.

Tang Siqi and Lian Rou's bodies were obviously covered with a layer of frost, and their long hairs were frozen as well. From these events, surprise appeared inside their eyes.

The eyes underneath Blood Shadow's hideous mask let loose a fierce and brutal color. He was obviously not too affected by it. Seeing that the spirit snakes had been frozen, he frowned and said darkly, "You truly are a genius who has learned a concept. Concepts are something that even I do not have the talent to learn, and yet a Natal Opening brat like you actually managed to learn it. How unfortunate..."

As Blood Shadow approached Qin Lie—

—a thick bloody aura gushed towards Qin Lie.

Qin Lie's eyes were disturbed, and his mind shook a little. Seeing Blood Shadow walking towards him, he had the feeling that he was facing an endless sea of blood surging and flooding over him.

This was an instinct that came directly from his soul. It was also the mental attack formed by the bloody aura on Blood Shadow. It could strike straight into the depths of his soul!

"Prak prak prak!"

Blood Shadow walked towards him, one step at a time, and the ice on the frozen spirit snakes exploded at once.

The little snakes immediately regained their freedom.

Clutching the Eye of Frost, a thin layer of ice formed on Qin Lie's body. The frost concept he had unleashed upon his surroundings was so terrible that even the air itself had gradually stopped.

But this level of power seemed to be far from sufficient against Blood Shadow!

At the Netherpassage Realm, Blood Shadow was a top notch expert even among the surrounding Black Iron forces. He was someone who could be considered on equal footing with Jiu Liuyu and Yuan Tianya.

This kind of character was obviously not someone whom he could face right now.

His eyes were as cold as ever, but his mind was spinning quickly for a way to deal with Blood Shadow.

A wisp of mind consciousness had also slipped into spatial ring and searched continuously...

All of a sudden, a metallic ball fell into his mind's eye. An idea flashed through his mind as his eyes flashed with a strange light.

The Terminator Profound Bomb!

He still had one Terminator Profound Bomb left. It was the Terminator Profound Bomb that Li Mu had provided him with a detailed list for and that he had forged with his own hands!

He attempted to activate the Terminator Profound Bomb inside the spatial ring.

"Rrrmmb!"

As his wisp of mind consciousness moved it inside the spatial ring, a dull rumble came from inside the Terminator Profound Bomb.

The light in Qin Lie's eyes grew brighter and brighter.

"Your talents are extraordinary. If we allow you to continue

cultivate like this, you will definitely become another Mo Hai in the future. Perhaps you may even become another Lang Xie." Blood Shadow moved closer with his entire body boiling with a thick, bloody aura that destroyed all the ice along the way and freed his spirit snakes.

"The hybrid of Mo Hai and Lang Xie may really lead Armament Sect to glory and turn Armament Sect into the third Copper force in Scarlet Tide Continent." Blood Shadow's pupils were like bloody crescents. The blood clouds squirmed above his head. "This is something that no one wishes to see. That is why you are on our must kill list and why I will kill you."

When he finished saying those words, Blood Shadow had arrived within seven meters in front of Qin Lie. The blood cloud on his head was incredibly thick, and the blood aura on his body gushed out madly.

Blood Shadow himself seemed to have turned into a bolt of bloody light that shot straight at Qin Lie.

Qin Lie's aura abruptly changed.

The frigid coldness in his eyes abruptly turned violent and crazy. He suddenly lifted his hand as the Terminator Profound Bomb abruptly flashed into his palm. "Explode!"

He threw out the Terminator Profound Bomb and retreated swiftly. He evacuated at top speed in the direction he came from outside the yard.

Blood Shadow watched the rolling metallic ball with disdain in his eyes. He actually extended a hand to grab it. “Cheap tricks.”

“BOOOM!!

A violent thunderous rumble that would shatter the world, followed by many thick and long streaks of lightning abruptly exploded from Blood Shadow’s chest.

With that, a scream so terrible that it would hurt one’s eardrums pierced through that black sky.

Chapter 188: Split Earth!

Blood Shadow's chest crumpled inside. Almost every bone in his body had shattered instantly. There were even many of them protruding out of his flesh.

That appearance was incredibly terrible to look at. It was as if he had been torn by demons and monsters. His entire body was filled with broken bones, and these very bones were all from his own body.

Blood Shadow had underestimated the terrifying might of the Terminator Profound Bomb.

After the Terminator Profound Bomb had detonated, not only did the super powerful shockwave instantly deal a grievous blow to Blood Shadow, it had also shattered the frozen land around them.

The ice frozen land, the thick ice, the spirit snakes that had turned into ice crystals, they all turned into icy smithereens after the explosion.

A huge hole in the ground, several meters deep, was forcefully formed at the center of the yard. It was like the gaping mouth of a gigantic beast.

"Krak krak krak!"

While the earth shook, the shattered ice on top of Tang Siqi and

Liang Rou's heads fell down like hailstones from the trees.

The ice smashed into Yi Yuan's body, shocking him greatly as he instantly turned around to look behind him.

Yi Yuan froze shortly after.

Bones covered in blood were protruding from every corner of Blood Shadow's body. Surprisingly, despite being hurt so severely, his body somehow wasn't bleeding too much at all.

His hideous mask had also been blasted away, revealing Blood Shadow's true face—it was a terrifying face which had its nose and ears cut off!

"Yi Yuan! Take Senior Sister Tang and leave this place!" Qin Lie's icy cold voice suddenly came from underground.

When Yi Yuan focused his gaze, he realized that Qin Lie was now inside the exploded big hole in the yard since who knew when.

A powerful earth aura was unleashed again from Qin Lie's body, causing his temperament to change all of a sudden. He became as sturdy as a mountain, and his body was emanating a heavy yet relieving feeling.

"Split!"

Qin Lie stood in the middle of the large sunken hole, channeled the Records of Geocentric Magnetism, and shouted suddenly.

Inside the hole, an incredibly immense and powerful energy suddenly shook once like the heart of the earth.

“Kachak! Kachak!”

Shocking cracks suddenly appeared on the ground Blood Shadow was on. A powerful suction force poured out of the center of the earth.

Blood Shadow’s grievously injured body was abruptly devoured by the powerful gravitational field after the earth had cracked open a ravine.

He fell into the deep seams of the earth!

Yi Yuan’s expression had changed yet again. Shock appeared in his eyes as if he had just met Qin Lie for the first time.

“Take Senior Sister Tang and Lian Rou away!” Qin Lie cried out again, “I’m not sure why, but this Blood Shadow is incredibly weak. The blood aura inside his body is not even comparable to a Manifestation Realm expert! This is probably not his true strength, so don’t daze off right now. Otherwise, the moment he escapes danger, both you and I are going to die for sure!”

Qin Lie had an incredibly strong intuition that the current Blood

Shadow was definitely not at a normal state. He was definitely not at his best condition!

This was because Li Mu had told him before that, although the Terminator Profound Bomb's explosive power was terrible, it was not too realistic to expect that it could severely hurt a Netherpassage Realm expert.

Moreover, when he had ignited the Terminator Profound Bomb earlier, Blood Shadow had not even caught the profound bomb with his hand.

That was to say, Blood Shadow had not suffered the full explosive shockwave of the Terminator Profound Bomb at all.

But even then, Blood Shadow was still gravely injured to the point where he looked like he could die at any moment, considering the bones inside his body had shattered. This was obviously illogical.

Once reminded by Qin Lie, as if suddenly remembering something, Yi Yuan took out a blue dagger from his lap and cut off the spirit snake tightened around Tang Siqi and Lian Rou's waists. Then he cried out, "Blood Shadow has unleashed his Blood Arts: Materialization, so his true body didn't even have thirty percent of his true power. That Blood Arts: Materialization came into existence with seventy percent of his blood, with half of his soul as the core and his shadow as the body. That shadow has taken away seventy percent of his blood and power!"

While he was speaking, Yi Yuan carried Lian Rou on his shoulders and immediately discovered that a forbidden art had bound Lian Rou's body.

As he extended his other hand to carry Tang Siqi away as well, a scarlet red blood shadow suddenly howled violently before rushing back at top speed!

Feng Rong had also came back together with that blood shadow!

"Not good!"

Yi Yuan was shocked when he saw that blurry, blood red shadow charging in his direction. He hurriedly withdrew his hand away from Tang Siqi and opened his big umbrella.

Bits of purple light danced on the umbrella like beautiful, purple starlight.

That big umbrella that was seen by Yi Yuan as his second life abruptly began to spin, and while it spun, bolts of fearsome purple light shot out from the sides of the umbrella.

Those bolts were like a flock of purple blades!

"Zing zing zing!"

The purple lights shot everywhere. On the blood shadow's way

back, it was struck by the purple lights. Traces of bloody red mist appeared from it.

"Blood slave! Kill all of them!" Blood Shadow's true body shouted fiercely from within the crevice.

"Close!" Qin Lie madly channeled the power of geocentric magnetism.

The split open crevice in the ground was actually closing, bit by bit, with a strength that could crush even a mountain!

The bones of Blood Shadow's true body trapped inside the crevice were already broken, so after it was squeezed like that, more explosive cracks like the sound of frying beans came from inside.

Blood Shadow let out an inhumane scream, "Brat, I'm going to grind you into dust!"

"Good job!" Feng Rong rushed over and took out a silver hairpin. There was immense mind energy and constrictive power emanating from it.

She waved the silver hairpin and continuously used her mind to lock onto the blood slave. She wanted to seal it with its restrictive power.

With full concentration, Yi Yuan continued to wave his big umbrella, and many sword-like purple beams shot at the blood

slave without end.

Under the purple light's assault, the blood slave steamed with wisps of blood smoke while it avoided being imprisoned by Feng Rong. It was obviously flying towards Yi Yuan, but because Qin Lie had used the power of earth to crush Blood Shadow's true body, it seemed to have been affected greatly as well. It finally turned into a clump of bloody light that shook continuously in the air.

"Return with Blood Escape!" Seeing that the blood slave could not return after a while, Blood Shadow shouted again.

"Splurt!"

As he cried out, the blood slave exploded into seven streaks of bloody lights and plunged towards the underground crevice from different directions.

Each and every one vanishing toward Blood Shadow's true body!

Every time one of the lights entered his body, his dying consciousness would recover somewhat. When all seven bloody lights had merged into his true body, all the protruding bones on Blood Shadow's body were actually forcefully withdrawn back into his flesh.

Those weak eyes of his had also regained his terrifying, bloody gleam. It was as if his strength had completely returned.

“I’m going to kill all of you!”

Blood Shadow howled angrily at the sky before morphing into crimson smoke and flying out from the crevice.

A terrifying sphere of power that was as thick as blood suddenly pressed down from the sky and covered the entire yard.

“I’d like to see who’ll die first!” Feng Rong laughed coldly, “Do you really think you can beat me after withdrawing your blood slave and fighting me with your true body?”

Feng Rong bit open her finger and pressed a drop of fresh blood between her eyebrows. Then, she slowly pulled out a palm sized blood knife from between her eyebrows.

The moment the blood knife had come out, Feng Rong’s aura abruptly changed as her body actually unleashed an even thicker stench of blood than Blood Shadow’s.

Chapter 189: I'll Be Waiting For You To Kill Me In The Future

Feng Rong pulled out a palm sized blood knife from between her eyebrows and grabbed onto it.

"Blood Arts: Soul Shackle!"

Feng Rong waved her knife as the knife drew crimson streaks. The streaks of blood intersected in the air to form a bloody net.

A soul shackling, mind consciousness suspending bloody aura was unleashed from the bloody net.

"Cover!" Feng Rong pointed at Blood Shadow.

The blood colored net fell on Blood Shadow, attempting to nail down his soul and restrict his consciousness.

Both Qin Lie and Yi Yuan felt their souls tighten as the thought of being imprisoned inside a cage spawned terror within their hearts right after the net had formed.

While watching the blood colored net fall onto Blood Shadow, Qin Lie's mind shook as he realized that every soul type mind energy seemed to have been shackled as soon as the bloody net was formed.

The blood was obviously aimed at Blood Shadow, yet he had felt his own soul tighten as a strange feeling caused him to feel uncomfortable all over.

“Qin Bing! Yi Yuan! Take one each and leave this place as soon as possible!” Feng Rong yelled coldly. Her beautiful eyes shone with a faint bloody light.

If someone looked at them carefully, they would realize that there seemed to be droplets of blood shaking deep inside her pupils.

“Take care, Instructor Feng!”

Yi Yuan had planned to leave a while back. The moment he heard Feng Rong’s words, he immediately scooped Lian Rou in his arms and rushed outside immediately.

After a moment’s hesitation, Qin Lie made up his mind as well and ran towards Tang Siqi.

The battle between the Netherpassage experts was definitely not something he could interfere with. Before Blood Shadow’s blood slave had returned to his true body, he only had thirty percent of his strength. Moreover, after Blood Shadow had been assaulted by the Terminator Profound Bomb’s explosion, Qin Lie could even beat him while Blood Shadow was down and slightly had the upper hand while he was severely injured.

But now that the blood slave had returned to Blood Shadow's body, the broken bones on Blood Shadow's body vanished and his aura's strength grew many times over...

Qin Lie knew very well that it would be incredibly difficult for him to pose a threat to Blood Shadow right now. If he really pushed himself to stay, he would only become Feng Rong's burden.

And so, just like Yi Yuan, Qin Lie carried Tang Siqi with him and headed in the direction Yi Yuan had left.

Dark Asura Hall's Yuan Tianya was here, Dark Tower's tower lord, Di Shijiu, was also here, and even Shadow Tower's Liang Yangzu was hiding in the shadows. Even Blood Spear had missed the three entering the city. Their careful plotting was obviously not aimed at a tiny Natal Opening Realm martial practitioner like him, but to destroy Blood Spear itself!

They had come for Lang Xie and Feng Rong!

Qin Lie had seen through this fact very quickly.

"Yuan Tianya, Di Shijiu, Liang Yangzu... who else? Blood Shadow did not kill Yi Yuan and said that Purple Mist Sea had wanted Yi Yuan to be alive. Could it be that Purple Mist Sea has joined this battle as well?"

Qin Lie's expression was serious. A bad premonition slowly grew inside his heart as he thought of tonight's events.

He suddenly recalled the letter Liang Zhong had sent over. Liang Zhong had told him that Armament Sect was not a good place to stay for long and that he better leave as soon as possible.

“Liang Zhong is from Dark Asura Hall. He should’ve known about today’s matter for a while now. Perhaps even Seven Fiends Valley and Cloud Sky Mountain was also in on this!” The more Qin Lie thought, the colder he felt.

At this moment, he was carrying Tang Siqi’s voluptuous and lush body in his arms, but there was not the slightest bit of lust in his mind. He only felt chilled to the bones.

“If the five great forces had joined hands to attack Armament Sect, then where in the world should I go?” Qin Lie was at a loss.

“Qin Bing!” At the alleyway, Yi Yuan exclaimed with a serious expression while standing and holding Lian Rou.

Qin Lie walked over while holding Tang Siqi.

“Listen.” Yi Yuan said.

Qin Lie focused his mind, channeled the Records of Geocentric Magnetism and, with his soul probing for the fluctuations on the ground, listened to surroundings.

He heard the cries of fighting, the messy footsteps of martial practitioners, the intense sounds of combat...

“There is a stone building this way. Let’s go up and take a look.” Yi Yuan seemed to have predicted something and, after a sigh, led the way up the stone building.

Qin Lie followed right after him.

At this moment, the duo had left the secluded district where Shadow Tower was. They could not hear the sound of Feng Rong and Blood Shadow fighting either, much less Lang Xie’s current condition.

The location they were in right now could also be considered rather secluded. It was still a ways away from the bustling city area.

While holding a woman each, they climbed the tallest stone building and looked into the distance from the top.

They could see many houses were on fire and many martial practitioners slipping by swiftly at the faraway bustling districts.

“They’re not from Armament Sect,” Yi Yuan sighed softly.

Qin Lie frowned. He channeled his spirit energy and attempted to look at Armament Sect’s entrance, to look inFlame Volcano’s direction.

However, both Armament Sect and Flame Volcano were pitch black under the night sky. Because he was too far away, he could not see the situation over there.

“Qin Bing, to tell you the truth, I came to Armament Sect purely for Lian Rou. I have no interest whatsoever in artifact forging, and I only cared a little bit about Blood Spear’s blood pools, but now…” Yi Yuan shook his head bitterly, “Blood Spear probably won’t survive this.”

Qin Lie’s face was solemn.

“I’m sorry, but I won’t be returning to the sect anymore because it will be suicidal.” Yi Yuan looked at Lian Rou and said gently, “Lian Rou is with me now anyway. I’ll be taking my leave. I want to bring her safely away from Armament City.”

Qin Lie continued to stay silent.

He knew that Yi Yuan had always been a very smart and rational person. It was only in front of Lian Rou that he would become impulsive and show a kind of madness only a young person would have.

Most of the time, Yi Yuan had concealed himself. He was very good putting up that harmless facade in front of other people.

The fact is, Yi Yuan was never a good person.

This could be seen when he had attacked all the outer sect disciples at the food hall when he first entered the sect.

Qin Lie even felt that Yi Yuan's true strength might be slightly stronger than Pang Feng's. That feeling was now growing stronger and stronger.

"Five years ago, when Lian Rou had come to Purple Mist Sea, it was one of the lowest points in my life. My muscles and veins had fallen into disorder because I went against my seniors and cultivated a forbidden art in Purple Mist Sea. Not only would my realm not be able to grow, it would even deteriorate over time." Yi Yuan looked at Lian Rou gently.

"Then I was demoted from the most talented martial practitioner of Purple Mist Sea to a mere door guide. Everyone taunted and jeered at me that year. I was looked down upon by the people I once thought to be garbage, and I had disappointed the senior who had expected great things from me."

"It was also that year that Lian Rou came to Purple Mist Sea. As her guide, I was ordered to take her to visit all of the beautiful places in Purple Mist Sea."

"She had assumed that I was just a common doorman in Purple Mist Sea, but she did not look down on me. While I took her to visit those places of beauty, I felt tranquility from her happiness, and that tranquility was just the right thing that soothed the frustration and worry in my heart and helped me cultivated that

forbidden art successfully in the end."

"I met her during the lowest point of my life where her tranquility calmed my heart. That is why I have come from Purple Mist Sea. I have come to take her with me to leave Armament Sect alive!"

Yi Yuan looked at Qin Lie.

Qin Lie frowned. "Why are you telling me this? Is this your special way of saying goodbye?"

Yi Yuan's expression was a little complicated. After a moment of doubt he revealed, "In truth, before I had come from Purple Mist Sea, I already knew that Armament Sect would face this danger. The fact is, I had told you about this and brought you to Lang Xie and Feng Rong because I was hoping that you could bring Lang Xie and Feng Rong to meet Blood Shadow together..."

He paused for a moment at this point, and under Qin Lie's cold gaze, he finally continued, "This was what Purple Mist Sea wanted me to do from the beginning."

Qin Lie's expression changed greatly.

Shock also appeared in both Tang Siqi and Lian Rou's eyes, whose bodies' spirit energy were shackled. It was as if they could not believe Yi Yuan's identity was this complex.

“Purple Mist Sea wanted me to do this, but they did not order me. But I know their thoughts.” Yi Yuan took in a deep breath and elaborated, “I know that if I had done it, then Purple Mist Sea would seek them out and negotiate with them to protect Lian Rou’s life. The fact is my judgment was not incorrect. They allowed me to take Lian Rou and leave. This means Purple Mist Sea recognized what I have done for them.”

He looked at Qin Lie and said very calmly, “In my opinion, as long as Lian Rou is alive, I don’t really care too much if Lord Lang Xie, Lord Feng Rong, and you die. Qin Bing, I’m leaving. The reason I have told you everything I did was because I think of you as half a friend. I don’t want to lie to you, and I don’t want you to be kept in the dark, to let you know nothing…”

While carrying Lian Rou, Yi Yuan jumped down from the stone building and looked at Qin Lie one final time from below. “I’ll be waiting for you to kill me in the future.”

Once he finished, Yi Yuan opened his umbrella as a shocking sharpness abruptly emanated from his body. It was as if a sharp blade was hidden inside his body, giving off a feeling of great danger.

Qin Lie’s pupils shrunk as he looked deeply at Yi Yuan’s departing visage. He said indifferently, “So this is your true power.”

Chapter 190: Two Affectionate People

As Yi Yuan left, the sharp aura emanating from his body was even more terrifying than Liang Shaoyang, who had been killed by Qin Lie!

Liang Shaoyang had also been in the late Natal Opening Realm with nine completely filled Natal Palaces, but even so, from Qin Lie's point of view, Yi Yuan was at least a full level stronger!

Qin Lie had never crossed blows with Pang Feng; thus, he had no idea how strong Pang Feng was. However, he was certain that Yi Yuan was probably not any weaker than Pang Feng.

As for Pang Feng, he was one of Cloud Sky Mountain's geniuses who only came along once every hundred years. He was a youth Cloud Sky Mountain's mountain master had even attempted to personally persuade to not leave.

If Yi Yuan's strength was on the same level as Pang Feng's, then his status within Purple Mist Sea must not have been even slightly inferior to Pang Feng's status within Cloud Sky Mountain.

"You, for Lian Rou..."

Qin Lie was still standing atop the stone building, still carrying Tang Siqi in his hands. His expression was solemn.

Towards Yi Yuan, Qin Lie couldn't explain his feelings. However,

he felt some admiration, admiration towards the deep love Yi Yuan showed to Lian Rou.

For love, Yi Yuan was willing to travel a thousand miles to Armament Sect and give up his respected status within Purple Mist Sea. He was willing to take up the lowly identity of an outer sect disciple just to be beside Lian Rou so that he could take her away in case a day came where Armament Sect met trouble.

In this manner, he was like Qin Lie, who, regardless of the reward how many times he failed, had covered all the costs of the spirit materials which would be used to forge the Ling sisters' spirit artifacts.

He was the same as Yi Yuan, he also did it out of love.

And when he had learned that Tang Siqi and Lian Rou had encountered difficulty, even though he clearly knew that he probably wouldn't be able take a single blow from Blood Shadow, even though he clearly knew there was the possibility of him being killed by Blood Shadow, he had still personally acted as a bait...

This was because of gratitude!

It was because of the kindness that Tang Siqi and Lian Rou had shown him.

Lian Rou had cured him of the Eclipse Insect's poison and saved his life. As for Tang Siqi, she had, regardless of her prior dislike for

him, taught him the techniques of smelting artifacts and let him act as her assistant, allowing him to coordinate with her as she forged artifacts. From this he was able to learn multiple smelting tricks from her

Thinking about it from Yi Yuan's point of view, Qin Lie greatly admired Yi Yuan's deep love towards Lian Rou.

However, he also felt extremely angry! He was angry at Yi Yuan for ruthlessly betraying him, Lang Xie, and Feng Rong for Lian Rou!

On this matter, Yi Yuan had conflicted with Qin Lie's bottom line!

For Lian Rou's sake, Yi Yuan was not afraid of death. He was willing to go crazy, to kill people on her behalf. However, Yi Yuan shouldn't have forsaken those beside him as the price for saving Lian Rou!

If Yi Yuan had explained to him in advance, perhaps Qin Lie would have been able to accept it and even would have been willing to cooperate.

However, Yi Yuan had tricked them. He had played them for fools, and that caused Qin Lie to be unable to accept it! Nor was he able to forgive it!

"Yi Yuan, we will definitely meet again, and when we do, I shall

see what your true strength is and just how powerful you are!” coldly thought Qin Lie.

He lowered his head and glanced at Tang Siqi, and as soon as he did, he discovered that a glowing sheen was exuding out of her beautiful eyes, as if she had a lot to say.

Reaching out, Qin Lie removed the cloth bundle within Tang Siqi’s mouth. Then, he narrowed his brows, waiting for her to speak.

Tang Siqi’s full, lustrous, and fragrant lips moved as if she wanted to say something, but no sound came out.

Qin Lie froze, then immediately reached out and touched an extremely thin meridian on Tang Siqi’s neck. Using his spirit energy, he felt it out.

A few seconds later, his expression subconsciously became solemn. “The stagnation of blood within your body is extremely great. This kind of blood sealing restrainment technique is not something that I have the ability to disperse, and thus I have no way of allowing you to speak.

Tang Siqi’s eyes rapidly moved as she stared at Qin Lie, seemingly trying to convey her meaning through her eyes alone.

Qin Lie carefully observed her for a while, but realized that he was unable to discern her message from her eyes.

Afterwards, Qin Lie shook his head, saying, “I can’t unlock the restraining technique on you. I can only bring you back to the sect and have the outer sect’s elders help you.”

Finished speaking, he didn’t even wait for Tang Siqi’s eyes to move in acknowledgement as he jumped down from atop the stone tower with her still in his arms. Discerning his bearings, he began moving towards Armament Sect.

Walking out of the secluded alley, Qin Lie arrived at the entrance to a formerly bustling street. Upon peeking out, his expression slightly changed.

Tonight, atop this street which had probably been bustling during the day, fiery light constantly flickered between the tall buildings on both sides as the sounds of battle echoed over.

At the exit of this street, which was the fastest way to Armament Sect, three people calmly stood under a burning building.

It was Pang Feng, Pang Shishi, and the owner of “Heart of the Great Earth,” Wu Tuo. The three stood under the gleam of the burning building, as if they were waiting for something.

Flames flickered, illuminating Pang Feng. Atop his face, deep, seemingly rock-solid creases could be seen. His body was like a rock, emanating an immovable aura.

When Qin Lie appeared holding Tang Siqi, Pang Feng raised his head, his two profound eyes suddenly landing on Qin Lie.

Qin Lie suddenly felt his shoulders sink. He felt as if Tang Siqi had suddenly become several times heavier and a bit more difficult to carry.

“Pang Feng, I have found the person for you. Don’t forget our promise.” Fatty Wu Tuo chuckled as he casually patted Pang Feng’s shoulder and said, “I still have other matters to attend to and will be leaving first. Remember what I said earlier.”

Wu Tuo chuckled at Qin Lie and Tang Siqi as he nodded and calmly left.

As soon as Wu Tuo moved, several shadows suddenly sprang out from within the burning buildings on both sides of the street.

Those shadows were all shop attendants of “Heart of the Great Earth” and were practitioners which Cloud Sky Mountain had sent to be in Armament City.

A portion of them followed Wu Tuo into the distance.

The other portion brandished their spirit artifacts as they continued slaughtering the practitioners who were within the buildings on both sides of the street.

“Spurt!”

A javelin was thrown out by someone, nailing a practitioner who had run out of a burning building nearby to a stone wall.

Qin Lie concentrated his mind and observed. He discovered that the person who had just been struck by the attendant of “Heart of the Great Earth” was someone he had previously met before in Armament Sect.

It was the outer sect foreign delegate who had visited the sect with Han Qingrui. At the time, this fellow had been walking together with Han Qingrui and conversing with him.

This discovery caused Qin Lie to immediately realize what type of people were presiding within these buildings.

They were all the outer sect’s foreign delegates!

He had also immediately understood why Wu Tuo would bring Cloud Sky Mountain’s practitioners here and what exactly had occurred.

“Is Han Qingrui here?!” Qin Lie’s expression suddenly became extremely cold. Atop the burning street, someone suddenly loudly cried out.

“Old Han, Old Han is at Crossroads Street…” The person who had been nailed to the stone wall firmly stared at Qin Lie. He said this one sentence, then took his last breath.

“Has everything been tidied?”

“Yes, it’s all clean.”

“Mn, then let us go.”

The sound of a few simple words emanated out from the nearby buildings. Very quickly, numerous human figures walked out.

These people had just emerged all respectfully saluted Pang Feng and Pang Shishi. Afterwards, they moved in the same direction that Wu Tuo had just left to.

In the blink of an eye, there were no longer any people who drew breath within the buildings which lined the two sides of the street. Under the burning buildings, Pang Feng stood like a mountain.

“Junior Brother Qin, leave Senior Sister Tang here and flee.” A look of helplessness emerged on Pang Shishi’s little face. “As Dark Shadow Tower, Dark Asura Hall, Cloud Sky Mountain, and Purple Mist Sea have all moved, Armament Sect is definitely finished. It’s impossible to rescue the sect. Leave Senior Sister Tang to us and take this opportunity to flee from the city. Perhaps you will be able to survive, sigh…”

Qin Lie’s face was as cold as ice.

Pang Feng and Pang Shishi were originally from Cloud Sky Mountain. It was clear that these two were the same as Yi Yuan and had been sheltered by Cloud Sky Mountain.

He now also understood why Cloud Sky Mountain's Wu Tuo had suddenly entered Armament City and had become the master of "Heart of the Great Earth."

"One of you was apart of Blood Spear while the other was an inner sect disciple. Is this how you two are going to repay the sect?" coldly said Qin Lie.

A trace shame appeared on Pang Shishi's cute little face as she lowered her head. She didn't dare look Qin Lie in the eye as she faintly responded, "We had no other options."

"What happens if I don't hand Senior Sister Tang over?" coldly exclaimed Qin Lie.

Pang Feng's still body suddenly walked out from beneath a burning house. Narrowing his brows, he said, "Shishi, go find Wu Tuo. Leave this matter to me."

"Don't! Brother, Junior Brother Qin is also one of the sect's people. He is possibly even the future hope of the sect." Pang Shishi anxiously pleaded, "The sect has nurtured us for so many years and I don't want to see it disappear just like that. Please, leave just a flickering flame as hope for the sect! Brother, I beg you!"

“As long as he is willing to put down the person he is holding, he can leave,” lowly said Pang Feng.

“Junior Brother Qin, put Senior Sister Tang down. I beg you!” nervously pleaded Pang Shishi. “Armament Sect is finished, I’m telling the truth! You and Senior Sister Tang are both on the execution list. If you bring her with you, death is all that awaits you. Wu Tuo promised my brother that as long as my brother was willing to return to Cloud Sky Mountain, he would protect Senior Sister Tang’s life. If you leave Senior Sister Tang with us, she will live, but if you insist on taking her away, she and you will both be walking atop a road of despair!”

“I’m very curious as to why you want Senior Sister Tang so badly.” Upon hearing Pang Shishi’s words and seeing her expression, Qin Lie suddenly began to hesitate.

He currently believed that Pang Shishi’s words were not false.

As he and Tang Siqi were both on the execution list, no matter how he fled with her, he might not be able to preserve her life. If Pang Shishi’s words were true, however, and the two siblings could let Tang Siqi walk on the road of life, should he actually give her away?

He needed a reason.

“My brother loves Senior Sister Tang. He has always loved her! He’s already loved her for many years, but only I have known!” shouted Pang Shishi.

Qin Lie was stunned.

The eyes of Tang Siqi, who was sealed by the restrainment technique, upon hearing these words, suddenly became a mess. Clearly, her heart was also in turmoil.

Upon hearing Pang Shishi say those words, a trace of embarrassment which seemed out of place emerged on the tough face of Pang Feng, who had been as calm and steadfast as a rock the entire time.

Qin Lie immediately knew that Pang Shishi wasn't spouting nonsense.

Pang Feng indeed had an unrequited love for Tang Siqi, and it seemed like it had indeed been going on for quite a while. Qin Lie had never expected that a guy who generally spoke so few words would actually have the same kind of deep feelings as Yi Yuan.

Qin Lie became increasingly hesitant.

"Whether I leave her or not is not for me to decide. Let's see what Senior Sister Tang herself wants," said Qin Lie after thinking for a while. He looked Tang Siqi in the eye and said, "If you want to go with Pang Feng and Pang Shishi, blink three times and I shall let you go. If you want to flee with me, don't blink. However, let me say in advance that if you choose to flee with me, I cannot promise that we will make it out alive. Meanwhile, if you choose Pang Feng, you will definitely live... the choice is yours."

After these words, Pang Feng and Pang Shishi all suddenly tensed up as they concentrated on observing Tang Siqi.

They were all looking at a pair of alluringly beautiful, charming eyes.

Chapter 191: Respect

Tiny waves rippled within Tang Siqi's pair of enchanting eyes. Under the gazes of the other three, her eyes suddenly blinked.

Joy emerged on the faces of Pang Feng and Pang Shishi as they relaxed.

"Yeah, in the face of death, no one can feel calm..." thought Pang Shishi.

From her point of view, Armament Sect was most certainly ruined. It was to quietly disappear like Profound Ice Palace had so many years ago.

Tang Siqi originally was to be killed on sight. She was someone who, upon seeing a chance for survival, was like a drowning person seeing a boat. She would grasp it tightly and definitely not let it escape.

To Tang Siqi, these siblings were her boat, one which could bring Tang Siqi away from the sea of death.

Thus, the two siblings believed that, as long as Tang Siqi wasn't stupid, she would naturally choose to stay behind. She would choose to continue living with them.

Even Qin Lie believed that blinking was a wise decision for Tang Siqi. Thus, following Tang Siqi's first blink, he nodded and said,

“Okay, I shall honor your decision and immediately put you down.”

As he said these words, he prepared to let go of her.

However, he discovered that Tang Siqi didn’t continue blinking. Furthermore, a light was flashing within Tang Siqi’s eyes as she glared at him. An extremely angry expression emerged on her beautiful face.

Qin Lie was stunned. He continued watching Tang Siqi’s eyes, waiting for her to continue blinking.

Tang Siqi didn’t blink another time.

She only stared at Qin Lie. Within her eyes, even a bit of fierceness could be seen as her appearance became tense.

“You deserve to die! Bastard! Asshole! Die by a thousand cuts! My eyes were stinging so I subconsciously blinked. Bastard! A bastard who deserves to die!”

From when Qin Lie had first spoken, she had constantly stared at him, her eyes never blinking.

However, by the time Qin Lie was finished, her eyes were simply feeling too unbearable. She couldn’t help but blink.

Afterwards, before she could even react, Qin Lie had said that he was going to let go of her, that he was going to leave her. This caused Tang Siqi to feel so exasperated that she almost wanted to strangle him.

“Didn’t you say three times? Do you not know how to count! You deserve to die!” thought Tang Siqi in her mind.

At this moment, she didn’t dare to blink another time. No matter how much her eyes began to sting and feel uncomfortable, she continued to stare at Qin Lie. Her eyes which were burning with anger caused his nerves to tingle just from looking at them.

Pang Feng and Pang Shishi in the distance were also dazed. They had also been shocked by this sudden change.

The joy on Pang Feng’s face gradually disappeared. He was unable to understand, unable to understand Tang Siqi’s current response. He couldn’t figure out why Tang Siqi still hadn’t blinked.

“Could it be that she is begging for death?” thought Pang Feng. His expression sank.

Pang Shishi was also startled. She shouted, “Senior Sister Tang, only my brother is able to guarantee your life. If you aren’t willing to go with us, you might not even live past tonight.”

“You’d better think carefully. There’s no way I can promise that I

can keep you alive. However, if you go with Pang Feng, you will definitely survive!" whispered Qin Lie.

Tang Siqi continued to intensely stare, her beautiful eyes firmly glued to him. It seemed as if a fire had begun to burn within her eyes.

She endured her stinging eyes, resolutely refusing to blink as she stubbornly kept them open!

Even though it was clear that following Pang Feng meant surviving and following Qin Lie meant certain death, Tang Siqi resolutely and angrily stared at him and bitterly endured her stinging eyes...

Under the gaze of Tang Siqi's burning eyes, a crack suddenly appeared within Qin Lie's ice cold heart.

Deeping inhaling, Qin Lie calmly said, "That's enough, you can stop staring at me now. I understand what you want."

Tang Siqi's wide open eyes had long since felt unbearably uncomfortable. Upon hearing Qin Lie's words, she immediately closed her eyes as her tense expression also relaxed.

"I will honor her decision. What about you two?" asked Qin Lie as he narrowed his brows and looked at the two siblings.

Pang Shishi faintly sighed as she shook her said and asked,

“Brother, are you still going to force the matter?”

Pang Feng, like a towering mountain, suddenly moved himself in front of Qin Lie and said in a low voice, “I don’t care how she looks at me. I just want her to live! Thus, whether she wants to or not, as long as I believe that my actions will allow her to live, I shall take action!”

Without turning his head, he suddenly shouted, “Shishi, leave first. Go and find Wu Tuo and the rest. I shall be just a while!”

“Alright.” Pang Shishi knew her brother’s temperament well so she didn’t continue to try and persuade him. Before she left, all she said was, “Brother, Junior Brother Qin is the sect’s hope, don’t kill him.”

She knew knew how strong her brother was, so she had a biased confidence towards Pang Feng and believed that Qin Lie was not Pang Feng’s match.

“Mn, Brother promises you that he will leave Junior Brother Qin alive,” said Pang Feng as he nodded. “However, even if I don’t kill him, there will be others that will. There is absolutely no way that he will be able to escape from Armament City.”

“Whatever, he just cannot die by your hands! I won’t allow you to kill even a single person of the sect!” shouted Pang Shishi.

“Alright, I promise!” heavily relented Pang Feng.

Pang Shishi glanced at Qin Lie and Tang Siqi one last time, then sighed again as she nodded before turning around and leaving.

As soon as she left, the imposing aura on Pang Feng's body suddenly became even heavier.

He stood in front of Qin Lie like a towering mountain, causing Qin Lie to feel as if he had encountered an impassable object.

Qin Lie pondered for a moment, then put down Tang Siqi in a safe, nearby corner.

His eyes gradually became cold as his entire body began to exude an extremely frigid frost aura. One step after another, he walked towards Pang Feng, the acclaimed number one disciple of the outer sect!

"Crack crack crack!"

With his every step, the stone ground beneath his feet froze. In the wake of his advancement, the blazing flames on the buildings situated on the sides of the street gradually died away.

Due to his movement, the blazing red street slowly dimmed.

"Junior Brother Qin, I shall ask you one last time, must you take her with you?" heavily asked Pang Feng.

“She doesn’t want to stay, so I will take her with me. This is her own choice. Whether it is right or wrong doesn’t matter, I will respect her choice.” Qin Lie’s footsteps stopped.

“To seek life is the right choice. To seek death is ignorance!” shouted Pang Feng.

“BOOM!”

A terrifying fluctuation accompanied by a dazzling golden light suddenly exploded out from Pang Feng’s body like a landslide.

As Pang Feng charged over, one golden, rocklike fist after another wildly condensed in the night sky above Qin Lie’s head and explosively descended like shooting stars.

These golden, rocklike fists all contained fierce, unbreakable metal energy. As they plummeted down from within the depths of the stratosphere, they reached an astonishing critical velocity!

“Bang bang bang!”

As the golden stones fell, the area surrounding Qin Lie froze, and each of his steps resulted in it fragmenting.

Translucent slivers and fragments of ice swirled around in the sky under the moon’s bright luminescence.

Each piece was equivalent to a cold blade!

“Ice Crystal Shield!”

Qin Lie’s eyes became even colder as his arms quickly became encased in ice and frost energy surged out from within him, forming a giant ice shield as thick as a glacier in front of him.

Qin Lie raised the thick ice shield which was a big as a millstone, blocking his head.

It was used to guard against the rapidly descending golden stone fists!

“Bang bang bang! Bang bang!”

The golden colored fists were like meteors, were like giant hammers, and were like falling stones as they violently collided with the ice shield!

Fragments of ice shattered atop the ice shield, sparkling under the moonlight. Under the barrage of the descending golde meteors, a crack suddenly appeared, one which became increasingly wider by the moment!

Qin Lie’s body, which was holding up the shield, suddenly bent, as if his knees were no longer able to withstand the fierce blows and was about to break under the power.

So powerful!

Seeing the sky filled with descending golden stones and having felt the violent force from the impact of these stones with his ice shield, Qin Lie trembled in the depths of his heart.

Pang Feng was indeed worthy of being called Cloud Sky Mountain's martial genius, for he was harder and fiercer than others. Not even Liang Shaoyang was comparable to his vigorously unending attacks.

Qin Lie believed that if Liang Shaoyang had dared to come into conflict with Pang Feng, he would definitely have been unable to endure Pang Feng's crazed, unrestrained offensive.

Within the darkness of night, one enormous golden fist after another explosively descended like meteors. Pang Feng's figure was like a golden cyclone as he constantly struck out with his golden fists.

"Bang!"

The ice shield was finally unable to withstand the constant barrage of attacks any longer and burst into pieces. Its icy fragments flew in every direction.

Pang Feng's figure was like a giant hammer as he suddenly appeared and viciously threw a punch at Qin Lie's chest.

A violent energy which felt like it would crush everything in its

path and would shatter the world surged out from within his fist. The energy was one which would cause any timid practitioner to immediately flee.

“Tectonic Shift!” Qin Lie’s foot stomped on the ground.

“Boom!”

A rumble emanated out from within the depths of the earth as a gravity field suddenly arose, distorting the gravitational pull in the area.

Pang Feng’s body, which was flying through the sky, suddenly plummeted as if he had instantaneously been pressed down by someone.

Upon falling to the ground, the explosive energy he had gathered immediately scattered. The astonishing energy fluctuations surrounding his fist also turned chaotic.

“Clang!”

Qin Lie grabbed fragment after fragment of ice. Applying pressure, the ice crystals mysteriously formed into a sharp ice sword.

Taking advantage of Pang Feng’s body being strewn into chaos, Qin Lie took the ice sword and fiercely stabbed at Pang Feng’s chest!

“Crack crack crack crack!”

As the ice sword viciously charged forward, a golden light emanated out from Pang Feng’s chest. Right when it was about to pierce him, it suddenly exploded at the tip!

Pang Feng’s body was blown back by the attack.

However, at this moment, his entire body was golden. Flashes of a golden armor could be seen beneath his clothes, and even his skin had actually turned golden!

It was as if his body and the golden armor were one.

“Instructor Feng said that out of the practitioners who entered the blood pools to temper themselves, there was one person whose body was stronger than mine, and that was you.” Pang Feng had been blown backwards by Qin Lie’s attack, and the ice sword at his chest was still exploding into many fragments, yet at this time, he was still able to speak.

He looked at Qin Lie and exclaimed, “Your flesh or mine, I want to find out whose is stronger!”

The golden light around Pang Feng’s body suddenly grew brighter. He didn’t pull away, and instead, decided to take Qin Lie head on in close combat!

It was as if he had deliberately allowed Qin Lie to come close, as if he had deliberately let Qin Lie stab at him with the ice sword just so that he could compete with Qin Lie over whose body was stronger!

“Bang bang bang!”

At such a close distance, a golden fist, like a meteor, fiercely struck Qin Lie’s chest.

A feeling of terror was birthed as Qin Lie felt as if he had been struck by a chariot. His chest was jolted, causing a violent explosion to sound out, and what accompanied it was the violent fluctuation of thunder.

Heavenly Thunder Sacred Body had been directly triggered!

“Boom boom boom!”

The sound of rumbling thunder emanated out from within each of his body’s bones and began to pulsate within his five viscera and six organs. However, the sound was so withdrawn that only Qin Lie himself could hear it.

“Zzzt zzzt!”

Within Qin Lie’s pupils, streaks after streaks of fine lightning began to form and wildly fluctuate like dragons!

“Since you want to know so badly, I’ll gladly fulfill your wish!” roared Qin Lie.

Chapter 192: Fight To One's Heart's Content!

"Bang bang bang!"

Under the moonlight, two shadows were constantly assaulting each other like two entangled fierce beasts.

Dazzling rays of golden light and dark, cold pieces of ice flew around in the sky. Occasionally, the angry rumbling of the earth could also be heard beneath their feet.

This area was the one which Cloud Sky Mountain was technically responsible for. Earlier, Wu Tuo, along with his subordinates, had already killed each and every Armament Sect foreign delegate nearby .

Wu Tuo had predicted Qin Lie would make his way to this area, and thus, he had brought Pang Feng and Pang Shishi over with him. Upon seeing Qin Lie actually appear, he naturally had immediately left.

He had left Qin Lie for Pang Feng.

This was because he believed that Pang Feng, the most talented genius of his generation of Cloud Sky Mountain's martial practitioners, would definitely be able to defeat Qin Lie!

Pang Shishi had also chosen to leave because she too, like Wu Tuo, had absolute confidence in Pang Feng!

“Golden Stone Art: Third Style! Landslide!”

Pang Feng swung both of his hands up, twirling them like a rolling wheel. Clumps after clumps of golden light filled with the sharpness of metal rocks, as though a landslide composed by streams of rolling rocks, violently rolled toward Qin Lie’s chest.

“Bang bang bang!”

The balls of golden light were like boulders as they assaulted Qin Lie’s chest, causing all of the bones in Qin Lie’s body to crackle.

The two were standing extremely close together, to the point that any of their attacks would instantly hit. At such a close distance, neither of them were able to dodge the other’s blows.

“Crack!”

Qin Lie’s body greatly shook as he took advantage of the moment to grasp Pang Feng’s shoulders with his two hands. Masses of blue lightning suddenly surged out.

Within the lightning, the terrifying explosive power of thunder instantaneously burst out.

“Krak krak krak!”

The golden armor on Pang Feng’s body, which was struck by the explosive thunder energy, shattered as if it were golden glass, revealing Pang Feng’s solid as iron golden skin beneath it.

“Thunder energy, you actually also cultivate thunder energy!” shouted Pang Feng, unable to bear the pain from the wild, explosive thunder energy entering into his bones.

That Qin Lie was able to use earthen energy and create gravitational fields which instantly distorted gravity had already thoroughly surprised him.

As they fought in close combat, the sound of thunder rumbling had suddenly emanated out from Qin Lie’s body. As thunder energy permeated through his body, Pang Feng was shocked once again.

“So incredibly secretive. Not only were you hiding earthen energy, you were also hiding thunder spirit arts!”

On Pang Feng’s calm face, golden light began to gradually condense within his eyes. “But did you truly think that you would be able to beat me just because you cultivated so many spirit arts? Only if you wholeheartedly focus on a single spirit art can you truly wield its immense powers! As for you, who dabbles in everything, you will never be able to sense the true essence of a single spirit art!”

As he said this, Pang Feng tore off all of his golden armor, as well as the clothes covering his upper body.

A completely golden, glowing body which seemed like it was made of solidified molten steel suddenly appeared.

The muscles on Pang Feng's upper body were like pieces of a puzzle as they glowed with a golden luster reminiscent of molten steel. It gave off a feeling of extreme sturdiness, as if it couldn't be penetrated by blades nor spears, as if it was invincible!

One vein after another emerged from beneath his muscles like intelligent snakes within his body which had awoken from hibernation.

He removed his golden armor and tore off his clothes. In his half-naked state, his eyes were also glowing with a golden radiance, and his whole body was emanating an unparalleled unrestrained aura.

"Junior Brother Qin, you can still leave if you want to!" Pang Feng's expression was heavy as his face also turned golden yellow. Observing him now, it was as if he were a man of pure gold.

"You are on the execution list. However, if you conserve your power and take advantage of this chaotic time to escape, you might be able to live."

After tearing off his clothes, Pang Feng suddenly seemed to have a lot to say. "If you continue to fight with me, even if I don't kill

you, I will definitely severely injure you. If that happens, you will have no strength to deal with any remaining threats and will end up being killed by others!”

Qin Lie became slightly dazed as he was unable to figure out Pang Feng’s true meaning. He couldn’t understand why Pang Feng would say these words right at the peak of battle.

“You are very strong, and because you have been able to fight with me for so long, I feel very content!” A trace of madness flashed through Pang Feng’s eyes as he continued, “Ever since I began on this path until now, whenever I have fought same level practitioners, there has never been anyone who dared to fight against me in close combat! Junior Brother Qin, you are the very first one who could keep up!”

Qin Lie became dazed.

Listening as Pang Feng explained, Qin Lie understood that he had won the respect of this person through battle. Because he had been able to last against Pang Feng in close combat for so long, he had allowed Pang Feng to feel the utmost joy of battle.

This was what caused him to go mad? This was why he had suddenly wasted his breath to speak?

“Today’s fight has brought me joy. A joy I have never felt before!” Even more hints of madness emerged within Pang Feng’s eyes as he continued, “Because I am too joyful, I’m afraid that I will be unable to hold back my strikes. I’m afraid I will be unable to

keep my promise with Shishi and will lose control and kill you!”

Pang Feng took a deep breath and forced himself to calm down, then shouted, “Junior Brother Qin, leave Senior Sister Tang and leave now! I don’t want to kill you!”

“Are you even able to kill me?!” exclaimed Qin Lie, stomping his foot on his ground.

“Bang!”

Pang Feng’s golden body was unexpectedly thrown into the air by the sudden reversal of gravity.

Qin Lie raised his head to look at the night sky and then finally decided to no longer hold back a single bit of his power. He finally used all of his power to circulate Heavenly Thunder Eradication!

“Rrrmb! Rrrmb! Rrrmb!”

Finger wide bolts of lightning densely twined around Qin Lie’s entire body, one after another, like coils of rope as the sound of thunder continuously rumbled out from within his bones.

An explosive clap of thunder came from within the depths of the Ninth Heavens at that moment as a bolt of lightning pierced through the sky like a giant dragon and descended from amidst the roiling clouds.

“After forming the Heavenly Thunder Sacred Body, one can use the energy that is purely within one’s body to cause the heavens and earth to change and incite the descent of heavenly lightning!” said Qin Shan so many years ago.

After so many years, at this moment, Qin Lie was using purely the energy within his body to attract explosive Heavenly Thunder by inciting the rumbling of thunder within his bones and organs!

“KRACCKKKK!”

An explosive, seemingly world-fragmenting, clap of thunder followed the descent of the giant dragon-shaped lightning bolt which descended directly upon Qin Lie.

At this moment, Qin Lie was covered by interwoven strands of lightning. As the rumbling of thunder shook the heavens, a violent, crazed face looked up at Pang Feng who had been sent flying into the sky by the reversal of gravity.

“You’re enjoying this battle, is that right?” asked Qin Lie as the hidden violent madness within him was completely incited. “Well, I haven’t started enjoying myself just yet!”

“Boom!”

The energy of thunder and lightning began to wildly interweave between his two hands, condensing into an enormous thunder

lightning ball. He cupped the thunder lightning ball and fiercely rushed at Pang Feng's chest.

At almost the same time, the giant, dragon-shaped lightning bolt, which descended from the depths of the Ninth Heaven, and the world-shattering explosion of thunder also fell.

Landing on both Qin Lie and Pang Feng's bodies!

Intense, dazzling fluctuations of light burst out from Qin Lie and Pang Feng's bodies as another world-shattering rumble resounded across the sky. Then, like two empty artillery shells, they instantly fell from midair.

"Thump! Thump!"

On the hard gravel street, two human shaped holes appeared out of nowhere. Electricity generated smoke emerged from both of the holes.

The previous intense, constant sounds of collisions suddenly died away at this moment. Not even a clap of thunder could be heard from amongst the clouds.

This area which had been governed by Cloud Sky Mountain was, at this moment, surreally calm. Only Tang Siqi, who had been put in the corner of the street earlier, was watching the two human shaped holes with a twinkling radiance flashing in her eyes.

Tang Siqi's heart was completely filled with shock.

She had never expected that Qin Lie would actually be able to cause thunder to rumble within his body and cause the heavens and earth to change, thus inciting the descent of a seemingly world extinguishing, giant dragon-shaped lightning bolt.

She had watched as the two bodies fell from midair and, as if made of steel, create holes in the ground, now inwardly clicking her tongue from the results.

"These two aren't human, they're monsters made of steel..." she subconsciously thought to herself.

Her beautiful eyes focused on the two holes as she waited, waiting for another round of battle to abruptly erupt—for the two to truly decide a winner.

A hand suddenly emerged from within one of the holes!

Tang Siqi's pupils shrunk. She tensed up as she instantly yet subconsciously looked at that hand.

It was Qin Lie's hand!

It was one she recognized!

Because she and Qin Lie had often worked together to forge

artifacts, she was extremely familiar with this hand!

Indeed, at this moment, Qin Lie, relying on the strength of his own hand, fiercely pulled himself out of the hole.

Qin Lie's figure was not pleasant to look at.

His entire body was covered in dust as his head, skin, and shoulders were all black. An unapproachable frost energy emanated out from behind him, giving off a feeling of ruthlessness.

"Let us leave." Under Tang Siqi's gaze, Qin Lie quickly walked over and picked her up again.

Although she didn't know why, after being picked up by such a cold body and held so closely, not only did Tang Siqi not feel the cold at all, within her heart... she actually felt extreme warmth.

Tang Siqi couldn't move, and thus, could only gaze at their surroundings. Unable to help it, she looked in the direction of the hole which Pang Feng had created.

There was no movement...

Qin Lie walked with large steps towards the other district, gradually leaving the area.

Tang Siqi spent the entire time staring at the hole which Pang

Feng was in. However, even by the time Qin Lie left the district while carrying her, she had yet to see Pang Feng climb out from within.

"It seems that one carrying me is indeed the true victor," concluded Tang Siqi.

And it was indeed like that.

Only a full quarter of an hour after Qin Lie and Tang Siqi had left did Pang Feng manage to climb out of the hole with great difficulty. After getting out, he sat on the nearby fragmented stone ground.

The golden color had disappeared from his skin. His normal skin color was now littered with numerous wounds, many of which were still bleeding.

He swallowed several medicinal pills and began to silently attune his body as he healed his wounds.

A good while later he raised his head and looked at the dark night sky, looking at the clouds which were invisible to the naked eye. He quietly muttered to himself, "That was thunder energy, and he used his body to incite the thunder of the Ninth Heaven. He also condensed and caused the descent of the lightning..."

Pang Feng pondered for a while, then suddenly shouted, "You aren't called Qin Bing! You're probably called Qin Lie!"

Pang Feng's eyes lit up.

After sitting for a while, Pang Feng stood back up. His steps were somewhat unsteady as he staggered towards Heart of the Great Earth.

When he returned to Heart of the Great Earth, he discovered that Wu Tuo was currently instructing a set of Cloud Sky Mountain practitioners, as if he were seemingly arranging something. Furthermore, Pang Shishi was amongst them.

Upon seeing Pang Feng return without Tang Siqi, Wu Tuo astonishedly asked with a slight smile, "What happened? You decided to let her go?"

Wu Tuo thought that Pang Feng himself had decided to let Tang Siqi go. He thought that Pang Feng had decided to stop imposing his will and respect Tang Siqi's decision.

This was because after Pang Shishi returned, she had already explained what had happened and how Qin Lie had given the choice to Tang Siqi. Thus, Wu Tuo believed that the reason why Pang Feng didn't have Tang Siqi with him was naturally due to him respecting her decision.

The thought of Pang Feng losing never passed through Wu Tuo's mind.

“I lost. I lost to Qin Bing.” Pang Feng only quietly said one sentence.

However, he didn’t disclose any of the clues he had obtained in regards to Qin Lie’s identity. He trudged by himself to the back of Heart of the Great Earth and said, “I’m injured and need some time to recuperate. It would be best if you all don’t disturb me.”

Under the room full of shocked gazes, Pang Feng emotionlessly walked out, not bothering to say anything more.

Everyone within the room, including Wu Tuo and Pang Shishi, were somewhat unable to believe it, unable to believe that Pang Feng would actually admit defeat.

This was because from when Pang Feng had begun cultivating until this point, he had never lost when fighting someone who was on the same level as him!

This was the very first time.

Chapter 193: Crossroads Street

Late into the night. Armament City was burning amidst intense flames as the buildings of the Earth, Fire, Water, and Wind Districts had all been set ablaze.

The martial practitioners of Dark Asura Hall, Dark Shadow Tower, Purple Mist Sea, Cloud Sky Mountain, and Seven Fiends Valley scoured the once bustling streets of the four great districts as they rounded up any Armament Sect practitioners.

In an alley which led to the Fire District, the cold face of Qin Lie, who was carrying Tang Siqi, was illuminated by the light from the flames. It seemed a bit more weathered and distraught than before.

This entire time he had constantly kept his soul consciousness projected, relying on it to avoid being noticed by higher level practitioners and to explore nearby areas.

Upon discovering any powerful practitioners patrolling in nearby districts, he would deliberately avoid those areas, willing to take the long way around rather than risk encountering those powerful practitioners.

He was still moving towards Armament Sect.

Tang Siqi’s stimulating and mature body laid on Qin Lie’s wide back. After being imprisoned with blood, she couldn’t circulate her spirit sea at all and could only blink helplessly as she lowered her eyes and looked at Qin Lie’s face.

A trace of tenderness, as well as a trace of luster, gradually emerged within her enticing and charming eyes.

“To be like this is also not bad…” she inwardly thought.

Qin Lie’s forward steps suddenly stopped.

They were currently in Fire District and were still a good bit of distance away from Armament Sect’s gate. However, at this point, they could already clearly see Flame Volcano.

Qin Lie’s line of sight passed through the gap between two stone buildings and landed upon Flame Volcano in the distance.

Flame Volcano was currently shrouded in dense darkness. From his point of view, he couldn’t even see a trace of fiery light.

Something wasn’t right!

Qin Lie’s expression became heavy.

Flame Volcano was the living quarters of the inner sect disciples and elders. Upon beginning to forge spirit artifacts, inner sect disciples and elders never cared about the time of day.

Thus, even at the darkest hour of the night, there would frequently be fiery light flickering atop Flame Volcano.

On the volcano, there were also usually a great number of

luminous lanterns and crystals which would fill the night with light.

But currently, as he looked from where he stood, the volcano was completely shrouded in darkness. From the looks of it, it was completely silent.

A bad feeling emerged within Qin Lie's heart.

He stopped where he was, his brows deeply furrowed as his inner heart was thrown into turmoil.

"Should I return to the sect or not?" Qin Lie repeatedly asked himself.

To be honest, he didn't particularly have any deep affection towards Armament Sect as he had entered Armament Sect purely for the purpose of learning about how to smelt artifacts.

Moreover, even after staying in Armament Sect for the last year, he had only developed somewhat of a friendship with three people: Yi Yuan, Lian Rou, and Tang Siqi.

As for Sect Master Ying Xingran and the three great reverends, it was only because he had shown such extraordinary talent for artifact forging later on that they had treated him like such a genius. It was only because of this that they had ascended to the heavens in one step and treated him so well.

Qin Lie knew very well that the thing that caught their attention was only his talent, not himself.

Thus, he didn't have any deep feelings for Ying Xingran and his followers.

He only truly had feelings for three people, the first one being Yi Yuan, the second one being Lian Rou, and the final one being Tang Siqi, who was on his back. That was it.

Currently, Yi Yuan had separated from Armament Sect and taken Lian Rou with him, and Tang Siqi was on his back.

At the moment, Armament Sect was under the joint assault of five great forces. The main goal of these five great forces was to exterminate Armament Sect so that they could capture and split its artificers.

It was also to take the wealth that Armament Sect had accumulated over the last few years!

As for him, he was on the execution list!

"Is there still any need for me to return? If I return, is there anything I can bring back to the sect?" Qin Lie asked himself.

He couldn't find an answer. Somewhat at a loss, he couldn't find a reason for him to need to return to Armament Sect even after quite some time.

After a while, he finally thought of a reason which convinced him. “My furnace! I need to forge those spirit artifacts! I also need those spirit materials!”

The spirit materials that he required for forging spirit artifacts for Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan, along with his furnace, were all still within his cave.

He had promised Ling Yushi that he would definitely forge a spirit artifact for her. Without his furnace and those spirit materials, he would be unable to fulfill his promise.

Within the alley, he pondered for a while, ultimately deciding to make a trip to Armament Sect.

“If I really find myself at some helpless dead end, I’ll still have the Eye of Frost and can teleport back to the depths of the Arctic Mountain Range!” concluded Qin Lie in his mind.

“Let’s return to the sect!” said Qin Lie as he suddenly turned his head back to look at Tang Siqi.

Tang Siqi’s eyes just gazed upon his face, seemingly lost in a trance.

When Qin Lie had suddenly turned his head, he had caused Tang Siqi’s heart to suddenly be thrown into disorder. The slightest tinge of an intoxicating rosy blush appeared on Tang Siqi’s

beautiful cheeks.

Light fluctuated within Tang Siqi's eyes. Under Qin Lie's gaze, she blinked. However, it was apparent that she was somewhat nervous.

"Alright." Having understood her thoughts, Qin Lie didn't bother saying any more and continued walking forward with her on his back.

Not long after, his footsteps stopped once again. He was currently in the area of a blazing, smoky street—Crossroads Street!

"Crossroads Street. Uncle Han and the rest were all staying at Crossroads Street. I wonder if Uncle Han is still alive?" thought Qin Lie once again as he watched sparks shoot across the street and listened to the tragic cries emanating from within.

He once again reminisced about the time he spent at Nebula Pavilion, thinking about how Han Qingrui had cared for him, as well as his friendships with Kang Zhi and Han Feng.

If there hadn't been any unforeseen circumstances, then Han Qingrui, Han Feng, and Kang Zhi were most likely currently at Crossroads Street. They were probably under assault!

"Senior Sister Tang, I'm going to use a rope to tie you to my back. I plan to cross through Crossroads Street."

Qin Lie internally struggled for a while, then sighed. He silently retrieved a leather rope from within his spatial ring and used it to tie Tang Siqi tightly onto his back.

This way, he would no longer need to use his hands to carry Tang Siqi, thus freeing them up.

He would now be able to fight if the need arose!

After being bound to his back by the leather rope, Tang Siqi's luscious body was now sticking even closer to his own. Her two protruding twin peaks pressed into his broad back, changing shape due to the pressure.

Her two, perfectly straight, alluringly beautiful legs had also been bound by the leather rope and were now wrapped around his waist.

The position caused Tang Siqi's face to become bashfully red as her heart was thrown into disorder.

"This bastard deserves to die!" she scolded in her mind. Her eyes began to water and undulated like blue waves.

"In a little bit, even I will not be able to predict what will happen, nor will I be able to predict who we shall encounter," whispered Qin Lie. He solemnly continued, "Within Crossroads Street, there are several people who I have old friendships with, and I don't wish for them to encounter trouble. If possible, I plan to try and save them. If there is absolutely no way, then I will only be able to give up on them..."

By this time, the martial practitioners of the five great forces had already long since completely broken through all of Armament City's main gates.

Currently, the martial practitioners belonging to Dark Asura Hall, Seven Fiends Valley, Dark Shadow Tower, Cloud Sky Mountain, and Purple Mist Sea were all within the various large city districts, moving against Armament Sect's foreign delegates, various disciples, and martial practitioners.

Crossroads Street, which was in front of them, belonged to Fire District and was an extremely bustling neighborhood. It was where the outer sect foreign delegates lived.

Listening to the intense sounds of action from over in the distance, Qin Lie knew that there were definitely people currently over there killing outer sect foreign delegates and cleansing the street.

What he didn't know was whose people it was. However, when he had sent out his soul consciousness earlier to scout out the area, he hadn't sensed any extremely powerful life fluctuations.

It was only because of this that he had decided to make this detour.

"I'll use everything I have to protect you." Qin Lie's head turned around once more as he looked again at Tang Siqi. His expression was heavy as he said, "I might be bringing you to walk down the

road of death, but this was your own decision. I hope your heart is prepared for whatever happens."

After he was finished talking, Qin Lie finally began to step forward again, moving towards Crossroads Street with Tang Siqi on his back.

……

Under the darkness of night, tragic cries incessantly emanated out from both sides of Crossroads Street. Each cry that transmitted over was probably the death of yet another outer sect foreign delegate.

Atop the tallest building which oversaw both sides of the street, several figures stood proudly as they condescendingly watched the scene unfold below them. They watched as all of the people within the pavilion style houses on both sides of the street were killed.

"Lu Li has been beside Granny Jiu for quite a long time and is quite used to encountering this scene. I'm afraid there are no fluctuations within her heart." Shi Jingyun chuckled, and continued, "Yushi, Xuanxuan, you two are probably not quite used to it yet are you?"

Atop the tall building, Shi Jingyun stood impressively, along with Lu Li, Ling Yushi, and Ling Xuanxuan.

The martial practitioners who were currently massacring all of

the Armament Sect outer sect foreign delegates found on both sides of the street were none other than the experts of Seven Fiends Valley.

Their leader, was Shi Jingyun.

Lu Li's expression was as cold as frost, her eyes not showing even the slightest trace of emotion. She seemingly had a coldness which wouldn't melt even after ten thousand years.

"The flesh of the weak is the meal of the strong. In accordance with this ancient, never failing truth, Armament Sect can only blame themselves for having fallen to today's events. They were arrogant for too many years, always remaining independent and never joining Profound Heaven Alliance nor Eight Extreme Sanctuary. They didn't respect those above them, nor did they listen to any instructions which were passed down to them. They flourished for so many years and were slowly rising up."

Lu Li coldly said, "Unfortunately, there wasn't even a single peerless practitioner within the sect who was able defend themselves. Although Lang Xie was strong, he had still yet to reach that level. Thus, Armament Sect was unable to avoid this disaster."

Shi Jingyun's expression was heavy as he suddenly interrupted, "If we had given Armament Sect another thirty years, Armament Sect could have truly become the third Copper rank force on Scarlet Tide Continent. In forging, they would have a Qin Bing, a genius only seen once every thousand years, at their head. As for Blood Spear, it has always been getting stronger, year after year. Already, it is stronger than any of the purely combative teams of

one of the five great forces. This point is something that they have proven time and time again."

As he observed Lu Li, he continued, "Lang Xie is much stronger than you think! Even when Liang Yangzu, Di Shijiu, and Yuan Tianya attacked together, they were unable to kill him. I just received the news, but Lang Xie has already completely escaped."

Lu Li's expression slightly changed as she asked, "Is Lang Xie truly that terrifying?"

"Let me put it this way, the current Lang Xie is already the strongest practitioner amongst the five great forces!" said Shi Jingyun confidently. "The grand hall master of Dark Asura Hall and the mountain master of Cloud Sky Mountain, and perhaps even that fellow of Purple Mist Sea, are not even close to being Lang Xie's equal in one on one battles! It's because Lang Xie is too powerful, because Blood Spear is becoming ever so more terrifying, and because a fellow like Qin Bing suddenly appeared that the five great forces were able to reach an understanding and ally together to eradicate Armament Sect!"

Lu Li was secretly stunned.

Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan's beautiful faces both became slightly pale. It seemed like Shi Jingyun's words were a little hard for the two sisters to believe.

It was hard for them to accept this brutal reality.

Shi Jingyun sighed in his heart as he looked at the two. He said, “You two need to quickly become accustomed to this. This world has always been this cruel. I hope you two will be able to become as tough as Lu Li, for your hearts to be as hard as hers. Otherwise, in the future, if Seven Fiends Valley also encounters the same situation Armament Sect is in today, I’m afraid the two of you will directly crumble apart.”

“I thank Uncle Shi for his guidance. We shall slowly mature and learn,” said Ling Xuanxuan.

Ling Yushi let out the littlest of sighs, then said, “We will gradually get used to this.”

Shi Jingyun smiled as he nodded before looking back down towards another building and observing the people within the courtyard—it was none other than Han Qingrui, Han Feng, Kang Zhi, Kang Hui, and the rest of the martial practitioners whose origins were Nebula Pavilion.

“To be honest, Yuan Tianya and I spoke to each other, and he wanted me to kill all of these people who left Nebula Pavilion,” suddenly mentioned Shi Jingyun.

Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan’s expressions immediately changed as they hurriedly pleaded in unison, begging Shi Jingyun to show benevolence and let them go.

From the moment the two saw that Han Qingrui was still at Crossroads Street, they had pleaded with Shi Jingyun, hoping that

he would let Hang Qingrui and the rest live.

It was because of their pleading that Han Qingrui and his people were still alive.

“Alright, that’s enough. As I have already agreed, they will be able to live.” Shi Jingyun chuckled as he continued, “After all, Yuan Tianya isn’t from our Seven Fiends Valley, so giving him face doesn’t mean much to me. Furthermore, in the past, his subordinate Liu Yuntao dared to make a move against the Ling Family. This already has not given any face to your master and in turn hasn’t given face to our Seven Fiends Valley. Thus, I shall completely ignore him today.”

As he said these words, Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan subconsciously let out their breaths.

“Lu Li, I shall leave this side to you. I will go walk around some other areas.” After observing the scene and finding it to be under control, Shi Jingyun, feeling reassured, gave Lu Li some instructions before immediately leaving the area in a relaxed manner.

Chapter 194: Nothing Is Certain

“Where’s Jingjing?” asked Ling Xuanxuan as she watched the events unfold below. “How come she isn’t here with us?”

“She didn’t want to come,” said Lu Li with a cold expression. “After staying at Armament Sect for a year, her temperament seems to have become more gentle as she didn’t want to make any moves at all against Armament Sect’s people.

“No human can be devoid of emotions,” said Ling Yushi gently.

As she looked towards the where Han Qingrui and his group of people were, traces of helplessness appeared on her elegant face as she lamented, “The world is truly unpredictable. Three years ago, we still needed to pay attention to Han Qingrui and Kang Hui’s expressions. Yet in the blink of an eye, here we are, actually in control of their lives. Sigh, it is truly something that I never would have imagined.”

“Look at that little fatty, his name is Kang Zhi. He’s the son of the previous Pavilion Master, Kang Hui,” said Ling Xuanxuan, chipping in. “In the past, when I went to Nebula Pavilion, the guards at the entrance prevented third uncle and me from entering and said harsh words towards us. It was only because of the emergence of this little fatty that third uncle and I were able to enter Nebula Pavilion and meet with Elder Han…”

“He was only giving face to Qin Lie,” quietly said Ling Yushi.

“Yeah. He was giving face to Qin Lie. If not for Qin Lie, our Ling Family would have collapsed long ago.” Ling Xuanxuan fully agreed with Yushi’s statement, continuing, “He also helped us by killing Du Haitian and his entire family, a job which should have been ours to complete. If he hadn’t killed Du Haitian, then he wouldn’t be pursued by Nebula Pavilion, and he wouldn’t have disappeared until now.”

Ling Yushi knit her brows as a feeling of bitterness emerged within her warm heart. She inwardly thought to herself, “Where exactly are you?”

“Huh? It’s Qin Bing!” suddenly shouted Ling Xuanxuan.

Atop Crossroads Street, a shadowy figure suddenly appeared. It walked along the street, carrying someone else on their back.

It was indeed Qin Lie!

Ling Yushi was stunned and couldn’t help but also look down, looking at Qin Lie who was on the street.

“How could it be him?” Ling Yushi was very doubtful as she, for some reason unbeknownst to her, subconsciously felt uncomfortable as she looked at the youth carrying a beautiful girl below her.

“Qin Bing? He’s Qin Bing?” Lu Li’s voice became several times

colder as she said, “He’s the Qin Bing who had me refused outside the gate and wouldn’t let me take even a step into Armament Sect?!”

“It seems like it is him…” carefully said Ling Xuanxuan.

“He’s on the execution list!” Lu Li took a deep breath. From within her ice cold eyes, it seemed as if wisps of frigid energy were spilling out. “I’m going to kill him!”

She took out her longsword which was made from rock crystal and suddenly jumped down from atop the tall building, landing right in front of Qin Lie’s figure.

Seeing the sudden change in situation, Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan’s minds were thrown into turmoil. Their minds were completely blank at this moment.

“What should we do?” asked Ling Xuanxuan. “This Qin Bing had previously agreed that he would forge personal spirit artifacts for us, should we help Senior Sister Lu Li kill him or not?”

Ling Yushi’s mind was similarly in distress, but she didn’t know why. As she observed Qin Lie walk across the the street with the girl on his back, she had felt a constant discomfort within her heart.

When Ling Xuanxuan asked if they should help Lu Li kill him, she felt even more uncomfortable, and felt she shouldn’t do that.

“This person treated us sisters rather well. It... it will be hard for me to make a move,” said Ling Yushi.

“Mn, I also feel that although his is extremely cold, he is still a good person.” Ling Xuanxuan nodded in agreement, then continued, “Let’s just watch for now.”

Thus, the two sisters just coldly observed from atop the tall building.

“You are Qin Bing? Armament Sect’s Qin Bing?!” Lu Li landed directly in front of Qin Lie, blocking his way. Her expression was cold as ice as she continued, “Have we met each other in the past before?”

“No,” indifferently replied Qin Lie.

“Have I killed any of your relatives?” asked Lu Li.

“No,” replied Qin Lie.

“Then I am very curious as to why you specifically ordered Yi Yuan to not let me take even a single step into Armament Sect?!” screamed Lu Li.

“It was only because I felt disgust when I heard your name!” coldly exclaimed Qin Lie.

“Good! Very good!” Lu Li laughed erratically as if she were short of breath. The sound of her laughs were as chilly as frigid air and caused those around her to tremble. “There has never been anyone who has dared to treat me like this! Never before!”

Frosty light glimmered off of the crystal sword within Lu Li’s hand.

Qin Lie’s expression was ice cold. He first glanced at Lu Li, then raised his head and looked in the direction of Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan.

A feeling of ridiculousness suddenly emerged within him.

From atop the tall building, Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan looked down on him with vigilant expressions.

Currently, Qin Lie had steeled himself to return to Armament Sect so he could retrieve the spirit materials and furnace within his cavern so he could forge artifacts for these two girls and fulfill his promise.

Carrying another girl on his back, he had actually been spotted from afar by the girl he loved. Furthermore, they were on guard against him…

Regardless of whatever he had predicted would happen, he never would have guessed that Crossroads Street would be cleansed by

Seven Fiends Valley. Even less so that the ones responsible would be Ling Yushi, Ling Xuanxuan, and Lu Li.

As he was about to shout out the names of Han Qingrui and the rest, upon seeing that Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan were present, he immediately shut his mouth.

He knew that with Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan's personalities, if they were to discover that Han Qingrui, Kang Zhi, and the rest were present, they would definitely protect their lives.

Thus, he knew that Han Qingrui and the rest were definitely safe and sound.

This was quite a piece of good news for him.

The bad news was that, although Han Qingrui and the rest were fine, he was now in a bit of trouble.

—Trouble which was in the form of Lu Li.

Frosty light shimmered off of the crystal sword within Lu Li's hand. Wisp after wisp of icy, frostbitten air also began to emanate from her body. From within the frost, a coldness containing extreme heartlessness and ruthlessness exuded out!

This Lu Li also cultivated frost energy, and her comprehension towards it was just as deep as his.

However, Lu Li, similar to Yi Yuan, Liang Shaoyang, and Pang Feng, was only at the late stage of the Natal Opening Realm. Furthermore, based on Qin Lie's own sense, Lu Li wasn't weaker than Pang Feng or Yi Yuan. At most, she was on Liang Shaoyang's level.

That year in Ling City, Lu Li had also been at the late stage of the Natal Opening Realm.

That year, Lu Li had only opened seven Natal Palaces. Currently, she had opened up all nine, and they were all completely filled with energy. However, it was still the late stage of the Natal Opening Realm.

That year, he had yet to enter the Natal Opening Realm and had been ridiculed by Lu Li's cold eyes. He had been completely ignored by Jiu Liuyu.

Today, although Armament Sect had encountered a great calamity, he was able to truly stand in front of Lu Li!

Today, he was able to rely on his status as a martial practitioner of the same stage to directly oppose Lu Li!

"You want to stop me? You're not qualified!" Qin Lie raised his hand.

"Crack crack crack!"

Fragments of ice composed of dense, white frost energy agglomerated and turned into an ice sword. When the sword formed, a frosty air which was even colder than Lu Li's was suddenly released from Qin Lie's body.

It was as if Qin Lie's heart, mind, soul, and thoughts had all formed frost as he instantly entered the concept of absolute zero.

A layer of frost formed atop his body while his two eyes became silvery white. He looked to Lu Li and indifferently said, "If you cannot comprehend the concept of frost, then you will never, ever qualify to be my opponent!"

The ice sword flew forward, turning into a sharp, icy light as it shot towards Lu Li's chest.

The crystal sword within Lu Li's hand suddenly began to exude an icy fog. In an instant, Lu Li's entire person was enshrouded by it. Right at this moment, when her figure faded, one ice flower after another suddenly flew out from within.

Each ice flower was carefully carved and indescribably exquisite, desolate yet beautiful. Moreover, each contained quite a shocking amount of frost energy!

The ice flowers flew out one after another as they were controlled by Lu Li and used to disrupt the frosty light atop the ice sword. From within the icy fog, a pleasant ringing sound could be heard.

Afterwards, Qin Lie was no longer able to sense his energy atop the ice beam.

“Concept, eh? Your comprehension are still too shallow. Your understanding of frost energy is not enough!” coldly shouted Lu Li.

Once lustrous ice flower after another suddenly flew out from within the icy fog. Like a hailstorm which had suddenly turned violent, the flowers began to wildly descend upon Qin Lie.

“Sinkhole!” Qin Lie circulated the Records of Geocentric Magnetism, relying on the energy of the earth within him to cause changes within the earth.

Amidst the icy fog, the earth under Lu Li’s feet suddenly cracked as if a demon had opened its jaws. From the core of the earth, a strong suction force emerged!

Lu Li’s cold, arrogant figure suddenly began to violently tremble within the icy fog as her footsteps became increasingly unstable.

“Bang bang bang!”

At this moment, Qin Lie faced the oncoming lustrous ice flowers with his ice shield as he charged forward while carrying Tang Siqi on his back.

Once he neared the icy fog, he used his ice shield to directly penetrate into the icy fog!

“Bang!”

He heard the sound of a heavy collision as well as the sound of Lu Li’s stifled groan. However, he didn’t bother looking as he instead increased his speed and rushed past Lu Li.

“Ling Yushi! Ling Xuanxuan! Stop him for me!” suddenly shrieked Lu Li from within the icy fog.

Atop the tall building, Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan exchanged glances. Their faces both had expressions of helplessness as they bit the bullet and jumped down from the building.

The two of them blocked Qin Lie’s path once again.

“I’m extremely sorry, but we cannot let you go.” Sorrow was written all over Ling Yushi’s beautiful face as the loops atop her snow white shoulders each began to glow at this time.

The corner of Ling Xuanxuan’s dress was seemingly ignited by flames as several clusters of fire appeared besides her. Her expression was also somewhat awkward as she stood there looking uncomfortable. She softly whispered, “About this, I don’t dare ignore Senior Sister Lu’s orders, so I can only stop you. I’m sorry.”

“Ooooooooo!” The obscure sound of a conch horn suddenly

emanated out from within the icy fog.

The expression on Ling Yushi's pretty face slightly changed as she knew what the sound meant. She realized that Lu Li was calling over all the nearby Seven Fiends Valley martial practitioners.

She knew very clearly that as soon as the nearby Seven Fiends Valley martial practitioners arrived, Qin Lie would probably not be able to escape.

"Sis, block him!" said Ling Yushi as her bright eyes continuously blinked, seemingly signaling something to Ling Xuanxuan.

The two sisters were thinking the same thing. With just a glance, they were able to know what the other was thinking. Thus, as soon as Ling Xuanxuan saw Ling Yushi's eyes, she immediately understood, hurriedly circulating her flame spirit art and causing all of the fireballs around her to fly out.

They rushed toward Qin Lie together!

Carrying Tang Siqi, Qin Lie watched as the two sisters rushed towards him, his eyes indifferent.

He didn't move at all.

Suddenly, his eyes began to gradually brighten as he realized that he couldn't sense even the slightest bit of killing intent from either

of the two sisters...

Right at the moment when he was still distracted, the two sisters who were seemingly charging over very quickly suddenly split, one going left and the other going right, as they bypassed him from his sides.

They had rushed behind him!

“Darn, he dodged us!” loudly shouted Ling Xuanxuan as he hurriedly turned her head around.

“Don’t let him escape!” shouted Ling Yushi in accompaniment.

Qin Lie’s figure slightly quivered as he no longer hesitated and quickly rushed out of Crossroads Street at maximum speed while the two sisters reformed their attack.

Behind him, Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan acted as if they were chasing in pursuit.

Even farther behind, in the distance, Lu Li was still stuck in the fissure within the icy fog, unable to climb out.

Chapter 195: Sealed

At the peak of Flame Volcano.

“Cough cough!”

Ying Xingran’s expression was pale. He coughed violently while covering his mouth with a towel.

A faint smell of blood came from it...

The three great reverends, Luo Zhichang, Fang Qi, and Jiang Hao, and the seven great inner sect elders, Mo Hai, Tan Dongling, and more, were now all gathered on this rock overlooking the entire city beneath the foot of the mountain.

At this moment, the many bustling streets of the four great districts of Armament City, the Earth, Fire, Water and Wind districts, had all been set alight.

When viewed from the peak of Flame Volcano, it seemed like there were numerous fire dragons circling inside Armament City. A terrible scream could be heard from time to time in the places where these fire dragons were found.

There were many martial practitioners dressed in different uniforms roaming all four districts, hunting down Armament Sect’s foreign delegates and Blood Spear martial practitioners.

Fights had broken out everywhere inside Armament City. Many of the areas were in ruins, and there were countless screams coming from many of the streets...

There were even more martial practitioners gathered outside Armament Sect, surrounding Armament Sect and even Flame Volcano itself.

“Dark Shadow Tower! Dark Asura Hall! Cloud Sky Mountain! Seven Fiends Valley! Purple Mist Sea!” Ying Xingran uttered through gritted teeth while coughing violently. His eyes shone with deep-seated hatred.

“Dongling, is there any news yet from Lang Xie and Feng Rong yet?” exclaimed Chief Reverend Luo Zhichang.

Tan Dongling’s expression was dark. “They haven’t come back yet. Perhaps... they have run into an accident.”

Everyone else’s expressions had turned dark as well.

Lang Xie and Feng Rong were Blood Spear’s pillars. They were responsible for dispatching Blood Spears to destroy their enemies. Now that their backbone, Lang Xie and Feng Rong, had gone missing, it caused a hopeless feeling to rise in the three great reverends and seven great inner sect elders.

They were just artificers. They had dedicated their entire lives to

the path of artifact forging, so they had not spent too much time on the martial path.

If they really had to fight to the death, they could not be of any use at all. A martial practitioner of equal rank could break their wings and destroy them with ease.

“Lang Xie will be safe.” Chief Reverend Luo Zhichang comforted the others and himself, “He is stronger than you can imagine. Unless Eight Extreme Temple and Profound Heaven Alliance have dispatched their own experts, no one should be able to stop him if he wants to leave! Even if the strongest experts of the five great forces had mobilized, they may not necessarily be able to kill him either. Lang Xie is even stronger than his master was in the past!”

Everyone’s expressions shook slightly.

“Qin Bing has also gone missing. I wonder what accident has befallen him,” Jiang Hao sighed softly.

“It must be because of Tang Siqi and Lian Rou’s matter that he went out of the sect!” Ying Xingran said with a scowl, “I had specifically instructed that no one was to disturb him from artifact forging. Someone must have contacted him for him to find out about Tang Siqi and Lian Rou being caught. That Yi Yuan came from Purple Mist Sea, right?”

“Correct, he is from Purple Mist Sea,” Mo Hai answered.

“Then it must be him!” Ying Xingran stated with a snort.

They all nodded silently and looked at the flames below within the city. With tense expressions on their faces, they watched all of the martial practitioners from various forces.

“The reason they’re surrounding us and not attacking is because they want to capture us alive. They still need us to forge artifacts.” Fang Qi pondered for a moment before he sighed, “The reason they’re hunting after foreign delegates with combat power and killing Blood Spear’s men all over the city is to break our fangs and claws.”

“The moment Blood Spear is exterminated, the moment all foreign delegates with combat power have been killed, we artificers will have no way to resist at all, and they’ll be able to do whatever they want,” Jiang Hao interrupted.

“Let’s wait. Let’s wait for Lang Xie and Feng Rong to come back. If Blood Spear truly is eliminated, then Armament Sect… may very well not exist for much longer.” Chief Reverend Luo Zhichang also sighed deeply.

……

At a street near Armament Sect’s entrance.

While carrying Tang Siqi, Qin Lie stopped at a dark corner of an alley and looked at Armament Sect’s entrance from afar.

Wu Tuo, Cloud Sky Mountain's martial practitioners, and Shi Jingyun were now guarding Armament Sect's outer sect entrance. They were also whispering and talking to each other.

The moment he saw Wu Tuo, Qin Lie's heart sank. He knew it would be almost impossible to step into Armament Sect.

Afraid that Wu Tuo and Shi Jingyun would discover him, he quietly crept backwards after just a momentary pause. He withdrew to a black stone building very far away.

The moment he came in he could smell a thick stench of blood. When he focused his gaze, he noticed that there were six bodies that died not too long ago in this stone building built from limestone.

Judging from their clothes, they should be outer sect's foreign delegates, and they were also those with incredible fighting abilities.

It was obvious that this place had been cleaned up before. Those foreign delegates around Armament Sect had all been killed by the "cleaner."

As he circled around the bloody corpses, Qin Lie carried Tang Siqi and arrived at a dark room inside. After releasing the leather ropes binding Tang Siqi and straightening her body, he said, "I've checked around for a bit. All roads heading towards Flame Volcano have been sealed. It will not be easy for us to return to the sect

now.”

From the moment he saw Wu Tuo, he already knew what they were planning.

They wanted to eliminate Armament Sect’s combat ability inside the city and control Armament City first. Then, they would capture all of the artificers in Flame Volcano like they were sitting ducks.

It was very obvious that they did not wish for those artificers to die. Moreover, they also coveted Armament Sect’s years of wealth.

After some thought, Qin Lie then guessed that the moment the matter inside the city was finished, the heads of the five forces would gather together beneath the foot of the mountain of Flame Volcano and formally negotiate on how to divide Armament Sect’s resources for themselves.

—Resources like spirit materials, spirit stones, and spirit medicine, and the partitioning of the city, Armament Sect and Flame Volcano, as well as how they were dividing up the artificers.

They needed to clear this up before they really set foot into Armament Sect.

Before that was done, the reverends and elders would be trapped inside Flame Volcano. They would not be allowed to take a single step anywhere.

The truth was that killing was happening everywhere inside the city right now. As long as the elders weren't stupid, they should know that Flame Volcano was still relatively safe.

Tang Siqi blinked her eyes with a somewhat hasty expression. It appeared that she had something to say.

But she couldn't speak.

"I don't know what you're trying to say." Qin Lie frowned, "Right now I can't think of anything either. I don't know where I should go, and there are men from the five forces everywhere in Armament City. All the city gates should be on the highest alert. It may not be too easy to exit the city right now."

He looked at Tang Siqi and said again, "The road back to the sect has been sealed as well. If we recklessly show up there, there is a high chance that we will be captured alive, so this path is not accessible either. In this case, I'm not sure what we should do. We can only find a hiding place in the city for now. What do you think?"

Tang Siqi's eyes stared straight at a single point—the spatial ring on her clean white fingers!

"There are things inside your spatial ring? Can I take them?" Qin Lie asked tentatively.

Tang Siqi hurriedly blink three times in a row.

“Then I’ll try it.” Qin Lie was surprised. He extended a finger and pressed once on the spatial ring, and a wisp of his mind consciousness suddenly slipped inside it.

A round and smooth pill that looked like a red gem was the first thing that entered his mind. He suddenly understood what Tang Siqi was trying to have him do.

He moved his thought, and the rosy, gem-like pill fell into his palm. Holding the pill he asked again, “This pill can release your bindings?”

Tang Siqi quickly blinked again.

Qin Lie nodded, moved himself closer, and sniffed the pill once. He could smell a thick stench of blood. It was as if this pill was formed from a special type of fresh blood. Its smell... was very pungent.

“Are you sure?” Qin Lie asked again.

Hastiness appeared on Tang Siqi’s face as she continued to blink once more to show that there was no problem with the pill.

Qin Lie no longer said anything. With one hand he lifted Tang Siqi’s small, shapely chin and pressed that rosy pill into Tang Siqi’s lips.

“Gulp.” Tang Siqi swallowed the pill with slight difficulty.

An obvious blood aura emanated from her body. As if the blood had set off her frozen blood, it caused her veins to grow active again.

“Cough cough cough!” Not too long after, she suddenly began to cough intensely. Her long frozen body was finally able to move again.

“This is a blood sealing art often used by Blood Spear. The Blood Circulation Pill is the best way to remove it. It took me a long while before I could activate the Blood Circulation Pill with a wisp of consciousness.” Tang Siqi’s eyes were opened wide. She was obviously still feeling somewhat uncomfortable, and it took her a while before she could finally speak smoothly, “There is a secret passage here that can enter straight into Armament Sect!”

“Here?” Qin Lie was shocked.

Tang Siqi glared at him and exclaimed, “Have you not read the secret scriptures the sect master has passed you?”

“I didn’t have the time,” Qin Lie nodded.

“The reason I know about this secret passage is because I’ve read it before in a secret scripture.” Tang Siqi moved her limbs as her beautiful face became slowly clouded by worry. “It has only been a

day and such a massive change has already occurred inside the sect. Sigh, I hope that Sect Master and the others have a plan.”

While saying that, she ignored formalities altogether and grabbed Qin Lie’s hand. She pulled him out of the room and headed towards the fake mountain area at the back.

Qin Lie was initially a bit unused to being held by her warm, small hands, but seeing the urgency on her face, he obediently followed.

Very soon, Tang Siqi had brought him to the fake mountains at the back. “It is right inside the small cave inside the fake mountain. There should be a huge rock blocking the cave’s entrance. Once we push that away, we will be able to enter straight into the sect through the stone passage. This passage was opened by a passionate sect master a few generations ago. It was so that he could leave and meet his lover conveniently…”

Tang Siqi curled her lips and explained.

Qin Lie entered the cave inside the fake mountain with her. This fake mountain area wasn’t that big in the first place, and the small cave inside was even narrower.

The cave could only fit one person. After the duo had entered, they even had to lower their heads and bow their waists, almost pressing their bodies against each other with very slow footsteps before they could walk inside.

“The lord has orders to check the areas that we’ve cleaned up every two hours. Go inside and have a look!” It was at this moment a cold voice was issuing orders from outside.

Then, heavy footsteps came from the entrance of the stone building.

Inside the fake mountain, Qin Lie’s expression abruptly changed. He suddenly hugged Tang Siqi inside that dark hole and attempted to press close to her ears, asking her to stop for the moment.

However, the narrow cave was dark and they were both lowering their waists as well. When he suddenly pressed forward, he seemed to have missed his target...

“Wh-what are you kissing me for?” Tang Siqi exclaimed with a mosquito-like voice. Inside the dark cave, her face was burning feverishly.

Chapter 196: Tease

The fragrant scent of orchids came slowly from Tang Siqi's body. It seeped into Qin Lie's nose and caused him to grow distracted.

The duo were bent over inside a deep cave while pressing tightly against each other. Qin Lie had even hugged her with one hand.

Hearing her pout, Qin Lie's expression changed slightly as he immediately noticed that the area he touched with his lips earlier was a little sensitive.

"Don't talk. Someone's coming," explained, having quickly lowered his voice.

In the darkness, Tang Siqi quickly turned silent and began listening seriously as well.

She had also heard the oncoming footsteps of martial practitioners and their impatient conversations. Then, she realized that she had misunderstood Qin Lie.

"Search the place once more. Someone might've slipped through the net and hid themselves or turned back," the leader called out from the outside.

"Got it, my lord," a martial practitioner answered lazily.

Someone began to pace closer towards the fake mountain behind the stone building.

Qin Lie slowly adjusted his breathing so that his heart rate would slow. He withdrew his soul consciousness and lowered the ripples of his life energy.

He quietly entered the state of Thoughtless Tranquility.

In this state, it was as if he had merged as one with the world and become part of it. It was just like an insect that had entered dormancy and did not catch much attention at all.

Even those martial practitioners who had higher realms than him would find it difficult to detect his presence after he entered the state of Thoughtless Tranquility.

Tang Siqi had never worked hard on the cultivation of the martial way, but her realm was already pretty high in the first place. She was at the Manifestation Realm and was even stronger than Qin Lie.

She might not be able to enter the state of Thoughtless Tranquility to deal with this current situation, but she had her own methods too.

Her method was very simple—swallow a Mind Focusing Pill.

The moment the pill entered her stomach, her heart rate, blood

flow, and life energy had all obviously slowed down. She had actually reached a similar state to Qin Lie's Thoughtless Tranquility.

The duo squeezed tightly against each other inside the cave of the fake mountain with one relying on a strange state and the other relying on a pill.

The sounds of the martial practitioners talking could be heard from time to time. They searched through every room inside the stone building and looked through the yard as well. But no one paid attention to a fake mountain, much less attempting to squeeze into the narrow cave of the fake mountain to search inside.

After a while, the group who had been ordered to search this area discovered nothing amiss and slowly left.

Qin Lie and Tang Siqi did not move immediately.

They leaned closely against each other and moved not a muscle, still waiting because they were afraid that those people would turn back.

After a very long time—Tang Siqi felt that her body was a little stiff already—she finally moved her arms and poked Qin Lie softly. "How are you?" she pursed her lips closer and asked in a small voice.

Sniffing her body's scent, Qin Lie turned distracted before he

regathered his soul and thoughts and answered indifferently, “I’m fine.”

“Shall we keep moving then?” Tang Siqi asked for his opinion.

Qin Lie nodded, “Alright.”

Tang Siqi began to move. Then, she cried out suddenly before falling limp onto Qin Lie’s body. That voluptuous body of hers was pressed tightly against him again.

“I half-crouched for too long there, my legs are all numb…” she said embarrassedly.

Qin Lie did not move or speak. He simply maintained his posture.

A sexy figure was pressed tightly against his just like that. Even though he held no undue thoughts towards Tang Siqi, he couldn’t help but grow restless as well.

His breathing grew a little rapid. He was afraid that he couldn’t control himself, which was why he dared even less to move.

Tang Siqi stopped talking as well after she gave the brief explanation. With her body against Qin Lie’s, she kicked her legs softly.

She was trying to regain the ability to move.

Following her kicking motions, at times her seductive body would suddenly come into contact with Qin Lie. At others they would suddenly grow separate.

It was as if she was teasing Qin Lie's heart again and again...

Whenever her beautiful figure shifted away from Qin Lie, he would feel a groundless sense of disappointment and reluctance. When she suddenly pressed close to him again, Qin Lie would be shaken and felt a most intriguing satisfaction.

"Junior Brother Qin, tell me. Do you think we can survive this?" amidst the darkness, Tang Siqi suddenly asked quietly.

She had switched to her other leg to stretch and kick, doing just the same to get blood flowing.

Her circulation had turned sluggish after she was trapped by Blood Shadow's blood sealing arts. Although she had swallowed the Blood Circulation Pill, her blood had not fully returned to normal.

That was also why her limbs had turned numb after crouching just for a little while inside the cave. She almost couldn't stand properly.

This was the short term after effects of the blood sealing arts.

“I don’t know,” Qin Lie said solemnly.

“Can I ask you a question?” Tang Siqi said again.

“Ask away.”

“Why did you want to kill Liang Shaoyang? Was it for me?”

Inside the darkness, Tang Siqi had stopped kicking her legs. Her eyes were bright, and her spatial ring shone with a faint light.

She looked at Qin Lie’s face in the weak light. Half her body was still pressed against Qin Lie. She didn’t seem to be in a hurry to move away…

“If he didn’t die, I wouldn’t have been able to sleep at night.” Qin Lie’s expression was calm inside the cave lit up by a trace of weak light. He said indifferently, “He tried to kill me with Eclipse Insects and ambushed me at Free Trade Street later on as well. I nearly lost my life both times. When I came back to Armament Sect, the first thing I did was to kill him because I couldn’t guarantee that my luck will hold for the third time if he ambushed me again.”

“It’s not related to me?” There were immense disappointment inside Tang Siqi’s bright eyes. “It really wasn’t for me?”

“A little.” After a moment of pause, Qin Lie finally nodded, “I do not want to see you leave Armament Sect by yourself. I do not want to see you fall to his schemes either. I wanted to take back

those things that were originally yours for you."

Tang Siqi' eyes brightened as liveliness brimmed inside them. There was a trace of happiness at the corner of her lips. "S-so, how much of your motivation to kill Liang Shaoyang was for me?" she asked again.

"Maybe twenty or thirty," Qin Lie replied honestly.

"That is enough!" A beautiful smile spread out from her lips.

Before Qin Lie could react, she suddenly moved forward and pecked Qin Lie's face once with her full and fragrant lips. She then smiled sweetly, "This is your reward, heh!"

Qin Lie froze instantly.

He stared stupidly at Tang Siqi and subconsciously touched the place she kissed before. He was still a little stunned.

"Let's go. I can see the rocks blocking the stone passage ahead already." The attractive smile on Tang Siqi's face did not disappear. She seemed to be feeling pretty good as she headed once again to the front.

The spatial ring on her hand continued to let out a faint light which faintly illuminated that attractive figure of hers inside the pitch black cave...

Inside the narrow cave, she had bent her waist and lifted her butt slightly. Her butt in the perfect shape of a peach was extremely seductive.

While watching dumbfoundedly from the back, he suddenly realized that there was fire burning inside his heart.

The image of Tang Siqi's sexy pose as her butt twisted through the cave was imprinted deeply in his mind. The image replayed again and again in his head, and like a naughty child, he couldn't wipe it away no matter what...

Suddenly his throat felt a little dry.

"Bang!"

While he was still in shock, he heard the sounds of falling stones at the front. It was only then that he realized Tang Siqi had moved the rocks away and was happily waving at him.

"Junior Brother Qin! Come over quickly. That secret scripture was completely correct, there really is a stone passage! It looks like Armament Sect's sect master was not a good person, he dug a stone passage purposely to meet his lover. That old lecher..." Tang Siqi mumbled as if she couldn't get over her senior's terrible behaviors.

Qin Lie had no choice but to channel Frost Arts before he could finally suppress the jumbled thoughts in his head.

He sucked in a deep breath and calmed his heart. Then he walked over.

There was a stone passage beneath Tang Siqi's feet. The stone passage went right underground and was dark. There was even a kind of rotten smell coming from it.

"I'll go down first. You wait up there until I call for you." Qin Lie frowned and leaped down into the stone passage.

The stone passage was wider than he thought. At the least it was much wider than the cave inside the fake mountain.

After he landed, there were gemstones shining beside the stone passage, causing it to be much brighter than the cave above.

He looked around for a bit inside the stone passage. Seeing that there was nothing amiss, he finally called out to Tang Siqi above, "You can come down now."

"Okay," Tang Siqi laughed softly before jumping down from above.

After a moment of shock, Qin Lie subconsciously extended his hands to receive her. Then, Tang Siqi fell right into his arms.

His hands happened to be holding that perfect, mouth drying

butt of hers. The full and smooth touch caused a certain fire in his heart to burn instantly out of control.

He discovered that his mouth was turning drier and drier.

He felt a flame burning his body and mind, burning at away his rationality.

His hands couldn't help but tighten and grab that beautiful butt which made him feel the blood rushing to his head. There was a mad blush on his face that had lost all rationality under the illumination of the gemstones inside the slightly wide stone passage.

His eyes also shone with a light that only an animal should have.

"Ooo..."

Tang Siqi murmured softly. A drunken red appeared on her beautiful face. A teary light glittered inside those soul stealing eyes of hers.

"Junior Brother Qin, y-you're hurting me." She suddenly bit her lips and rolled her eyes at Qin Lie. Her watery eyes gazed at Qin Lie as she said embarrassedly, "Come on, we still have actual business to do..."

After a moment of shock, Qin Lie suddenly came around and realized that the state he had created with Frost Arts had actually

shattered earlier.

He quickly channeled Frost Arts again, going so far as to guide the frost energy inside his Natal Palace to circulate around all of his veins at once.

Only then did the lust inside his body slowly extinguish as he regained true clarity.

However, he realized that his hands were still holding Tang Siqi's butt...

He quickly released her while looking a little embarrassed. He stuttered, "Just now, just now, I..."

He couldn't say anything. He couldn't explain it, and he could not find convincing words to explain it either.

"No worries, it's me, my own fault. I'm the one who was reckless and caused this..." Tang Siqi pursed her lips with a blush, but a hint of a mischievous smile leaked out of her eyes. "Heh, and here I thought Qin Lie could not be disturbed even in a woman's lap. A year ago, when you were taking the entrance exam, you had looked oh-so-serious, and now... aha, why do I not see any sparks flying in my direction this time, hmm?"

Qin Lie froze.

It had been a whole year already, and she still had not forgotten

about that matter. She actually hadn't forgotten about the grudge all this time.

And this time, she finally found the chance and excuse to counterattack.

"A woman's heart..."

Qin Lie shook his head with a wry smile, and ignoring her teasing, he turned around and headed deeper into the stone passage.

As if she had won a war, Tang Siqi chuckled all the way and cheerfully followed after him.

It was as if the duo didn't realize that their sect was at the border between life and death.

Chapter 197: The Final Spirit Pattern Pillar!

The sky was about to brighten.

All those Armament Sect outer sect members who weren't good at fighting had gone up Flame Volcano a long time ago.

There was only a small portion of outer sect elders and Blood Spear martial practitioners left at the outer sect. They were gathered at the back courtyard and did not dare to take a step out of the sect. All of them waited in silence.

Waiting, for Lang Xie and Feng Rong to come back.

Inside an artifact forging room at the outer sect that had been long deserted, a strange noise suddenly rang from an old and broken bronze tripod.

"This should be the artifact forging room. No one has used this room for many years, so we should be safe to go out now," Tang Siqi whispered quietly inside the tripod.

"Alright, let's move." Qin Lie's head popped out of the bronze tripod before he jumped out first. Then, he extended a hand and pulled Tang Siqi out as well.

Once the duo appeared inside the dusty artifact forging hall, they met each other's glances once with odd expressions.

Qin Lie adjusted himself and maintained his cold demeanor again. His expression turned indifferent.

Tang Siqi bit her lips softly while her seductive and attractive eyes rolled about once. Suddenly, she chuckled softly.

Qin Lie's pretentious expression made her feel a little funny on the inside. It made her feel that Qin Lie had been using his cold mask to hide his embarrassment this entire time.

The fake mountain cave and the stone passage. Those two charming moments... had pulled the duo much closer to each other.

Tang Siqi had always enjoyed teasing people. She had never forgotten that matter from a year ago. Now that she had found the opportunity, she would tease Qin Lie from time to time...

She was actually beginning to take the initiative.

Her beautiful eyes rippled as she smiled and said, "Are you ready to go out?"

Qin Lie suddenly grew anxious. The moment Tang Siqi had said this, he couldn't help but send out his soul consciousness to search around and scout for surrounding movements.

"Eh?"

The outer sect elder, Cheng Ping, nearby sensed it acutely when Qin Lie was floating about with his soul.

"Someone is inside the artifact forging room!" Cheng Ping suddenly cried out softly after being stunned for a moment.

Almost instantly, he and two other Blood Spear martial practitioners rushed towards the artifact forging room and stopped at the abandoned artifact forging room that had been turned into a store room.

He gestured to the two Blood Spear martial practitioners with his hand and had them spread out in preparation to flank the opponent. Then, he said in a low tone, "Who's inside?"

The moment Cheng Ping's voice came up, Qin Lie and Tang Siqi both let out a sigh of relief.

They were afraid that the outer sect of Armament Sect had already been conquered by the five great forces and were worried that the moment they appeared, they would see Dark Shadow Tower and Dark Asura Hall's killers roaming everywhere.

If that were really the case, then they would be walking right into the enemy's hands and their own deaths.

"Elder Cheng? It's me, Tang Siqi."

“I’m Qin Bing.”

They both expressed their identities.

Cheng Ping was greatly caught by surprise as he exclaimed softly, “It really is the two of you? How did you come here?” He then gestured for the two Blood Spear martial practitioners to stand down.

The two men slowly withdrew the spirit artifacts in their hands.

Qin Lie and Tang Siqi walked out of the entrance filled with cobwebs above them and arrived in front of Cheng Ping.

“Qin Bing! Tang Siqi! It really is you two!” Cheng Ping was overjoyed.

“Old Cheng?” Tong Jihua’s voice came from afar.

“It’s alright. Qin Bing and Tang Siqi are back!” Cheng Ping cried out.

“Ah?” Tong Jihua was overjoyed as well.

Before long Tong Jihua had rushed over from afar while leading five Blood Spear martial practitioners with him. He looked at Tang Siqi in surprise and asked, “How did you come back? Where’s Yi Yuan and Lian Rou?”

Tang Siqi's eyes darkened. "Yi Yuan and Sister Rou may not be coming back any longer."

"Were they caught in an accident?" Tong Jihua's expression was heavy.

"What is going on?" Cheng Ping asked softly.

Tang Siqi detailed the situation outside and pointed out Di Shijiu and Yuan Tianya's appearance after Lang Xie and Feng Rong had arrived at the scene, Blood Shadow's might, and the matter's relation with the Blood Spears. She had elaborated on the things that had happened that night.

Tong Jihua and Cheng Ping were greatly shocked by what they heard. Because of that, they would occasionally look at Qin Lie with great shock in their eyes.

To shatter Blood Shadow's body with a spirit artifact, to trap Blood Shadow with the power of the earth, to fight Pang Feng and Lu Li afterwards and still successfully bring Tang Siqi back to the sect. Had he done this all by himself?

As outer sect elders, Tong Jihua and Cheng Ping knew very well how terrifying Pang Feng was. They had also heard of Lu Li's might and could imagine the sheer terror Blood Shadow was.

In their eyes, Qin Lie's difficult return to the sect through the

rioting Armament City was practically unimaginable.

“What is the situation?” Qin Lie asked the situation over here.

“Very bad.” Cheng Ping sighed once and said, “Not a single man Blood Spear sent out came back after they were sent out. Lord Lang Xie and Feng Rong are both missing, and the many experts of the five great forces are right outside the sect entrance. They have locked down all exits with clear intentions of trapping us.

“We are lucky they have not attacked us. Otherwise, we would not be able to stop them at all,” Tong Jihua also laughed bitterly.

“How about the sect master and three great reverends?” Tang Siqi asked.

“They are at the peak of the mountain. They should be at a loss as well since they aren’t good at fighting after all.” Tong Jihua frowned deeply, “It is my mistake. I should not have told Yi Yuan about the matter. If it wasn’t for this, Lord Lang Xie would not have fallen into danger. If he could command Blood Spear, then we may still have a fighting chance.”

“It has nothing to do with you.” Qin Lie scowled, “According to Yi Yuan, the five great forces had planned to attack the sect for a long time. Even without me or the murder of Liang Shaoyang, they would’ve come sooner or later. My appearance had only accelerated the matter a little.”

“This place is not safe. Head up the mountain, I do not think the enemy will be going up for a while,” Cheng Ping said.

“Okay. We’ll go up first and see what the sect master and three great reverends have to say,” Tang Siqi nodded.

Qin Lie exited this artifact forging zone together with her and headed in the direction of Flame Volcano.

As the sky slowly brightened, the twelve spirit pattern pillars that were like the pillars of the heavens continued to stand tall at the plaza at the foot of Flame Volcano.

Qin Lie and Tang Siqi were walking right on top of the plaza and beneath the spirit pattern pillars.

When he passed by the twelfth spirit pattern pillar, Qin Lie’s footsteps grew slightly unsteady. He felt a little regretful that he was not able to understand the wonders of the final spirit pattern pillar.

He understood that the moment Armament Sect was gone, these twelve spirit pattern pillars would either be destroyed or split between the five great forces.

No matter what the situation was, these twelve spirit pattern pillars might not be here any longer.

Moreover, he would never have the opportunity to learn the

mysteries of the final spirit pattern pillar. He would not be able to figure out what kind of magical spirit diagram was inscribed inside it.

It made him feel a little regretful.

That was why he had looked again at this final spirit pattern pillar one last time before he went up the mountain.

However, he suddenly froze after a deep glance.

He could smell a thick stench of blood!

This thick stench of blood actually originated from the spirit pattern pillar before him. It came from the pillar's surface!

He had come to a complete halt. He frowned and stared deeply at the pictures of ancient world inscribed on this spirit pattern pillar,. he could see that the lines drawn on were actually dyed in fresh scarlet blood!

It was as if the magical lines on the spirit pattern pillars were formed from fresh blood!

This was definitely different from what he had seen before.

"Something's not right!"

Qin Lie's expression turned serious. After staring at it for a while, he suddenly sat down just like that.

He sat beneath the final spirit pattern pillar.

"Senior Sister Tang, please return to Flame Volcano first. I'm just going to sit here alone for a while. I will be done very soon," Qin Lie said.

Tang Siqi had also stopped her footsteps at the front and turned back to look at him. Her expression was doubtful. "What's wrong? Are you thinking of not giving up and attempting to unveil the secrets of the sect's last treasure before the sect is destroyed?"

"Give me a little more time." Qin Lie threw down his words and formed a wisp of mind consciousness. It slipped into the blood stained ancient glyphs as he began drawing slowly with his soul.

Before long the picture of ancient worlds on the last spirit pattern pillar suddenly came alive.

In Qin Lie's eyes, it was as if a layer the color of blood had shrouded the life-like world on the pillar. It caused him to grow terribly fearful.

He tried once again with a wisp of mind consciousness to break inside it, to break through the barrier.

He smelled an even thicker stench of blood as an illusion was

borne inside his mind; it was as if there was thick, fresh blood flowing inside the spirit pattern pillar...

Forcefully suppressing the discomfort in his mind, he abruptly rammed into the inner barrier with his wisp of consciousness!

Surprisingly, the barrier that had bounced his consciousness away at least ten times did not stop him this time. His wisp of consciousness had gone in very smoothly!

In the next moment, a small, blood stained space appeared inside his consciousness.

This was the world inside the spirit pattern pillar!

The sky was bloody, and the ground was dark red. This was a plaza, a plaza exactly the same as the one outside!

There were also twelve spirit pattern pillars here, and they were also inscribed with all sorts of magical and wondrous pictures. Those beautiful pictures wriggled slowly as if they had a mind of their own...

For example, the strange howls of the demons and monsters of the Celestial Sealing Demon Diagram were not voiceless, but earthshaking!

The heavenly rivers inside the Nine Winding River Diagram were like silver rivers flowing upwards to the sky. Clear water flowed

slowly inside it.

The birds inside the Soaring Sky Birds Diagram had extended their wings and flew high in this bloody red space while continuously unleashing waves of amazing spirit energy.

……

The spirit diagram of the twelve spirit pattern pillars seemed to be filled with energy in this place as they covered the area beneath the bloody red sky.

It was an emaciated old man they were sealing underneath!

The old man’s head was lowered, and he was as thin as a skeleton wearing a human skin. Not a trace of blood could be seen in his entire body.

Twelve rusty chains connected the spirit pattern pillars on one side and his bag of bones on the other. At a glance, it was as if those chains had grown out of his body and was a part of him.

Each of the twelve spirit pattern pillars had a chain connected to his bones. The reason the spirit diagrams above the spirit pattern pillars were active was obviously to seal him.

On the plaza, the world inside the final spirit pattern pillar had actually shackled a ghastly old man inside it.

Qin Lie’s mind was shaken.

It was at this moment the bowing old man had raised his head suddenly. His white as paper face and scarlet as blood eyes let loose a most shocking light of blood!

“Who are you? Where is You Hongzhi? Why is he not here!” the old man yelled furiously while staring at Qin Lie.

Qin Lie’s wisp of consciousness seemed to be perfectly visible in his eyes. It was just a glance, but Qin Lie’s wisp of soul consciousness had actually broken down instantly and scattered into wisps of thin smoke.

Chapter 198: The Mummy-Like Old Man

Inside the plaza Qin Lie's body shook as his eyes opened wide in an instant.

He stared at Tang Siqi in shock before crying out, "There's someone inside the spirit pattern pillar!"

"W-what?" Tang Siqi could not react for a moment.

"There's someone sealed inside the last spirit pattern pillar! I just saw him!" Qin Lie sucked in a deep breath and forced himself to calm down. He asked, "Did the sect's secret scriptures have any records about this?"

"No, not at all." Tang Siqi shook her head continuously with fear written all over her beautiful face. "Qin Bing, who exactly did you see? What is going on?"

"I'll explain to you later." Qin Lie thought for a moment before saying, "My wisp of mind consciousness had collapsed instantly after he had glanced at me just once. I'm regathering my consciousness again and going in!"

After he said this, he closed his eyes again, and under Tang Siqi's slightly fearful gaze, he entered inside the spirit pattern pillar once more.

Beneath the twelve spirit pattern pillars at the dark red plaza

under the bloody sky.

The emaciated old man stared at Qin Lie's wisp of mind consciousness with a frigid look and scarlet eyes, shining with terrible blood light. He hmphed coldly, "Where is You Hongzhi? Why has he sent you here?"

"Who is You Hongzhi?" Qin Lie expressed out his thoughts.

The bloody light inside his pupils was thick as the ghoul-like old man hesitated for a moment before asking again, "You Hongzhi did not send you here?"

"No," Qin Lie answered with his mind.

"Then how did you get in?!" the old man yelled loudly once more.

"Bang!"

Qin Lie mind was inflicted with great pain. The wisp of consciousness he slipped in was destroyed a second time.

Outside, he scratched his head subconsciously while a look that he was obviously in pain appeared on his face.

When Tang Siqi had looked at him, he shook his head with a bitter smile and regathered his mind consciousness once more.

This time he expressed his intentions first the moment he entered this wondrous space, “Don’t yell. The moment you yell my head will hurt, and you will directly shatter my consciousness.”

The mummy-like old man gradually calmed down as he stared at Qin Lie’s wisp of consciousness with a pair of bloody red eyes. “If You Hongzhi did not let you in, then how did you manage to come here?”

After he said those words, the old man’s expression changed as he suddenly looked towards the many spirit pattern pillars beside him.

He suddenly recalled a certain possibility as his thin, mummy-like body began to shudder visibly. “You, you’ve activated all of the spirit pattern pillars…”

The bloody light in his eyes grew more and more shocking. “Not long ago the spirit pattern pillars in here had reacted intensely. Are you the one who caused them? It’s you! Are you the one who activated the spirit pattern pillars from the outside and entered into the rest of the eleven pillars?!”

“Yes, I did cause all twelve spirit pattern pillars to brighten more than half a year ago at the plaza outside,” Qin Lie answered.

“That’s right, that’s right, I should’ve known!” he whispered to himself as his expression grew more and more excited. Rays of terrifying, bloody light burst out of his eyes as he exclaimed

suddenly, “Kid, let me out and I will give you a huge fortune!”

“Let you out?” Qin Lie observed him with his mind and answered with his thoughts, “Who trapped you here? How many years have you stayed in this place? Who is You Hongzhi? Also, why have they trapped you? How can I release you? What can you give me?”

Qin Lie asked all of the questions on his mind.

“You don’t need to know about me.” The man quickly calmed down. “Kid, you only need to know that I can give you everything you want!”

“I will not let you go.” Qin Lie expressed, “You are too dangerous. There’s no telling what you will do in the outside world, and I cannot guarantee that you will not casually kill me once you come out, so before I have a way to resist you, you’ll stay right here.”

Once he was finished, Qin Lie immediately withdrew his mind consciousness.

The second his wisp of consciousness had slipped away, the old man suddenly roared madly inside this space. It was like a demon from hell howling.

A bloody aura so terrible which seemed it could destroy the world filled the entire space suddenly. It caused the bloody sky to look as if it would start to drip blood and the dark red ground to shake with destructive waves.

It was as if this aura alone could kill Qin Lie countless times over and vanquish his soul in its entirety.

But it lasted for only a moment. The old man calmed down as his face grew paler. Even the bloody light in his eyes had gradually darkened.

“More than a thousand years have passed, more than a thousand years...” He grit his teeth and exclaimed with a raspy voice, “You Hongzhi could not take me away from here, but perhaps this kid can. Only a person who can learn everything about the eleven spirit pattern pillars can truly release the sealing art exerted here!”

His eyes burned with the light of hope.

Starting at the bloody sky, his expression had already calmed down completely. He then exclaimed in a low tone, “I will get out of here no matter the cost!”

Qin Lie opened his eyes.

His expression was incredibly serious as he stared at the spirit pattern pillar in front of him. He had withdrawn all of his consciousness.

The man sealed inside the spirit pattern pillar reeked with the thick and terrifying smell of fresh blood. It was obviously of the same kind the Blood Spear martial practitioners had, the same that

Lang Xie and Feng Rong possessed.

What was this man's connection with Blood Spear?

While thinking, Qin lie suddenly asked Tang Siqi, "Senior Sister Tang, have you ever heard of someone named You Hongzhi before?"

Tang Siqi's expression abruptly changed. "Why did you suddenly bring him up?"

Qin Lie's mind caught on as he questioned closely, "The person inside the spirit pattern pillar mentioned You Hongzhi. He thought that I was sent in by him, so he definitely saw You Hongzhi before. Just who is this You Hongzhi?"

"You really should read the sect's secret scriptures carefully." Tang Siqi frowned, "The man was recorded inside the sect's secret scripture. This You Hongzhi is the founder of Blood Spear and also Lang Xie and Feng Rong's master."

"Lang Xie's master?" Qin Lie was quietly shocked.

"Yeah, Blood Spear wasn't called Blood Spear in the past. They were called Fire Spear. Fire Spear was also Armament Sect's combat squad. They were responsible for protecting Armament Sect's artificers and martial practitioners. It was always at the bottom when compared to all the other surrounding great forces. Their powers were incredibly weak."

Tang Siqi explained slowly.

“It wasn’t until You Hongzhi joined Fire Spear that a huge change occurred. Tens of years ago he was also recruited as an Armament sect outer sect disciple. His cultivation talent was amazing, and he was quickly picked up by Fire Spear and absorbed as a combat personnel. While he was in Fire Spear, his combat style was a little extreme, and his behavior was also cruel and ruthless.

“I heard that he had never left a single enemy alive during his time in Fire Spear!

“There was a time when a small city’s martial practitioners had robbed the spirit materials the sect was transporting, and Fire Spear had sent him and a small team to handle the matter. What happened was that You Hongzhi slaughtered the entire city and killed everyone. Due to this matter, the sect’s reverends became afflicted with violent rage and sentenced him to punishment. They had chained him to a spirit pattern pillar, and they seemed to have wanted to burn away the violence in his heart with scorching fire.”

Tang Siqi pointed at the spirit pattern pillar before Qin Lie, “According to the records of the secret scriptures, it should be this one.”

Qin Lie’s expression was moved.

“After that the records weren’t very clear, and I do not know if

the sect had actually burned him with the fire." Tang Siqi recalled and continued, "But You Hongzhi had survived and was even kept at Fire Spear. Before long he had actually become the master of Fire Spear. Since then, Fire Spear changed its name and began to call themselves Blood Spear.

"It was because of him that Fire Spear had turned into Blood Spear. The old Fire Spear was the bottom of all other great forces in terms of combat power, but now Blood Spear is publicly known as one of the most terrifying divisions. Their existence frightened everyone, and not even Eight Extreme Temple and Profound Heaven Alliance dared looked down up their bloody name.

"The situation today is all because of You Hongzhi's appearance."

"Where is he now?" Qin Lie asked again.

He was beginning to clear up some of the information...

That You Hongzhi had probably entered into the spirit pattern pillar when he was chained to it.

Next, he had probably obtained some benefits from the mummy-like old man and became the master of Blood Spear later on.

Therefore, all current Blood Spear martial practitioners, including Lang Xie and Feng Rong, had been taught by him. Their bloody aura was also the same as the old man inside the spirit pattern pillar.

The spirit art these people were cultivating was obviously the same as the ghoul-like old man.

You Hongzhi must have been the one who had brought this bloody spirit art into the open from inside the spirit pattern pillar.

“You Hongzhi died a long time ago. There was no record on exactly how he died, so I’m not sure about this either,” Tang Siqi said.

Qin Lie grew quiet.

He frowned deeply and thought of the connections between the spirit pattern pillar and the ghoul-like old man’s words.

After a long while, he said, “Senior Sister Tang, please don’t tell anyone about the man trapped inside the spirit pattern pillar for the moment. I want to investigate this slowly.”

“There really is a man?” Tang Siqi still asked a little disbelievingly.

“There really is, and an incredibly terrifying one as well! It was possible that this man has been sealed for a thousand years and has a longer history than even Armament Sect!” Qin Lie said solemnly.

“A thousand years. H-he’s still alive? He’s really alive?” Tang Siqi

shuddered.

"He's perfectly living," Qin Lie nodded.

Tang Siqi's face turned pale, and she pondered for a moment before finally saying, "Alright, I'll keep it a secret for you. I won't say anything."

After a pause she said again, "But you must not act recklessly either. It's best... it's best if you don't go inside any more. I don't know why, but I feel that something is incredibly wrong just listening to you."

"I know. Let's go up the mountain first." Qin Lie was also worried.

The duo started again and headed towards the peak of Flame Volcano with increased speed.

Along the way, Blood Spear martial practitioners would appear from time to time. Their eyes were all glittering with a bloody light. It was only after they saw that it was Tang Siqi and him that they nodded and let them go.

An hour later they arrived at the mountain peak and finally saw Ying Xingran and the three great reverends.

The sky had already brightened completely at this time.

“Instructor Feng!” When Qin Lie arrived at the Procedural Hall, he saw Feng Rong sitting beside Mo Hai’s legs with an ashen white face as if she had lost too much blood while explaining something to the crowd.

“Blood Shadow is Yan Chi!” Feng Rong exclaimed softly with a trace of blood flowing down the corner of her lips, “Yan Chi was Master’s adopted son. Originally, he was supposed to be the master of Blood Spear and was supposed to take over Lang Xie’s position. We thought that he was had already died some time ago, but we didn’t expect that he was at Dark Shadow Tower and had even become their Blood Shadow.”

Chapter 199: The Past

“Yan Chi! How is Yan Chi not dead yet?!”

Sect Master Ying Xingran screamed, “That year I saw you and Lang Xie injuring him severely before blasting him into Flame Volcano with my very own eyes. After that, we even found his bloody corpse beneath Flame Volcano. How can he still be alive?!”

“That corpse probably isn’t his. He really is alive, and he is even scarier than before,” Feng Rong replied bitterly.

It was at this moment that Qin Lie and Tang Siqi had walked inside. The moment the duo appeared, Ying Xingran and the three great reverends’ attentions instantly fell on them.

“It’s good that you came back, it’s good that you came back.” Ying Xingran put down the heavy burden in his heart.

Ever since Feng Rong had arrived, the three great reverends and him had been asking about Qin Lie. They were still worried even after learning from Feng Rong that Qin Lie had left with Tang Siqi, afraid that the duo would be captured or killed amidst the chaos.

To them, Qin Lie and Tang Siqi were the sect’s future, the key to Armament Sect resurgence.

In their minds, they themselves could be captured or die, but Qin Lie and Tang Siqi must not fall into danger!

“Instructor Feng, who is Yan Chi?” Qin Lie walked over with a stern expression. “Is he that Blood Shadow? Why did you and Lord Lang Xie want to kill him in the past?”

“Qin Bing, you do not need to worry about these trivial matters,” Ying Xingran said.

“Mn, it is only a matter of the past. It has nothing to do with you,” Feng Rong said tiredly.

“I want to know!” Qin Lie exclaimed, “I want to know the past relating to Blood Spear, I want to know the man named You Hongzhi, I want to know the enmity between Blood Spear, You Hongzhi, and Yan Chi!”

When he mentioned You Hongzhi’s name, everyone inside the hall changed their expressions a little. But they did not feel strange about it.

They naturally had assumed that Qin Lie had also read the sect’s secret scriptures, which was why he knew about You Hongzhi’s existence and the man’s involvement with Blood Spear.

Feng Rong looked at Ying Xingran.

After some thoughts Ying Xingran nodded and said, “The sect’s future will fall on him sooner or later. There are some things that he should know. Say it, there are no strangers here anyway.”

“About… Master. How much do you know about him?” Feng Rong swallowed yet another pill before she asked.

Qin Lie repeated what Tang Siqi had said, “This is all recorded in the secret scriptures. I know nothing that isn’t in there.”

Ying Xingran and the three great reverends nodded quietly.

“Master… Master died by Lang Xie’s hands,” Feng Rong said softly.

“Why?” Qin Lie asked.

“Back then, You Hongzhi was chained to a spirit pattern pillar and burned with hot flames as punishment for his atrocities.” Chief Reverend Luo Zhichang interrupted suitably, “The fire seemed to have failed to burn away his ruthlessness. Not long after the punishment ended, he learned some kind of bloody spirit art out of seemingly nowhere. Furthermore, his cultivation improved by leaps and bounds as his power only continued to grow stronger.”

Wariness filled Luo Zhichang’s eyes. “A few years later, his realm and power far exceeded Fire Spear’s spear master at the time. That man seemed to have a special kind of charisma. Back in those years, there was a large portion of martial practitioners who admired him greatly. When his realm and power exceeded Fire Spear’s spear master, he then challenged him directly and took down the spear master. That was how he rose to the top.

“After he had taken over Fire Spear, he had changed Fire Spear into Blood Spear. Later on he began to recruit new members and teach them the bloody spirit art he cultivated. He had even created the blood pools to massively increase the strength of our martial practitioners. Due to his existence, Blood Spear grew stronger and stronger, causing the forces around Blood Spear to fear Blood Spear’s reputation.”

At this point, Luo Zhichang looked at Feng Rong and said, “Yan Chi, Lang Xie, and Feng Rong are the first members to have learned under him. Yan Chi was Lang Xie and Feng Rong’s senior brother. Yan Chi’s cultivation talents were actually slightly weaker than Lang Xie and Feng Rong, but his character was incredibly similar to You Hongzhi. They were practically made from the same fold. That was why he highly regarded Yan Chi, and why Yan Chi admired him greatly.”

“Why was he killed by Lang Xie?” Qin Lie asked again.

“That’s b-because Lang Xie discovered that master had cultivated into a fiendish rebound. Lang Xie saw it with his own eyes that he was feeding on human blood!” Shocking fear appeared on Feng Rong’s face. “I’ve saw it too during a battle. He was feeding on human flesh! Drinking human blood! He grew scarier and started to look less like a human!”

Tang Siqi’s face turned as white as a sheet. Her body shook slightly, and her mind was greatly shaken.

“He ate people?” Qin Lie’s expression had also changed.

“Later on, Master grew increasingly crazy and he only became more irritable. There were many junior brothers who sometimes failed at their tasks, and he would break all their necks directly.” Feng Rong looked down. “At the time, everyone was scared, and there were many of junior brothers who would attempt to discretely escape from Blood Spear . In the end, however, they were all killed by Yan Chi under his orders.

“When Lang Xie found out that Master was feeding on human blood, that was when he made up his mind to kill Master. After that, Lang Xie and I had found Sect Master and three great reverends and told them about our master’s bizarre condition.” Feng Rong glanced once at Ying Xingran. “After a thorough discussion, Sect Master and three great reverends all felt that master was too dangerous and was afraid that he would one day lose control, so…”

After a pause, Feng Rong said, “First, we weakened his body with a slow acting poison. Then, we ambushed him while he was cultivating. At long last, we finally managed to kill him. After the news of Master’s death had spread out, Yan Chi slaughtered his way up Flame Volcano in attempt to take revenge against the sect master and three great reverends. However, once he was dealt a grievous blow by Lang Xie and I, we blasted him off a cliff.”

Feng Rong and Chief Reverend Luo Zhichang had explained those secret pasts and cleared up the relationship between You Hongzhi, Yan Chi, and Blood Spear.

This matter was not very well known even among some of the elders of inner sect, so this was the first time they learned the whole truth.

Just like Qin Lie and Tang Siqi, their faces were also a little pale. Their expressions were somewhat unnatural as well.

In their eyes, the blood sucking You Hongzhi was already not human. He had become a monster that was even scarier than a wild beast.

When you add that onto You Hongzhi's dictatorial actions later on and the murder of many Blood Spear disciples, they slowly lost their respect of him. After Ying Xingran and the three great reverends had thought over the matter carefully, they were afraid that You Hongzhi would one day lose control and commit mass murder.

That was why they had cooperated with Lang Xie and Feng Rong and, after a period of planning, finally eliminated You Hongzhi.

"Is Yan Chi dead?" After a long time, Qin Lie asked again when the crowd turned quiet.

Feng Rong's eyes were dark. She shook her head. "He's still alive. I'm the one who was injured instead. The current Yan Chi is probably no weaker than Lang Xie! I can't believe he still has such combat power even after suffering an injury as terrible as that. All these years in Dark Shadow Tower, revenge was probably the only thing he thought of, so he most likely hasn't stopped cultivating

since. On the other hand, I did slack off these years after I've met A'Hai."

She admitted that she was no longer Yan Chi's match.

This caused Ying Xingran and the three reverends to grow even more worried.

They knew very well that Yan Chi wasn't Di Shijiu, Liang Yangzu, or Yuan Tianya.

This man had seen You Hongzhi as his father, and he hated Ying Xingran and the three great reverends to the bones for killing You Hongzhi.

If Yan Chi climbed up Flame Volcano, they would not be captured alive or imprisoned to forge spirit artifacts.

—They would be killed by him on the spot!

Right now, Feng Rong had admitted that she wasn't Yan Chi's match. The only one who could fight against Yan Chi, Lang Xie, was now completely missing.

If Yan Chi were to attack them at this moment, who could stop him?

Who would be left alive?

They were all feeling a little hopeless.

“Qin Bing, stay here while we make some preparations. We will tidy all of the sect’s secret scriptures and put them into safekeeping inside your spatial ring!” After a while, Ying Xingran made a snap decision and yelled, “The situation may bode ill for us, but the future of the sect must not be destroyed! As long as Qin Bing is alive, as long as he researches the sect’s secret scriptures, then Armament Sect will not perish. There will still be hope for a resurgence in the future!”

The moment he said this, the three great reverends and seven great elders’ expressions were all shaken. They all placed their gazes on Qin Lie.

“The five forces still need some time before they can take control of Armament City completely. They will probably not enter this place just yet.” Even on the brink of death, Ying Xingran was very rational. “We still have time to gather the sect’s most precious items. All of you should properly pack all your artifact forging experiences within this short time frame as much as possible.”

The three great reverends and seven great elders nodded in unison.

“Qin Bing, you will wait here for us. Once we have finished gathering our things, you will leave with Siqi along the same route through the underground passage!” Ying Xingran exclaimed.

Qin Lie's eyebrows were deeply locked.

The reason Tang Siqi and him had braved difficulties and returned to Armament Sect was because they hoped that Ying Xingran and the three great reverends would have a way to solve the sect's crisis. But from the looks of it... they had expected too much.

It was just as Yi Yuan and Pang Feng had said. Armament Sect was finished. No one could save the sect from the combined attack of the five great forces.

"Maybe, maybe..." While Qin Lie was thinking, an idea flashed across his eyes. After pondering for a moment, he said, "Sect Master, I will go back to the cave and gather up some things. Then I will go to the plaza at the foot of the mountain and wait for you all at the last spirit pattern pillar."

Just as Ying Xingran and the three great reverends were about to stop him, he continued, "The spirit diagrams inside the twelve spirit pattern pillars are the true essence and core of the sect! Once this is over, the twelve spirit pattern pillars will either be destroyed or split among the forces. I will no longer ever have the chance to see them again."

"Before I leave the sect, I want to try one last time and see if I can take away the spirit diagrams of the last spirit pattern pillar! I wish to preserve the sect's essence in its entirety!" Qin Lie said powerfully.

Ying Xingran, the three great reverends, and the seven great inner sect elders' expressions were all shaken slightly when they heard his words.

"Alright! Give it one last try!" Ying Xingran exclaimed.

And so, Qin Lie turned around and left.

Under Tang Siqi's surprised gaze, he swiftly entered the mountain peak's Procedural Hall and went to his cave on the side of the mountain first. He picked up a furnace and collected all of the spirit materials, putting them into his spatial ring.

After sweeping a glance around the cave and finding nothing else important remaining, he then swiftly left .

He leaped all the way from the mountainside and arrived at the plaza at the foot of the mountain shortly after. He sat down once more beneath that spirit pattern pillar.

Sucking in a deep breath, he calmed himself down and connected all the information he had gathered together.

After a while, he finally looked at the spirit pattern pillar before him and gathered his mind consciousness once more. He slipped inside the spirit pattern pillar.

His wisp of consciousness had entered that strange space once more, meeting with the mummy-like old man again.

“I knew you would come back,” the old man said darkly.

Chapter 200: Xue Li

At the space inside the spirit pattern pillar.

The moment Qin Lie's wisp of mind consciousness entered, the old man then said darkly, "I am called Xue Li. As long as you are willing to get me out of here, I can give you everything you want."

"Xue Li..." Qin Lie hesitated for a moment before asking with his thoughts, "The bloody spirit art brought out by You Hongzhi and the method of tempering one's body with the blood pools. Do they all come from you?"

"That is correct." Xue Li's scarlet eyes shone with intimidating light. "Where is he now?"

"You Hongzhi died a long time ago. I... I heard that he fed on human flesh and drank human blood, turning into something neither man nor demon. Is that a side-effect after cultivating that bloody spirit art of yours?" Qin Lie expressed his doubts.

"Side-effect? What kind of a side-effect is feeding on human blood?" Xue Li said with a dark face, "The spirit art and secret technique cultivated by our Blood Fiend Sect is a shortcut in the first place. Since it is a shortcut, naturally, it has its own unique characteristics! A martial practitioner hunts spirit beasts, forges their artifacts with their beast core, and enhances their energy with the refined blood of spirit beasts. Aren't they just the same as us?"

“A spirit beast is a spirit beast. A man is a man,” Qin Lie said.

“There is no difference to me,” Xue Li said coldly.

Qin Lie pondered and asked again, “How can I help you escape this place?”

Xue Li’s eyes abruptly brightened as he looked at the spirit pattern pillars beside him. He said, “Very simple. If you can cause the spirit pattern pillars to react on the outside, you can do the same here as well. As long as you break through one of the nodes of these spirit pattern pillars, the chains shackling me will be unlocked as well. When all twelve shackles have been released, then I will be able to leave this place!”

When he heard this, Qin Lie’s wisp of mind consciousness directly fell onto the spirit pattern pillar inscribed with the Nine Winding River Diagram.

This spirit pattern pillar was exactly the same as the one in the outer world, but the only difference was that this spirit pattern pillar wasn’t made from stone. It was tempered from some strange beast’s bones, and it was creepy white, covered in a similarly eerie cold air.

Using the way he entered, his mind consciousness copied the tracks of the ancient glyphs and swam over the diagram.

Before long, his mind consciousness had arrived at the critical

point which would break the inner area.

That just happened to be the port where the chain was connected. It glittered with light and unleashed a thick and powerful energy wave.

According to Xue Li, as long as he attacked it with his mind consciousness, he would be able to break open the light clump and release the chains.

But he did not do it.

He withdrew the wisp of mind consciousness and gathered into a smoky form in front of Xue Li, saying with his thoughts, “If you are correct, then I can release these chains. I have seen the port connection point of the chain already.”

Xue Li’s scarlet eyes grew brighter and brighter.

“We can talk about other matters in the future. Right now I only have a question. How can I control you?” Qin Lie asked.

“Control me?” Xue Li’s thin face and sunken eyes was like a skeleton. The blood light in his eyes flashed, causing him to look quite terrifying and spooky, “You want to control me?”

“If I can’t control you, then you can kill me instantly when you come out. Why would I release you then?” Qin Lie answered and then said, “Perhaps you need more time to consider.”

As he said that, he withdrew his mind consciousness once more and retreated from the spirit pattern pillar.

“Yo-you have communicated with him?” Before he knew it, Tang Siqi had come down and stood right beside him. The moment she saw him regaining his consciousness, she hurriedly asked in a shocked voice.

“Why have you come?” Qin Lie narrowed his eyes.

“I couldn’t interrupt regarding the matters discussed on the mountain. Also, Sect Master asked me to leave the sect with you, so not long after you came down, I went back to the cave to make preparations,” Tang Siqi explained and then asked again, “What did you talk about inside? Who is he?”

“If we say You Hongzhi is Lang Xie, Feng Rong, and Blood Shadow’s master, then that person inside is You Hongzhi’s master.”

“You Hongzhi’s master?!”

QIn Lie nodded and lowered his voice, “The bloody spirit art You Hongzhi obtained was from him. That spirit art caused You Hongzhi’s power to grow exponentially, turning Fire Spear into Blood Spear and also caused You Hongzhi to turn into something neither man nor demon. The root of all these things is the man inside the pillar!”

Fear and worry appeared on Tang Siqi's face. She exclaimed, "What did you talk about? Qin Bing, I think you should tell this to Sect Master and let Sect Master and the three great reverends know about the situation inside."

"Tell Sect Master..." Qin Bing frowned, "They would probably do their best to kill this man. They couldn't even accept You Hongzhi, so how can they accept Xue Li, who is even scarier than You Hongzhi. This Xue Li is the true owner of the bloody spirit art. Who knows what kind of secrets a person who has been sealed for thousands of years has."

"Xue Li?"

"Mn, it's this person's name. He seems to be from a force called Blood Fiend Sect. Senior Sister Tang, have you heard of Blood Fiend Sect before?"

"No, never. Nowhere in Scarlet Tide Continent does such a force exist, I can guarantee this."

"In that case, Xue Li is probably not a person from Scarlet Tide Continent..."

Qin Lie pondered for a moment, then thought for a while more before closing his eyes again.

He entered the inner world of the spirit pattern pillar once more.

“Senior Xue Li, what are your thoughts now?”

“I can’t think of any way that can make you control me in a way that appeases you.” Xue Li’s expression was calm. Even the blood color in his eyes had been withdrawn. “Kid, your realm is too weak. You can’t control me at all. But I have a suggestion. I can teach you the spirit art I cultivate and all of the secret arts I’ve given to You Hongzhi. I can even give you more than that. What do you think?”

“I do not wish to become a stranger who is neither human nor demon, so I have no interest in the spirit art you cultivate. Keep thinking.” Qin Lie withdrew once more.

The moment his consciousness left, Xue Li immediately turned violent again as he let out many maddening roars one after another. The blood aura around him soared as if it would shatter the entire space.

It was obvious that his previous calm earlier was forced.

“I just smelled a very thick stench of blood.” On the outside, even Tang Siqi could detect that something was wrong. She stared at the pillar beside her with great shock in her eyes, “I-it’s coming from the spirit pattern pillar! Is that Xue Li? How terrifying!”

“Mn, he should be going crazy inside right now.” Qin Lie’s expression was stern. “I will continue to grind him down. He’s been sealed for more than a thousand years and now, he finally has seen a chance to escape. He will eventually submit to me.”

“Submit to you? Wh-what are you planning to do?” Tang Siqi cried out.

“Right now the sect is being besieged. With the five forces surrounding us, the sect’s collapse is inevitable unless there is a huge change,” Qin Lie said with a darkened face and looked in Armament City’s direction. He coldly continued, “I want to see if I can overturn this situation, and Xue Li may just be the possibility that can save Armament Sect from this danger!”

“Him?” Tang Siqi looked shocked.

“If he can come out and is willing to help Armament Sect, I believe that Armament Sect’s current dilemma will be resolved,” Qin Lie elaborated.

Tang Siqi frowned and thought seriously for a moment. She also sat down quietly before saying, “Take care. You must not lose yourself.”

“Mn. I’ll be careful.” Qin Lie closed his eyes.

He did not hurry to immediately enter the spirit pattern pillar. Instead, he first took out a pill that recovered mind energy and swallowed it. Then, he rested for a moment beneath the spirit pattern pillar.

Next, he flipped through the sect’s secret scriptures inside the

spatial ring and very quickly discovered a book.

Poring through the book, he read it with utmost concentration to research the information within.

Two hours later, after he felt that his mind had recovered, he finally put the book away and stepped once again into the world inside the spirit pattern pillar.

After such a long time, Xue Li had, as expected, calmed down again. The scarlet color in his eyes had also been withdrawn. His voice had grown quite indifferent as well. “What do you want me to do?” he asked Qin Lie on his own.

“I’ve looked through some books just now, and I’ve learned that there are many way to control a person. Special medicines, spirit artifact shackles, women, family, children, and so on.” Qin Lie’s consciousness floated. “You’re alone, so I can’t control you through your family. From what I can see, even if you do have a family, this method may not be of use…”

How could Xue Li, someone who taught You Hongzhi to become more and more extreme, be bound by family?

“With your realm and cultivation, medicines or shackles will he hard pressed to control you as well. I am not the master here after all, so I can’t build such a large scale sealing formation.” Qin Lie paused. “In the end, the only way I can think of to control you is through your soul.”

A blood-red color appeared inside Xue Li's eyes. "Soul?"

"That's right. Surrender a portion of your soul to me and allow me to imprison it. Only then can I be reassured enough to take you out," Qin Lie said.

"Kid, aren't you desiring a little too much!" Xue Lie shouted angrily.

However, Qin Lie had already left beforehand to avoid having his mind consciousness destroyed when his expression had changed greatly.

Xue Li was the only one left inside the spirit pattern pillar howling at the top of his lungs.

"The stench of blood on the spirit pattern pillar is growing thicker and thicker," worriedly said Tang Siqi, who was outside.

Qin Lie withdrew his consciousness and looked at the spirit pattern pillar before him. He was also secretly shocked.

He himself didn't know if dealing with a person like Xue Li would cause him to fall into an abyss with no hope of redemption. An old demon who lived over a thousand years like this must have spent his entire life in conspiracies and scheming. In the end, he might very well be devoured whole from bargaining with such a person.

"Qin Bing, I still think we should give up. W-why don't we just

leave Armament Sect sooner?" Tang Siqi felt that this was not the best course of action.

"If we leave Armament Sect, we will never have a place to live again." Qin Lie said with a dark face, "The five great forces will not allow us to continue living. We are still carrying the sect's secret scriptures as well, so they will definitely hunt us down with everything they have."

Tang Siqi fell into silence once more.

Qin Lie closed his eyes and entered the spirit pattern pillar again. His mind consciousness appeared once more in front of Xue Li. "Senior Xue Li, have you come to a decision?"

"I promise you!" Xue Li yelled out with a bowed head.