

# Tales of Demons and Gods

(妖神记)

Chapter

251-300

Mad Snail

(厨二好き)

## Story Description:

In his past life, Nie Li was the strongest Demon Spiritist and stood at the pinnacle of the martial world. However, he lost his life during the battle with the Sage Emperor and the Six Deity Ranked Beast.

His soul was then brought back to when he was still 13 years old. Although he's the weakest in his class with the lowest talent at only Red soul realm, with the aid of the vast knowledge which he accumulated from his previous life, he trained faster than anyone.

He aims to protect the city which in the coming future will be assaulted by beasts and end up destroyed, as well as protect his lover, friends and family who died in the beast assault. And to destroy the Sacred family whom abandon their duty and betrayed the city in his past life.

Original Story can be found here: [Link](#)

# Chapter 251: Jin Dan

Nie Li pulled his attention and thoughts away.

After he finished this round of cultivation, Nie Li would prepare to destroy the egg. Based on the bloodlust it had just released, this egg was definitely a dangerous existence.

As soon as that idea crossed Nie Li's mind, the eggshell cracked. he immediately opened his eyes, quickly brought the egg out, and watched as the eggshell rapidly split open. A terrifying energy swept throughout the surroundings.

"I've already run out of time?" Nie Li furrowed his brows for a moment.

Yu Yan's eyes were also fixed on the egg in Nie Li's hand.

The eggshell cracked and the terrifying ripples of energy settled down. A round golden-yellow head popped out. Immediately after, a ball-like object with sticky liquid all over its body fell out with a little splat.

Nie Li fixed his gaze on the creature.

This thing that fell on the ground, and stood up trembling, has a golden yellow body and was big-bellied, with a small pair of wings that were growing from its back. When it walked, its body waddled left and right like a duck. It opened its big eyes wide.

"Coo, coo." The creature waddled to Nie Li's side, swinging left and right, then nuzzled its round head on his leg. One round eye looked innocently up at Nie Li.

Nie Li had been gathering the three Law Energies and was prepared to kill it; however, when he saw such an innocent and harmless expression on the little guy's face, he halted his actions.

This little guy didn't seem to be as dangerous as he had imagined. Nie Li could still feel that his soul realm had a slight link to it.

During the mysterious egg's incubation, Yu Yan had also been frightened by it, because the energy that it had discharged was simply too

powerful. However, now that she had seen the little guy that had actually emerged from the egg, even she was stunned.

Yu Yan couldn't help asking, "Nie Li, what's this creature?"

Nie Li tried to sense the creature's aura, but was unable to detect the slightest ripple of energy from the little guy. He couldn't help doubting whether this creature really was the one that had hatched from that egg. Before the egg had hatched, it had absorbed a massive sea's worth of Law Energy from Nie Li; however, now there wasn't even the slightest ripple coming from it.

"Coo, coo," The little guy cried out to Yu Yan in a childish voice.

Yu Yan's harsh stare slowly turned gentle as she said, "This little guy doesn't look like much of a threat. Should we keep it?"

Nie Li's gaze fell back to the little guy. At the instant it had hatched, Nie Li had most certainly sensed a horrifying bloodlust. But looking at its innocent and clueless appearance, his heart also softened. After all, that bloodlust came from its bloodline. It had just been born into this world and had yet to commit any wrongs.

Furthermore, in Nie Li's perspective, it wasn't a permanent issue. As long as Nie Li used his own energy to reform the little guy from birth and reverse the bloodlust in its bloodline, it shouldn't walk the path of its ancestors when it grows up.

"We'll keep it, then," said Nie Li. He already has a plan in mind for reforming it.

"Coo, coo." The little guy obviously couldn't understand what Nie Li and Yu Yan were talking about and just stood there with a dumbfounded look on its face.

Affected by how adorable the little guy was, Yu Yan flew down and landed beside it. She patted the little guy's round head and said, "From now on, you'll be coming with us. You'll have to listen to us, okay?"

The little guy seemed to understand Yu Yan's words and nodded its head.

“Nie Li, look! It looks like the little guy understood me!” Yu Yan cried at the unexpected surprise.

The little guy opened its mouth and bit at Yu Yan’s dress, ripping off a large portion of the cloth.

Yu Yan’s dress was woven from Law Energy; it was impossible for an ordinary person to tear it. However, the little guy tore her dress as easily as if it’d been made of paper. Caught off guard, the lower half of Yu Yan’s body was instantly bared, only leaving behind a strip of torn pink \*\* [1]. Through the tears, the outlines of her perfectly round and plump butt could be vaguely seen.

[tl: [1] = you know it. the raws had this \*\*, so it kept as it is. ]

At the sight of it, Nie Li couldn’t help laughing. Usually, Yu Yan carried herself nobly, but now her dress had been torn by the little guy. Luckily, there wasn’t anyone else present; otherwise, Yu Yan would’ve been too embarrassed to show her face in public anymore.

Yu Yan’s face instantly turned black. She flew back onto Nie Li’s shoulders and rapidly spun another dress out of Law Energy.

“Such a perverted thing! It’ll be better to just kill it!” Yu Yan’s tone was icy cold and was filled with murderous intent.

The little guy looked overjoyed as it lowered its head and swallowed its portion of Yu Yan’s dress. Nie Li couldn’t suppress his smile as he said, “Sister Yu Yan, it wasn’t doing it on purpose. It didn’t know that it was supposed to be your dress and just thought that it was all Law Energy! It seems like this guy’s a creature that lives off of energy!”

Yu Yan snorted. Although her body had been seen by Nie Li before, that was when her divine body had only just formed. No one could be blamed for that incident. But this time, her dress had actually been torn and Nie Li had seen her again. This was really embarrassing.

However, Nie Li’s words calmed Yu Yan down a little, and her facial expression relaxed. According to Nie Li, Law Energy was equivalent to food for the little guy. The creature still didn’t know what dresses were.

“Little guy, you can’t just go tearing a girl’s dress. Do you understand?” Nie Li half squatted and used his finger to tap the little guy’s head.

The little guy nodded and seemed to have understood what Nie Li had just said. Its round eyes wandered around and landed on Yu Yan’s reformed dress. Its eyes suddenly lit up and it started crying out as it blinked brightly.

At the sight of this, Yu Yan couldn’t help clamping her long slender legs shut, clutching her dress, and showed a different facial expression.

Dresses formed through Law Energy weren’t that easy to tear under normal circumstances, even by powerful weapons. By right, she shouldn’t have to worry about it being torn. However, the sharpness of the little guy’s teeth made her dress seem like nothing.

Yu Yan was feeling extremely depressed.

Nie Li threw his hands out in exasperation. “I’ve got no more ideas. All of a sudden, it looks like it can’t understand human language anymore! Looks like sister Yu Yan will have to switch to ordinary dresses from now on!”

Switch to ordinary dresses? Yu Yan’s face turned black. In a battle between Spiritual Gods, what could an ordinary dress do? It would be destroyed in one battle.

“Why don’t you switch to an ordinary dress for daily use and keep another made of Law Energy?” Nie Li couldn’t smiling as he made his suggestion.

As Nie Li and Yu Yan conversed, the little guy’s attention wandered around. It seemed to be searching for something to eat as its stomach rumbled with an audible noise. Suddenly, it reacted to something, opened its mouth, and began inhaling.

The black flames on the fifth floor were swiftly gathered into a huge vortex.

The little guy’s stomach was originally flat. As it inhaled the black flames from the fifth floor, that stomach began to inflate. A short while

later, the black flames on the fifth floor had been extinguished. Once the task was done, the little guy had turned into a round ball. It patted its stomach with its short wings and gave a satisfied burp as a pleased look filled its face. At this point, it was no longer able to move normally and ended up rolling around like a ball.

Nie Li and Yu Yan were both stunned as they watched it.

Those were the black flames of the Black Infernal Tower's fifth floor! They were all absorbed by this little guy!

Nie Li's scalp tingled. This little guy was simply too frightening! It's basically a monster that can devour all kinds of energy. If it's already so terrifying from birth, what would it be like in the future? Nie Li didn't know how long he could handle it for!

The little guy cooed as it rolled to Nie Li's feet and nuzzled his leg, appearing very obedient.

Nie Li went silent for a brief moment. Through his soul force, he sensed the link that connected them and his heart softened. Forget it, he decided to continue with his plan of reforming the creature.

At the same time, on the ninth floor of the Nine-Layered Deathlands

The seven experts looked at each other in shock.

"Just what kind of demon beast is that little guy? To have such powerful strength! It actually absorbed all of the black flames from the fifth floor of the Black Infernal Tower!" Deep shock was reflected on Tian Hun's face.

The Nether Master slightly frowned and said, "None of us have ever seen this creature before. I'm afraid that it's not a demon beast, but a spiritual beast!"

"A spiritual beast? The ancient bloodline?" Ling Yun and the rest were all stunned. However, now that they thought about it, only spiritual beasts would have such strength.

"A spiritual beast should recognise its master upon hatching and have mutual connections with him. Establishing a secure and unwavering soul

connection to its master. This youngster's luck is indeed excellent to have hatched a spiritual beast. Even old guys like us couldn't get our hands on a low-grade spiritual beast!" Tian Hun said in envy.

Even in the Draconic Ruins Realm, spiritual beasts were very rare.

At the same time, Nie Li slowly bent down as he lowered his head to look at the little guy. In his previous life, Nie Li had owned spiritual beast; therefore, he knew what kind of existences they were. The moment a spiritual beast hatched, it would form an unbreakable soul bond with its master.

However, when this little guy had hatched, although Nie Li could vaguely sense a trace of a soul connection, it wasn't an unbreakable one.

He could sense that this creature was definitely not ordinary.

Seeing the satisfied expression of this little guy, Nie Li couldn't help finding it funny. This little guy has extremely high Spiritual Wisdom!

"From now on, I'll call you Jin Dan [2]." Nie Li couldn't help laughing. Right now, this little guy was so round that it didn't look any different from an egg. Furthermore, its body was golden-yellow, so this name was most fitting.

[tl: [2] = Literally means "Golden Egg" ]

# Chapter 252: Soul

“Jin Dan?” Yu Yan made a weird expression at the odd name.

But regardless of what the little guy’s name was, Yu Yan decided that she would never tease it again.

Since the black flames of the fifth floor have been sucked dry, their only choice was to head towards the sixth floor. Although the flames from the fourth and sixth floors were rushing in to fill the space, it was still too thin.

“Sister Yu Yan, let’s head for the sixth floor,” Nie Li said as he glanced at Yu Yan.

Yu Yan nodded. Since Jin Dan depleted the black flames on the fifth floor, she couldn’t cultivate anymore and could only move to the sixth floor. However, the Demon Lord was also on the sixth floor. She hoped that a fight wouldn’t break out; if that were to happen, their chances of winning would be very low.

Nie Li walked towards the stairs that led to the sixth floor. He turned his head around and saw Jin Dan clumsily tottering its inflated body in an attempt to follow.

It seems that the little guy was somewhat dependent on him.

When he saw how clumsy Jin Dan was, Nie Li waved his right hand, gathered a trace of Law Energy, and lifted Jin Dan up, making the little guy float behind him.

Although Jin Dan was floating, it continued to swing its stubby little legs and looked as if it was taking a leisurely stroll through the air.

Nie Li couldn’t help laughing, “The little guy thinks it’s walking on its own.”

Together with Jin Dan and Yu Yan, Nie Li climbed the spiral staircase towards the sixth floor.

The sixth floor of the Black Infernal Tower

The moment Nie Li stepped onto the sixth floor, his surroundings suddenly turned into a boundless space. To think that the sixth floor of the Black Infernal Tower was actually a vast chamber like this.

“It looks like an illusion!” Yu Yan said as she furrowed her brows for a moment.

Within this vast space, there seemed to be countless powerful auras concealing themselves and countless pairs of eyes staring at them, causing their hair to stand on end.

“Hm. I can’t be bothered about them. My only goal is to comprehend the anatta mental state and pass the Nether Master’s test!” said Nie Li as he sat down, crossed his legs, and began cultivating.

Yu Yan stood guard at Nie Li’s side and prepared to engage in battle at any moment, should the need arise. Although the presence was vague, she could sense that something terrifying was hiding in this space. As for Jin Dan, it was snoring by Nie Li’s side.

Earlier, Nie Li had briefly come into contact with the anatta mental state; however, it was disrupted when the golden egg hatched. An ordinary person would find it difficult to re-enter that state after being so suddenly disturbed.

However, Nie Li appeared at ease and quickly found that feeling again.

His soul drifted and entered a bizarre state. He could almost see the vine in his soul realm slowly growing. The flower bud on it swelled pure and full, looking as though it would blossom at any moment now.

Just by fixing his eyes on that flower, a beautiful feeling overflowed his chest and his mental state opened up.

Nie Li entered into a state of profound insight within the profound state as his physical body continuously refined itself under the pressure of the black flames. A black coloured impurity secreted from his skin and was rapidly burned to nothingness by the black flames. Nie Li’s skin became even fairer and the heroic spirit between his brows increased.

He lost track of time as he slowly immersed himself in the profound

state.

Time continued to flow.

Suddenly, Nie Li heard a powerful voice travel from his surroundings into his mind.

“Infinity has no beginning, no beginning can have no end!”

As if Nie Li had suddenly become enlightened, a vast quantity of energy poured into his head. He sensed a powerful soul rush into his soul realm, as if it was trying to occupy it.

Nie Li, who was seated, suddenly furrowed his brows in pain. He could feel the enmity in this soul, it was filled with bloodlust. The pain made his entire body feel as though it had exploded.

“I have finally found another inheritor! I have stayed in this damned place for god knows how long, but I can finally see the sun and sky again!” That soul laughed savagely as it frantically attacked Nie Li’s soul realm.

One of Emperor Kong Ming’s successors?

“This guy is trying to possess my body?” Nie Li coldly snorted. This guy has really underestimated him. Nie Li would definitely not allow him.

Nie Li immediately pulled back his soul realm, gathered the three types of Law Energy, and attacked the alien soul.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The three Law Energies wildly collided against the soul.

Sensing Nie Li’s fierce resistance, the soul was surprised. “So you know how to shrink your soul realm and are able to use Law Energy to resist me. You are indeed capable at such a young age! However, it is still impossible to entirely rebuff me!”

The alien soul suddenly split itself into several parts and dodged the attacks of the Law Energies, then launched a direct attack towards Nie Li’s soul realm.

This guy was extremely difficult to deal with! Nie Li furrowed his brows.

Without hesitation, he mobilised the powers of the Fanged Panda and the Shadow Devil demon spirits to surround the soul.

“Just where is this kid from? To have gained insight on three types of Law Energy and have integrated with two demon spirits!” The invading soul was utterly shocked as it realised that Nie Li was far more than he’d bargained for. He had never seen anyone with two demon spirits.

As the soul tried to take over Nie Li’s body, it managed to dodge the attacks from the three Law Energies, but was unable to dodge the two demon spirits. However, if it wanted to take over Nie Li’s soul realm, he has to defeat them.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The alien soul was engaged in a heated battle against the two demon spirits. Nie Li felt as though his soul realm would explode from the terrifying collisions of energy. He didn’t think that it wasn’t something his soul realm could withstand for much longer.

This soul was way too powerful. As the battle dragged on, Nie Li could sense that the two demon spirits were being suppressed to the point that they were rendered unable to breathe at all.

“Hahaha, this body is even better than I expected. If that’s the case, then from now on, this body will belong to me, Kong Yan!” The soul savagely laughed as he pressured the two demon spirits, as though he was trying to drive them out of Nie Li’s soul realm.

The name of this soul is Kong Yan?

“Old fart, get the hell out of my soul realm right now. Otherwise, don’t blame me for being impolite!” Nie Li snorted as he aggressively activated the Soul Array, absorbing the soul force from Duan Jian and the others to prepare his counterattack.

The invading soul sensed Nie Li’s frantic attempts at resisting; however, from his point of view, Nie Li’s struggles were futile.

“Hmph! Getting impolite with me? You’re overestimating yourself too much. Even if I’m only a remnant of a soul, I’m more than enough to deal

with the likes of you!” The soul directly charged at Nie Li’s soul realm.

Nie Li manipulated all of his soul force into the sharpest spear and shot it towards the soul.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The battle in Nie Li’s soul realm grew more and more intense. Although this soul was powerful, it was also unable to gain any advantages over Nie Li.

The soul spoke in an astonished and furious tone. “I never imagined that your control over soul force would reach such an astonishing level!”

Nie Li could manipulate his soul force as he wished. Therefore, even if that soul was several times more powerful than he was, he could still deal with him.

As she watched Nie Li’s pained expression, Yu Yan couldn’t help furrowing her brows for a brief moment. She could feel that Nie Li’s cultivation seemed to have gone wrong, since the Law Energy surrounding him was embroiled in chaos! She landed on Nie Li’s shoulder and tried to examine his condition.

“How did it turn out like this?” Yu Yan’s brows were tightly furrowed.

Stuck in a deadlock against the soul, Nie Li suddenly had an idea. There was something in his soul realm that could even cause Nie Li to feel fear.

It would be the vine that resides in the depths of his soul realm!

Nie Li immediately mobilised the vine and spiraled it towards the alien soul.

“What’s this damned thing? Why would something like this appear in a person’s soul realm?” The soul was utterly astonished. Nie Li’s soul realm was simply too weird and was totally different from an ordinary person’s soul realm!

As the vine spiraled towards himself, the soul snarled in a low voice, “get lost!” and bombarded the vine with an energy attack.

Boom!

When the energy attack landed on the vine, it merely shifted its direction and lengthened as it continued to wildly spiral towards the soul. Thereafter, it began to absorb the energy from the soul.

Even Nie Li didn't know of this vine's origin. However, there would definitely be heavy consequences to underestimating it!

The vine wound itself around the soul and proceeded to absorb him, causing the soul to issue a miserable shriek. He constantly struggled, but was bound to the vine by restrictive knots.

Knowing that he was about to be sucked dry, the soul abruptly struggle himself free and rapidly retreated.

The soul then escaped out of Nie Li's soul realm and frantically ran for his life.

A streak of light shot out from between Nie Li's eyebrows.

"Just where do you think you're going?!" Nie Li suddenly opened his eyes as the trace of light flashed from between them. Nie Li materialised his soul force and rolled it towards the soul.

The soul had suffered heavy damage and was no longer strong enough to fight!

Yu Yan had been examining Nie Li when a sudden streak of light shot from between his brows. Upon seeing it, she instantly understood what was going on. Just as she was about to prepare herself to help Nie Li capture the soul, the soul shot itself between her brows with lightning speed.

Yu Yan's pupils immediately dilated.

"Not good!" Nie Li never thought that the soul would go after Yu Yan after it failed to deal with him. Although Yu Yan was formerly one of the most powerful Spiritual Gods, the strength of this soul seems to be even stronger than a Spiritual God's.

# Chapter 253: Master of the Nether Realm

Yu Yan instantly showed a pained expression on her face, as though she was engaged in an intense struggle.

Sensing that something wasn't right, Nie Li immediately held Yu Yan in his hands. Her body was still as small as it used to be and her exquisite skin was coloured with endless temptation. Her thin silk clothes felt as though they were nothing.

However, the current Nie Li didn't pay any attention to such matters. He pressed his thumb to her chest and sent a trace of his soul force into her soul realm.

"Ugh..." Yu Yan groaned as her body twisted in discomfort.

A strange sensation travelled through Nie Li's thumb. He could see that Yu Yan was currently experiencing intense pain, probably due to an intense battle that was happening in her soul realm. Nie Li exerted more pressure through his thumb, sending his intent directly into her soul realm.

Within her soul realm, the invading soul was engaged in an intense confrontation with Yu Yan.

"I never thought that I would fall so far, to have to resort to snatching a woman's body!" The soul named Kong Yan said miserably. If that vine in Nie Li's soul realm hadn't inflicted such heavy damage on him, he definitely wouldn't have shown any interest in Yu Yan's body.

However, since he'd suffered such heavy damage, he had no choice but to search for a new body. Otherwise, his soul might disperse. Compelled by the circumstances, he chose Yu Yan.

However, he never expected that Yu Yan's resistance was even more intense than he could've possibly imagined.

The two souls battled fiercely in Yu Yan's soul realm.

However, Yu Yan's soul gradually fell at a disadvantage. Ever since she reformed her Divine Spark, her current soul still remained shattered.

Therefore, her weakest point was her soul. As the two souls fought, Yu Yan's soul suffered forceful attacks.

After Nie Li wound his soul force into Yu Yan's soul realm, he immediately began a barrage of intense attacks towards the invading soul. However, he could only provide limited assistance to Yu Yan, now that they were inside her body.

With Nie Li's aid, Yu Yan also began to unleash attacks towards that soul.

"Damned bastard, always getting in my way! If I manage to come back to life, I'll definitely tear your body into shreds and crush your bones!" The invading soul had developed a deep hatred towards Nie Li. If it hadn't been for Nie Li's interference, he would've already devoured Yu Yan's soul! "But trying to defeat me won't be that easy!"

The invading soul suddenly turned into a thin needle, dodged Nie Li's obstructions, and shot itself directly into Yu Yan's soul.

The soul issued a wild laugh, "Hahaha! It's impossible for you to get in my way now!"

Not good! Nie Li's expression drastically changed. Now that the enemy soul entered Yu Yan's soul, the battle could only be fought between the two of them. Nie Li couldn't provide help anymore.

The aura of the invading soul instantly strengthened as it began to devour Yu Yan's soul.

At the sight of this, Nie Li's heart beat frantically in anticipation. He could sense Yu Yan's soul aura getting weaker and weaker, almost to the point of being extinguished.

Nie Li's heart boiled with deep sadness. After all, Yu Yan had followed him for so long and could already be considered an irreplaceable friend within Nie Li's party. If her soul was seized, then she would be utterly destroyed.

Yu Yan's brows tightly furrowed from the deep pain that came from her soul. Some time ago, her human emotions gradually faded away and

disappeared from her. Distant memories had also dulled in her mind. However, now that she stood before the doors of death, those countless memories suddenly poured into her head.

She could still see herself as a child, running through a grassy plain with her father and mother nearby. She seemed so happy as she played around.

She saw her young self, secretly in love with a boy even though she didn't even dare to raise her head to look at his face.

All kinds of human emotions resurrected themselves in her mind once more.

A savage laugh burst from Kong Yan as he continued to devour Yu Yan's soul. "Human emotions are indeed useless! You're about to die, what's the point of remembering them?"

Just when her soul was about to be extinguished, a golden flame suddenly ignited itself in her soul realm. This golden flame was small at first, but immediately swelled and became an inferno.

"Argh!" Kong Yan issued a wretched shriek. These golden flames weren't something he could resist as they burned his soul.

Yu Yan's soul aura suddenly transformed from a tiny weak trace to something much stronger.

Kong Yan was seized by fear as he trembled. "You...you're..." He turned and tried to run, but Yu Yan's golden flames had already covered him. He issued a miserable shriek before he quickly burned to nothingness.

When Nie Li sensed the blazing energy in Yu Yan's soul realm, he immediately withdrew his soul force from her body.

"Just what's going on?" Nie Li was also puzzled and had no idea what had just happened.

Yu Yan's soul aura finally recovered and she abruptly opened her eyes, while gasping for air. Her clothes had also been thoroughly drenched in sweat.

Although the current Yu Yan was tiny, her translucent clothes still

couldn't fully cover her impressive figure. A deep ravine could be seen through her loose collar and her slender legs seemed even purer, as if they had been made of white jade.

Nie Li and Yu Yan's eyes met. When he realised that Yu Yan had awoken, he was stunned. With his currently cultivation, Nie Li couldn't tell who was occupying Yu Yan's body.

A split second later, an embarrassed expression appeared on Yu Yan's face. "Let go of me already!"

Nie Li was currently holding her with his thumb pressed to her chest. Her well developed chest were pressed under Nie Li's thumb, making them seem even more tempting.

At the sight of Yu Yan's expression and posture, Nie Li remained briefly stunned before he released his hands, still recovering from his dumbfoundedness.

The current Yu Yan wasn't the same as the previous one!

However, this person should still, without a doubt, be the real Yu Yan. If Kong Yan had been occupying her body, he wouldn't have shown such a reaction. Nie Li scratched his head as he still couldn't understand what was going on.

Yu Yan flew up and landed on Nie Li's shoulders. That red flush in her cheeks had yet to subside as she said, "That soul was burned away by my flames of life."

However, she didn't tell Nie Li that her heart had been slightly changed in the process.

"Oh." Nie Li had already sensed that the enemy soul had been burned away. However, Yu Yan's expression was still a little weird. He thought about it a little, but then tossed the question aside and was determined not to be bothered by it anymore.

Nie Li continued to cultivate while seated with his legs crossed.

Yu Yan calmly sat on Nie Li's shoulders, but her thoughts were unable to

calm themselves for a long period time. Eventually, she raised her head and looked at the resolute outline of Nie Li's cheek. Her gaze flickered. She then turned her head towards a different direction with a light sigh. She saw it in the depths of her soul: the truth that she was not from this world. She wondered what the circumstances of her birth were. Where did she come from?

Yu Yan decided that once her strength returned to its pinnacle state, she would leave this world in search of her origins.

However, if she had any reserves about it, it would be due to this youth by her side. She wondered as to what heights this youth would grow to.

Nie Li calmly sat for three days straight as he gradually enter into the anatta mental state. His cultivation rose at an extremely fast pace, from 1-star to 2-star.

#### Seventh floor of the Black Infernal Tower

In this very narrow space, the Demon Lord calmly sat alone. He had already reached the anatta mental state. As he sat on the seventh floor of the Black Infernal Tower, a mysterious energy entered his body and something formed in his soul realm.

The thing that formed was a fate soul. Only those who have managed to form a fate soul have truly stepped into the Heavenly Fate Realm.

He had already come into contact with the door to the Heavenly Fate Realm. He abruptly opened his mouth and inhaled, swallowing an endless river of black flames. Like a frog, his abdomen swelled and inflated. The speed at which he devoured the seventh floor's black flames was even faster than Jin Dan's.

Upon entering the anatta mental state, time seemed to fly. Several days passed in the blink of an eye.

Tenth day.

After the test ended, the experts from various races within the Black Infernal Tower turned into streaks of light and disappeared.

The exquisite garden on the ninth floor of the Nine-Layered Deathlands

Nie Li and his party and a few add-ons suddenly materialised from thin air and landed in the garden.

“Where is this?” Nie Li swept his eyes around his surroundings and found Ye Ziyun, Xiao Ning’er, Duan Jian, and the rest all present. As far as his eyes could see, the garden was gorgeously designed, with flowers blossoming in every corner. The entire scene was extremely aesthetic, and at the sight, they all wondered whether they were still in the Nine-Layered Deathlands or not.

“Brother Nie Li and sister Ning’er, we meet again!” Xiao Yu lightly smiled as he greeted them.

“Xiao Yu, why are you here?” Xiao Ning’er was stunned.

Nie Li’s gaze swept pass Xiao Yu and fell onto the seven people who stood behind him. These seven experts all emitted terrifyingly powerful auras. At the sight of this, Nie Li’s heart jumped. The cultivation of these experts were at least of the Heavenly Fate Realm!

He never thought that there would be so many powerful experts gathered in the Nether Realm!

Upon seeing Xiao Yu together with this group of people, Nie Li’s heart trembled. From among these experts, one must be the Master of the Nether Realm!

Cang Ming, Mu Ye, Hua Huo, and the others who had been teleported along with them were staring in astonishment. The Demon Lord looked very calm. His gaze swept past these experts and an almost unnoticeable smile escaped from the corner of his mouth. He had been waiting for so long for this moment. Now, he could finally head towards the Draconic Ruins Realm!

The one black robed expert from among the seven glanced over Nie Li and the others. “It’s nice to meet you all. I am the Master of the Nether Realm that you all have no doubt heard of...”

# Chapter 254: Becoming a Disciple

When they heard the words of the black robed expert, everyone was astonished. Was the person standing before them really the Nether Master that they had heard of in legends?

Yu Yan, who was hiding in Nie Li's sleeve, also felt the aura of the Nether Master and the others who stood behind him. She was also utterly astonished. It turned out that there were so many experts in the Nether Realm, a total of seven, who had reached the level of Spiritual God.

Xiao Ning'er couldn't help asking in a low voice, "Xiao Yu, your relationship with the Nether Master...?"

Xiao Yu turned towards Xiao Ning'er and explained with a smile, "The Nether Master is my foster father and treats me kindly."

So it turned out that Xiao Yu had such a huge, terrifying background. No wonder Xiao Yu once said that no one in the Nether Realm could touch him.

The Master of the Nether Realm looked everyone over and casually smiled. "All of you are talents that we have chosen from within the Nether Realm. Perhaps you are still unsure of your futures. But from now on, all of you will be introduced to a whole new domain."

"This world that we currently reside in is called the Tiny World. It is only a small portion of the Draconic Ruins Realm. Furthermore, the Legend rank that you all have praised is only the beginning of true cultivation. Above Legend rank, there is still Heavenly Fate, Heavenly Star, Heavenly Axis, Dao of Dragon, and Martial Ancestor."

At these words, a deep shock revealed itself in the eyes of Cang Ming and the others. So the Tiny World was only a small area within a larger world. Furthermore, they have been told that there were many more realms above Legend rank.

The Nether Master continued, "There are many sects in the Draconic Ruins Realm: supreme forces that have lasted for aeons. Any one of these

sects alone could easily exterminate the entire population of experts of the Tiny World. The only reason why the Tiny World has maintained its current peace is because the residents of the Tiny World can exit as they wish; however, those from the outside world are unable to enter. The portal between the Tiny World and the outside world only opens once every five years. Only people who were born in our Tiny World can come and go as they please.”

In his previous life, Nie Li had also charged through that portal to reach the Draconic Ruins Realm and entered a whole new world.

At the words of the Nether Master, Cang Ming, Mu Ye, and Hua Huo were filled with strong anticipation and desire to venture to the Draconic Ruins Realm. Just what kind of world would it be?

The Nether Master’s gaze swept over everyone. “The six experts here have the same motive as me. They are also experts born in the Tiny World. Each of you have already been chosen to become a disciple of these experts. If you are willing to establish a master and disciple relationship and bear the Soul Seal, then your master will bring you to the Draconic Ruins Realm. From there, you will join various sects, learn higher level cultivation techniques, and become supreme experts!” As cultivators, such temptation was simply irresistible.

Once the Soul Seal is formed, your relationship as master and disciple will be stable. In the Draconic Ruins Realm, cheating and betraying your master is the most unforgivable sin!

Du Ze whispered in Nie Li’s ears, “Nie Li, are we going to the Draconic Ruins Realm?”

Nie Li nodded his head as he glanced at the Demon Lord, who stood far away, and said, “It’s a must for us to go to the Draconic Ruins Realm. Otherwise, in five years, we’d no longer have enough strength to protect Glory City from the dangers it might experience.” If they stayed in the Tiny World and allowed the Demon Lord to enter the Draconic Ruins Realm, then five years later, it would be an easy task for the Demon Lord to destroy Glory City.

A trace of sadness flashed through Du Ze's eyes. "Then, will we be able to bid farewell to our parents?"

Nie Li pondered for a brief moment and said, "The Nether Master should give us some time to do that!"

As if the Nether Master had overheard the party's discussion, he lightly smiled, "Before heading for the Draconic Ruins Realm, I will give all of you few months worth of time to spend with your families. Furthermore, if any of you have unfulfilled wishes before entering to the Draconic Ruins Realm, we will also do our best to help you fulfill them!"

Suddenly, Cang Ming stood out from the sidelines, bowed, and asked, "Esteemed lord, I would like to ask as to who will be our master? Are we going to choose our own master?"

The Nether Master shook his head and said, "Your master has already been decided. If any of you are unwilling, you are permitted to leave!"

Hearing the Master of the Nether Realm's words, Cang Ming immediately shut up. They didn't have the right to make any choices. In fact, it was already a great favor to them for experts of that level to accept them as disciples. They couldn't help being a little anxious as they wondered what kind of master they would have.

Ye Ziyun, Du Ze, Xiao Ning'er, and the rest were a little nervous. With so many of them here, they probably won't have the same master. Did that mean that they would all go separate ways?

Ye Ziyun and Xiao Ning'er almost simultaneously turned to Nie Li. After all, this was the distant Draconic Ruins Realm that they were talking about. They wondered as to what kinds of experiences they would have once they're there.

The Nether Master's gaze swept over everyone. "After you have become a disciple, your master will explain to you in detail the situation regarding the Draconic Ruins Realm. However, all I have to say now is that no matter which sect you enter, all of you originate from the Tiny World. A person should never forget their origin nor betray their master! Otherwise, we will do all in our power to kill you personally!"

Sensing the terrifying chill within his eyes, everyone immediately nodded their heads.

The beautiful lady who stood behind the Nether Master revealed a gentle smile, then pointed at Ye Ziyun, Xiao Ning'er, and Xiao Xue. "You, you, and you come here! From now onwards, you are my disciples."

Compared to the other experts, this beautiful lady appeared far more kind and gentle. Nie Li could rest more easily if Ye Ziyun, Xiao Ning'er, and Xiao Xue followed this lady.

Quickly, every expert found their own three disciples. Du Ze, Hua Huo, and Cang Ming were placed together with a blue haired expert. Duan Jian, the Demon Lord, and Mu Ye were also grouped together.

Nie Li, Lu Piao, and a twenty year old Demigod rank expert were placed together, as disciples of the Nether Master.

Although the Soul Seal placed certain restrictions on the disciple, the same also applied to the master. In the Draconic Ruins Realm, those who have established Soul Seals all had an extremely stable master-disciple relationship. The master would definitely not place any harm on the disciple; therefore, Nie Li could calmly form a Soul Seal with the Nether Master.

"The next three months will be time for you to bid farewell to your families. Once the portal to the Draconic Ruins Realm opens, all of you will head for the sects." The Nether Master said to everyone as he glanced at Nie Li's sleeve.

Nie Li had also understood that the Nether Master knew that Yu Yan was currently concealed in his sleeve. However, the Nether Master had only given a glance without saying anything.

The Nether Master eyed Nie Li and the other two as he said, "From today onwards, all three of you will address me as Master!"

Nie Li took a step forward and cupped his hands, "Lord Master, before heading for the Draconic Ruins Realm, I have a request. I wonder if Lord Master will agree to it?"

“What request?” the Master of the Nether Realm asked.

“I come from outside of the Nether Realm, a place called Glory City. While I’m not around, I hope that Master could do his best to protect the safety of Glory City!” Nie Li said with respect. He had decided to be honest with the Nether Master now that their master-disciple relationship has been established. Therefore, the Nether Master would surely agree to aid in this matter. After all, protecting Glory City wasn’t a tough problem for the Nether Master.

“Oh? Glory City?” When the Nether Master heard Nie Li’s words, he wasn’t shocked in the least. He smiled meaningfully, “A city of the human race in the main world, practically the only one. Furthermore Glory City has managed to preserve itself until today and hasn’t been destroyed by the demon beast hordes. Did you really think that the few experts of Glory City were capable of that all by themselves? Rest assured. I have long been entrusted by a friend; as long as I live, no one can touch Glory City!”

Someone had entrusted the protection of Glory City to the Nether Master? Nie Li was stunned for a brief moment. But now that the thought about it again, he realised that it must be true. Glory City had experienced so many disasters, yet still managed to survive; this was indeed an unusual matter. So there has always been someone protecting the city from behind the scenes.

However, Nie Li was puzzled as to the identity of the one who had entrusted the protection of Glory City to the Nether Master.

If that’s the case, then why was Glory City destroyed in his previous life? Could it be that in his previous life, the Nether Master had...

Nie Li’s heart was embroiled in endless confusion. But since the Nether Master wanted to keep it a secret and didn’t seem willing to talk about it, Nie Li ceased his questions. It seems that the solution this puzzle had to be saved for the future.

By the time the disciple ceremony ended, each person formed a Soul Seal with their respective master.

Xiao Yu lightly smiled towards Nie Li. “If we end up in the Divine

Feathers Sect of the Draconic Ruins Realm, brother Nie Li has to look after me!”

Nie Li shrugged. “It should be the other way round.”

Previously, he didn’t know Xiao Yu’s true identity and therefore, had his guard up against him. But now that he was aware of the relationship between Xiao Yu and the Nether Master, the guard he originally had was now gone. However, Nie Li still disapproved of Xiao Yu’s sissy attitude.

“Then we’ll meet again in three months!” Xiao Yu laughed.

In three months, everyone will head towards the Draconic Ruins Realm! These three months would be their final period in the Tiny World. When they returned next time, it would be five years later!

After the ceremony ended, the talents chosen by the seven experts bided farewell and decided to return to their own families.

“Nie Li, are we going back now?” Du Ze asked Nie Li. After this, they would stay in Draconic Ruins Realm for at least five years!

Everyone was also in anticipation of Nie Li’s reply.

Nie Li went silent as he pondered for a brief moment. Then he said, “Of course we will return to Glory City. But before we go back, there’s still a place we have to visit!”

“What place?” everyone looked at Nie Li in a puzzled way.

“The Desert Palace!” Nie Li said as he stared into the distance. Before heading for the Draconic Ruins Realm, he had to make a trip to that place!

The Desert Palace? Everyone was slightly stunned at the name of it. They wondered. what kind of place was this Desert Palace that Nie Li spoke of. Why did Nie Li want to go there?

# Chapter 255: Previous and Present Lives

Eastward of the St. Ancestral Mountains lies a vast, boundless desert with endless dunes of yellow sand.

When the gales blew, the ever-present sands would slowly envelope the entire region in a yellow veil.

The environment here is extremely harsh and demon beasts would appear from time to time, making the region extremely dangerous.

The main world itself was vast and boundless. In his previous life, when Glory City was destroyed, the surviving residents of Glory City escaped to the Heavenly Fate Plateau before they headed east. Pursued by Snow Wind demon beasts, they trekked through the entire St. Ancestral Mountain range and into the Endless Desert.

Along the journey, countless fell.

Nie Li still clearly remembered the events that occurred after they escaped into the Endless Desert. In order to save him, Ye Ziyun died from a demon beast's attack. Nie Li originally intended to follow her in death, but her dying words begged him to guard her remaining clansmen. However, as they travelled deeper into the Endless Desert, one man fell after another. By the time Nie Li reached the Desert Palace, he was all alone.

As he recalled the past, everything looked as if it had been arranged by fate.

As he stood in the desert, Nie Li's eyes turned watery as countless scenes flashed through his head. He thought of how he had gotten to know Ye Ziyun the first time and how they had experienced life and death together. It was Ye Ziyun who changed him back then, from a timid and cowardly youth into a firm and strong young man.

Xiao Ning'er, who stood next to him, noticed Nie Li's expression and curiously asked, "Nie Li, why're you crying?"

Nie Li wiped the tears on his face as turned to look at Xiao Ning'er and

Ye Ziyun, who both stood quietly and looked out into the Endless Desert. He sighed with sorrow, “Ning’er, during a person’s life, there will always be a special event and a special person. Although he or she may only appear in your life for a brief moment, they will become an eternal memory, for as long as you live. You will continue to live for the sake of that memory. This memory is irreplaceable. Someone who has travelled the lands and sailed the seas wouldn’t stop for little things.”

Nie Li muttered as his thoughts drifted off into the distance.

As she observed Nie Li’s absent-minded expression, a trace of pain quivered Xiao Ning’er’s heart, even though she didn’t understand why. However, she vaguely knew what Nie Li was talking about. ‘But Nie Li, did you know? You’ve already become an eternal memory of my life. If we are separated upon entering the Draconic Ruins Realm, then this is the memory that I will live the rest of my life for. My memories of you are irreplaceable.’

Tears flickered in Xiao Ning’er’s eyes. Although her heart ached, she still kept a smile on her face. “Nie Li, why did you bring this up all of a sudden? Didn’t you say that the Desert Palace isn’t far from here? Let’s hurry up!”

Finishing her words, Xiao Ning’er turned and walked away. Under the sky, in a land full of sand, the lovely image of Xiao Ning’er’s back carried a sense of loneliness.

As he watched Xiao Ning’er’s back, Nie Li couldn’t help sighing internally as he continued moving forward.

He walked up to Ye Ziyun’s side and realised that she was dumbfoundedly staring into the Endless Desert with her brows furrowed tightly. He couldn’t figure out what she was thinking about.

Nie Li looked at her in puzzlement and asked, “Ziyun, what’s going on?”

Xiao Ning’er, who was nearby, also threw a curious glance towards Ye Ziyun.

With her brows furrowed tightly, Ye Ziyun’s expression became unreadable. It looked as though she was trying her best to recall

something, but was having a difficult time of it.

Ye Ziyun shook her head and said, “I feel very strange. Why is it that when I stepped into this desert, a vague pain appeared in my heart? There are also strange memories of happiness and pain flashing through my head. I have no idea what’s happening to me.”

At Ye Ziyun’s words, Nie Li’s mind was thrown into disarray and he felt as though he’d been struck by lightning. This was just too bizarre! Ye Ziyun had obviously lived in Glory City ever since her birth and had never stepped into the Endless Desert before. So why would she have such feelings when she stepped into the Endless Desert?

Nie Li grabbed Ye Ziyun by the shoulders and asked anxiously, “What can you remember?”

Ye Ziyun blankly shook her head and said, “I have no idea whose memories these are and why they’ve appeared in my head. I can’t understand it at all. In some flashes of these memories, it seems like we’re being chased by demon beasts.”

Astonishment showed itself in Nie Li’s eyes. Why would Ye Ziyun have memories of her previous life? Just what is going on? Could it be that Ye Ziyun had also been reborn? No, without the Temporal Demon Spirit Book, how could that be possible?

He sensed that this mystery held an extremely large secret. He looked at Ye Ziyun’s absolutely gorgeous face and asked anxiously, “Can you remember anything else?”

Ye Ziyun furrowed her brows even tighter as she tried her best to recall. She submerged herself in those memories. As she tried to scrutinize them further, a peculiar feeling arose in her body. She watched herself stand under the moonlight as her clothes slowly fell away from her jade sculpture-like body before she walked towards her lover.

That person was...Nie Li?

Nie Li’s hands lightly caressed her body, causing a numbing sensation to flow through her. Then, he picked her up and carried her. Under the

moonlight, Nie Li's face was painted with an unwavering determination that caused her heart to beat rapidly. She was deeply in love with him. With this mutual love, they each desired to knead the other into their own bodies.

A bizarre feeling passed through her body and she couldn't resist a soft moan. But suddenly, Ye Ziyun recalled that it was all just an imaginary scene and her face instantly flushed a bright cherry red.

Nie Li anxiously watched Ye Ziyun, but when he saw her red cheeks, beautiful face, and red lips, the only thing he could think of was that he felt like biting them. Ye Ziyun was still submerged in her thoughts. Out of concern that something might happen to Ye Ziyun, Nie Li moved closer to Ye Ziyun to see if he could find out what was going on with her through her clear, charming eyes.

Ye Ziyun was deeply sunk in those memories, and the charming scenes caused her heart to jump wildly. Upon opening her eyes, she suddenly saw Nie Li's face before her, startling her so much that she slapped him.

Pa!

"You indecent rogue! I'm never talking to you ever again!" Ye Ziyun hastily struggled free from Nie Li's arms, turned around, and stalked away. Her head hung so low that it almost touched her chest.

Slapped by Ye Ziyun, Nie Li was stunned. He didn't do anything at all! If there was anything that could have been described as "indecent", it would've been that night when Ye Ziyun had stripped off her clothes as she stood in his tent!

Hearing the crisp voice, Du Ze, Lu Piao, and the others all turned and looked at Nie Li in puzzlement.

"Nie Li, what did you do to goddess Ziyun?" Lu Piao looked at Nie Li with an odd expression as he continued, "Although goddess Ziyun is already your fiancée, you shouldn't be in such a hurry!"

"I..." Nie Li was despondent. He obviously hadn't done anything and still didn't know exactly what was wrong with Ye Ziyun.

Ye Ziyun lowered her head. Her mind was already cleared, but her face was still red, her chest heaved up, and down and her heart jumped wildly. She knew that she had just slapped Nie Li for no reason, but she still wasn't willing to apologise to him. Why did those scenes appear in her mind? Why did she have such a peculiar feeling when those scenes appeared? There was no way that she would engage in such acts with Nie Li!

But, could those be the true desires of her heart? As she re-imagined the scene where she took her clothes off in front of Nie Li, Ye Ziyun became even more embarrassed and no longer had the courage to look anyone in the eye.

As he looked towards Ye Ziyun's back, an idea flashed through Nie Li's heart. Could Ye Ziyun have recalled those events from their previous life? Although he was still curious as to why such memories would've appeared, he was still secretly happy. If Ye Ziyun could regain the memories of her previous life, then she would definitely understand his undying feelings for her.

Xiao Ning'er gave Nie Li a confused look before turning towards Ye Ziyun. She still hadn't understood what'd just happened. Why did Nie Li suddenly become so emotionally stirred? Why did Ye Ziyun's face suddenly flush red and slapped him? Furthermore, Nie Li and Ye Ziyun had been talking about deep things like memories!

Xiao Ning'er looked at him and curiously asked, "Nie Li, what's wrong with Ye Ziyun?"

Nie Li gave a deep look at Ye Ziyun's back, then his gaze drifted into the distance. Finally, he turned back to Xiao Ning'er and smiled, "Ning'er, do you believe in previous and present lives?"

At Nie Li's words, Xiao Ning'er was slightly stunned, but she nodded her head seriously as she said, "Yes, I do!"

Xiao Ning'er's reply thoroughly surprised Nie Li.

Xiao Ning'er continued, "For a while now, I've already had a kind of doubt. Occasionally when sitting by a tree or a window, I'd have this

peculiar feeling that I've already experienced this before, that it'd already happened numerous times. It felt like everything was cycling endlessly in a loop."

"Before I met you, I was entangled in an endless nightmare, dreaming about my family forcing me into an arranged marriage. I dreamed that I was about to marry Shen Fei of the Sacred Family. After that, I ran away and entered a dark forest. From there on, I was constantly submerged in darkness and suffering!"

"I kept dreaming that I was a soul, drifting about in the endless dark forest, suffering endless torment and pain..."

"Until one day, a youth pulled me out from that endless nightmare. From that moment onwards, my world of darkness lit up. I made a firm decision that I would use my entire life to protect his grace!"

At Xiao Ning'er's words, Nie Li was submerged in deep shock. In the previous life, Xiao Ning'er had entered the Black Devil Forest and never came back!

"Do you still dream of those things now?" Nie Li asked Xiao Ning'er.

Xiao Ning'er shook her head and said, "After that dream, everything went fuzzy and I have no idea what happened later. It seems like there was something else, but the memory isn't very clear..."

# Chapter 256: Desert Palace

After Ye Ziyun arrived to the Endless Desert, she discovered fragments of memories from her previous life.

Furthermore, Xiao Ning'er had said that in her dreams, there were scenes of her entering the Black Devil Forest!

These events were definitely not coincidental!

Just what is going on?

Nie Li could vaguely sense that the matter regarding his rebirth was definitely much more complex than he'd originally thought! The more he thought about it, the more it frightened him. Just who was capable creating such a situation?

He could sense that in order to unveil the entire mystery, the first step would be to find the Temporal Demon Spirit Book and head for the Draconic Ruins Realm. He would never find the answers if he stayed in the Tiny World.

As he watched Xiao Ning'er's pained expression, Nie Li suddenly understood that meeting her was definitely not a coincidence. Xiao Ning'er's fate is the same as Ye Ziyun's: destiny had tied the two girls to him. No matter what, he decided to bring Ye Ziyun and Xiao Ning'er along in his search for answers.

The group continued their search for days throughout the vast barren wasteland.

According to his memory, the Desert Palace should be somewhere nearby.

Lu Piao, who was standing next to him, said dispiritedly, "Nie Li, are you sure that this Desert Palace is nearby? Duan Jian's been flying in the sky for so long, searching for days, yet we still haven't found that Desert Palace!"

"The Desert Palace is definitely nearby! Let's continue our search for it!" Nie Li solemnly said after a brief moment.

When Lu Piao saw Nie Li's confidence, he said, "Fine then, we'll continue the search!"

The group searched the surroundings without rest.

Nie Li's brows were furrowed tightly. According to his memories, the Desert Palace should be nearby. But why couldn't they find even a shadow of it after searching for so many days? It made no sense that they couldn't find such an enormous and majestic structure after searching for so long.

Nie Li slowly walked through the yellow sands as he recalled his memories. Gradually, he entered into a profound state.

As he walked, memories from his previous life flashed through his head.

In that life, he walked alone through the barren lands as the people at his side fell one after another. He entered an unconscious state as though he was swimming in a dream. Under the distant blazing sun, a vast palace appeared on the horizon.

He was so shocked by the appearance of the palace that he thought he had actually reached heaven, the legendary palace of the gods.

Step by step, he moved closer to the Desert Palace. His entire body was enveloped in a golden luster, until he reached the entrance of the Desert Palace. He then pushed those giant golden doors open and a dazzling glow nearly blinded him, making him unable to open his eyes. With great difficulty, he forced his eyes open and saw vast sculptures sitting in the palace. Each sculpture was different from the others; there was a golden armoured giant, a poverty looking girl, and all other sorts of fantastical creatures. Under the feet of these giant sculptures was a path that led ahead.

Nie Li followed the path and reached a strange altar, placed with all kinds of scrolls written with powerfully dense words. At the very center of this altar was the Temporal Demon Spirit Book.

A strange energy spread throughout the mysterious book as Nie Li reached his hand out towards it. From that point on, his life had been irreversibly changed.

Nie Li stayed in his profound within the profound state as a multitude of scenes continued to flash through his mind. He continued to walk ahead with a blank look on his face.

Sensing that Nie Li was acting strange, Du Ze and the others followed him, though they were confused as to what was going on.

Lu Piao reached out and intended to give Nie Li a shake to wake him, but was stopped by Du Ze. Nie Li's state seemed as though he were training.

Nie Li walked for another thousand meters, then suddenly seemed woke up. He opened his eyes and stared at the empty space before him and froze to the spot as if in shock!

Everyone turned in the direction Nie Li was looking. Only an endless desert stretched before them; there was no hint of a Desert Palace. There were however, many ancient and badly damaged sculptures scattered around in the sands.

These sculptures looked as if they were thousands of years old. Their original features were already indistinguishable.

Only a sense of bleakness could be seen in their eyes.

The wind whistled as it scraped up clouds of sand, as if it wanted to tell them something.

“How could this be?” Nie Li stared dumbfoundedly at the scene before him. When he visited the Desert Palace in his previous life, it had been a vast and majestic structure, as though it had been built by the gods, indestructible and timeless. But now, when he returned in this life, the same place had already become ruins.

Lu Piao looked at Nie Li in confusion. “Nie Li, what's wrong? Is this the Desert Palace that you've been talking about? Didn't you say that it was supposed to be a majestic palace? Why did it turn into ruins?”

Du Ze and the others were also very puzzled. Before they'd arrived, Nie Li had described several times that the Desert Palace was a very majestic place, like a palace of the ancient gods.

However, now that they'd reached it, it wasn't at all as Nie Li had described.

It's very likely that Nie Li had learned of the Desert Palace's existence from some treasure map or ancient record. However, now that they'd reached it and observed it in its current state, the Desert Palace had already been destroyed. It was very likely the work of demon beasts, right?

However, he doesn't know the answer to that right now. Nie Li is currently experiencing headache as he couldn't wrap his head around. He walked forward in accordance to his memories, and a short while later he more or less reached the spot where the altar was supposed to be. But aside from some broken fragments, nothing else was there! The other scriptures couldn't even be found, not to mention the Temporal Demon Spirit Book!

Where could the Temporal Demon Spirit Book have gone to?

Could it have vanished?

Nie Li felt an intense pain in his head, as though he was being torn apart. The scenes before his eyes constantly twisted. The images of Lu Piao, Du Ze and the rest twisted with it. Everything became surreal.

"Arghh!" Nie Li issued a miserable howl and felt as though his brain was about to be torn apart.

"Nie Li, what's going on?"

"Nie Li!" Ye Ziyun, Xiao Ning'er, and the rest all anxiously called out his name.

However, Nie Li's hearing gradually faded away as his consciousness slowly blurred and he fell to the ground.

The Desert Palace was no longer here.

Temporal Demon Spirit Book was also gone.

Just what was going on? Through the intense pain, Nie Li's consciousness entered into a silent darkness.

One month later, Glory City.

Everything flourished and bustled as it had been before. The various families from the Abyss Prison Realm and Heavenly Fate Plateau have already made themselves home, making Glory City even livelier. The walls of Glory City have also been raised by several meters and a surging energy clouded above the city.

The defenses of Glory City had tightened, with a total of five Ten Thousand Demonic Beast Arrays laid around the city, in addition to tons of other defensive methods. Even if it was invaded by a massive demon beast horde, Glory City could withstand it in its entirety.

At the martial field of the Holy Orchid Institute, a large number of youths are currently training.

Every move the youths made was filled with vigor. The tree that stood by the side of the field whistled in the wind.

These youths were all practising powerful cultivation techniques. There are already quite a few of them who have reached Silver rank Demon Spiritualist.

They are the future of Glory City. One day, when they become adults, they will become the power that protects Glory City. Not far from the field was a group of three to four-year-old children laughing and playing about.

Close to the martial field, atop a tree, sat a huge bird created entirely of metal. Anyone who saw it wouldn't be able to resist a satisfied smile, as the bird's expression looked almost human.

After staying for a brief moment, the bird took off as a streak of light across the sky.

### City Lord's Mansion

Ye Ziyun was currently bathing in her yard of the mansion with a look of deep gloom and sadness written on her face. One month has already passed, but Nie Li still hadn't regained consciousness. During this period of time, she and Xiao Ning'er took turns watching over him. Right now was Xiao Ning'er's shift so Ye Ziyun returned home to bathe.

She quietly sat as the water reflected her beautiful face. The outline of

her perfect figure could also be seen in the water.

Two tears fell from her face. She wanted to let that person know how much she yearned for him; however, it was already too late for some words to be said.

Her heart was filled with pain as she prayed to the heavens. As long as Nie Li could regain his conscious, she would be willing to give anything, even her life!

Suddenly, a knocking sound came from outside as Xiao Xue's voice sounded, "Ye Ziyun, Nie Li seems to have regained a little of his consciousness! Ning'er is calling you to go quickly!"

"Nie Li regained consciousness?" Ye Ziyun was stunned for a brief moment, then she immediately stood up from the water. There was no time to spare on caring for little things. Droplets of water dripped from her jade white skin as she quickly tidy up and left her room after putting on her clothes.

After exiting her room, she immediately stepped into another yard of the City Lord's Mansion.

In another yard in the City Lord's Mansion, Nie Li was lying on a bed with his eyes closed. Occasionally, a trace of a pained expression would flash across his face.

Since Ye Ziyun left, Xiao Ning'er had been standing guard at Nie Li's side. Throughout the entire month, she hadn't taken a single break nor gotten a good rest. Her face was haggard and her eyes were red, betraying the fact that she had been crying. Her jade white hands were tightly clasped onto Nie Li's as she tried to send her own soul force into his body. When she sensed a slight movement in Nie Li's hand, she immediately sent Xiao Xue to fetch Ye Ziyun.

Earlier, it was as though the energy in Nie Li's body had been sucked dry. No matter what they tried, nothing worked. But now, she could sense the strength returning slowly to him. She immediately wiped the tears off her face as she sent more soul force into his body.

# Chapter 257: Enemy Attack?

Because she had exhausted her soul force, Xiao Ning'er's entire body felt weak without an ounce of strength left. Her beautiful face was drenched in sweat and she looked a little pale.

At the same time, Nie Li felt as though he was experiencing a long dream. Within the dream, he watched his family, lover, and friends die one by one as he helplessly stood by. Then, once he had obtained a method to revive them, the Sage Emperor proceeded to extinguish all his hopes. In the end, he was left all alone to die a bitter death.

Because of the mysterious Temporal Demon Spirit Book, he was resurrected and was given a second chance.

However, the cause of all these events, the Temporal Demon Spirit book, was now missing.

As he thought about it, Nie Li felt his head ache even more. He couldn't understand what was going on.

He dreamed that just as he was about to grab the Temporal Demon Spirit Book, it turned into a streak of light and disappeared into the vast sky.

The Temporal Demon Spirit Book was the fundamental cause of everything that currently existed. Could it be that when he came back to life, he was resurrected into a different timeline, one that didn't contain the existence of the Temporal Demon Spirit Book?

The intense pain in his head slowly caused him to regain consciousness. As he opened his eyes, he saw Xiao Ning'er sobbing by his bedside. She wore a pink dress and had tear stains on her face, showing quite a pitiful sight. Down from her pearly white neck was her delicate and jade-like collarbone.

"Cough, cough." Nie Li coughed in embarrassment as he immediately shifted his gaze elsewhere.

Xiao Ning'er, who has been crying with her head down, suddenly sat up

stunned. She immediately raised her head as joy flashed through her eyes. She looked at Nie Li dumbfoundedly for a moment and then pounced on him.

“Nie Li, you’re awake?” Xiao Ning’er tightly hugged Nie Li. All of this felt like a dream, which scared her. Nie Li had been unconscious for a long time and Xiao Ning’er was worried that he would never regain consciousness.

A fragrance and softness entered Nie Li’s embrace. He was stunned for a brief moment as a trace of gentleness flashed through his eyes. Although he didn’t know how long he has been out for, he had an idea that it was for a fairly long time, since Xiao Ning’er looked like she’d almost worried herself to death. He tenderly patted her on the back as the light scent of a lady drifted to him. While he was out, Xiao Ning’er must have almost worried herself to death!

Feeling Nie Li’s body warmth, Xiao Ning’er was now assured that she wasn’t dreaming. The hug left a blush on her face, but she still wasn’t willing to let go of him. She sensed that tenderness and felt that at this moment, Nie Li belonged to her.

Suddenly, two figures rushed into the room.

At the sight of the two embracing, Xiao Xue immediately turned her head and said, “I saw nothing, the two of you should continue.”

Raising his head to looked at Ye Ziyun, Nie Li immediately become a little embarrassed. Just as he was about to explain the situation to her, he noticed the tear streaks on her face. The expression in her eyes wasn’t jealousy but a kind of joy, like two people meeting again after so long. She walked towards Nie Li and sat in the chair at the head of the bed.

As long as Nie Li was alive, nothing else mattered. During the time that Nie Li was out, Ye Ziyun already thought through it all. If he could regain consciousness, she would never fight with Xiao Ning’er again. In the face of death, what does the rest matter?

When he saw Ye Ziyun sit by the bed with a tearful look, Nie Li felt as though his heart was about to melt from her gentle gaze. It could be said

that the heavens have granted him grace by letting him meet her again in this life.

He reached out and took Ye Ziyun into his arms as his eyes filled with tears as well.

Having experienced all the turmoils of his previous life, the one thing that Nie Li feared the most was that everything he was experiencing now was only a dream. However, now that he beheld the two girls before him, he could assure himself that he was indeed alive in this world.

Ye Ziyun and Xiao Ning'er actually weren't fighting. Xiao Xue stared dumbfoundedly as the gears in her brain stopped turning from shock. However, now that she thought about it, it actually made sense. Indeed, as long as they were alive, nothing was more important. In this turbulent world, no one knew if they would still be living in the next moment. Therefore, the most important thing would be to enjoy the present with the person that's most important.

At this time, Duan Jian, Lu Piao, Du Ze, and the rest arrived as well. Upon entering the room, their eyes widened when they saw Nie Li being embraced with one beauty on each arm.

Lu Piao scratched his head. "Damn! This bastard Nie Li is really outrageous!"

Those two girls were the goddesses of the Holy Orchid Institute that countless guys have had crushes on! Now both of them were taken by Nie Li. However, now that Lu Piao knew that Nie Li had regained consciousness, he was happy in his heart.

Du Ze smiled. As long as Nie Li regained consciousness, the rest of them could all rest easy.

"How long have I been out?" Nie Li asked Du Ze and the others.

"You've been out for more than a month." Du Ze seriously replied.

"More than a month?" Nie Li was astonished. He knew that he had been out for a long time, but he only thought that it had been two or three days, which by itself would be shocking enough. He never imagined that he

would've been out for more than a month.

“Nie Li, how's your body?” Lu Piao asked, feeling a little uneasy. Although he was usually a nitwit, he was still very concerned towards Nie Li.

Nie Li circulated his Law Energy for a brief moment, then shook his head, “Nothing's wrong, my body's fine.”

His body was still the same as it was before. Aside from a vague headache, there weren't any major problems. However, he couldn't figure out why he had been unconscious for so long. But no matter how much he thought about it, he couldn't come up with an answer. Now that the Temporal Demon Spirit Book was gone, what should his next step be? It seems like he would have to wait and see after he reaches the Draconic Ruins Realm!

Nie Li touched his chest. The two remnant pages of the Temporal Demon Spirit Book were still with him. It looks like he will have to wait to unveil the mystery of the Temporal Demon Spirit Book.

Quickly, the news that Nie Li had awoken spread throughout the City Lord's Mansion.

When they heard that Nie Li had regained conscious, both Ye Zong and Ye Mo felt relieved. They immediately put down the matters in their hands and rushed to Nie Li's recuperation room.

With Ye Ziyun and Xiao Ning'er's help, Nie Li got out of bed and started to move about as the strength slowly returned to his body.

Nie Li and the rest walked to the courtyard, where the birds were singing and the fragrances of flowers gave a dense feeling of spring.

Nie Li pondered for a brief moment, then said, “In a short while, we'll have to head for the Draconic Ruins Realm. I have to return to my family and bid farewell.”

Ye Ziyun thought awhile and said, “Your body hasn't recovered yet, so it's best if you rest first. Why don't I send someone to bring uncle to the City Lord's Mansion?”

To prevent Nie Li's family members from worrying, they had told them that Nie Li was concentrating on his cultivation. Therefore, Nie Li's family was still unaware that he had been in a coma.

Nie Li pondered for a moment and nodded his head. "Alright then."

While they were chatting, Ye Zong rushed in. He had been very worried when he heard that Nie Li was in a coma. Although he would often argue with Nie Li, in his heart, Ye Zong had already accepted the boy as his son-in-law.

Seeing Nie Li still alive and active, a trace of a smile appeared on Ye Zong's face.

Ye Zong had a serious expression and said, "Nie Li, you brat! You've finally woke up. If you turned my daughter into a widow at such a young age, I'd make sure to teach you a sorry lesson."

At her father's words, Ye Ziyun blushed red and stomped her feet. Nie Li had just regained his conscious not long ago and her father was already speaking of such irrelevant things!

Nie Li smiled. "Thanks for worrying about me, father-in-law. I'm already fine." Nie Li had been unconscious for so long, but now that he saw Ye Zong again, he couldn't help feeling a sense of closeness to him. Therefore, Nie Li didn't try to argue with him.

'Why did this kid suddenly become so humble?' Wondered Ye Zong. Could it be that after waking from his coma, he became enlightened? He looked at Ye Ziyun, Du Ze and the rest; these kids were now the hope of Glory City. The only thing that made him feel sad was that Nie Li and the rest were about to head for the Draconic Ruins Realm. Although he didn't know what kind of place the Draconic Ruins Realm was, he knew that it should be a very distant place.

However, if an eaglet does not spread its wings, it will never grow to be a majestic eagle. Old guys like Ye Zong himself should just sit back and let the young'uns take flight.

The atmosphere in that wing of the mansion was very lively as everyone

felt joyous and harmonious.

Both Nie Li and Ye Ziyun were enjoying this meeting. Although Ye Zong still appeared very imposing, when he looked at Nie Li and Ye Ziyun, there was tenderness in his gaze. When he saw how happy his daughter was, he also couldn't help feeling happy.

Right now, Glory City was far safer than ever before. Even if Nie Li and his group left, with so many Ten Thousand Demonic Beast Arrays and so many Legend rank experts present, they had more than enough force to guarantee the safety of Glory City.

The sun slowly sank as the curtain of night veiled over.

“Why didn't grandfather come?” Ye Ziyun asked, puzzled.

“Yes, he should have received the news!” Ye Zong was also a little puzzled. Although Ye Mo was currently cultivating, once he learned that Nie Li had regained consciousness, he should've rushed over.

As they conversed, suddenly the sound of an intense fight sounded throughout the City Lord's Mansion.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

A few buildings were wrecked.

“What happened?” Ye Zong furrowed his brows as he abruptly stood up.

Nie Li's gaze also carried bewilderment. Just who would dare commit such atrocities in the City Lord's Mansion? Right now, aside from a few Legend rank experts, the City Lord's Mansion was still protect by by the Ten Thousand Demonic Beast Arrays. Unless several Demigod rank experts had come, it would be impossible for the intruders to leave alive!

“Let's go see!” Ye Zong leaped towards the direction where the sounds had come from.

Nie Li immediately materialised a set of black and white wings and soared over.

Duan Jian, Du Ze, Ye Ziyun, and the rest followed behind them.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

An intense fight had broken out in the center of City Lord's Mansion. Countless buildings were wrecked and dust filled the sky. It looked as if a terrifying storm had swept through. Countless experts of Glory City stood in trees, on walls, and on roofs, all watching the intense fight in the center of the courtyard. A fight of this caliber was simply too frightening! It wasn't anything that the likes of them could withstand; therefore, none dared to approach!

Just who dared to behave so rudely in the City Lord's Mansion?

# Chapter 258: Hostage

Very little could be seen through the sky filled with dust, as the particles slowly landed, except for the two figures who stood high in the sky. One was a bony individual with a shock of white hair and a beard. The citizens of Glory City beheld him as their war god, Ye Mo. The other person wore white clothes while shrouded in a terrifying storm. He is the one who Nie Li had engaged with before: the Demon Lord!

The Demon Lord stood proudly in the sky as a majestic storm composed of the Law of Hell rotated around him. The energy occasionally formed itself into images of all kinds of demons.

“Ye Mo, it’s been a long time since we’ve met. I never thought that you’d still be able to find me despite the fact that I’ve gone to such lengths to conceal myself.” The Demon Lord coldly smiled. Even though he was facing entire city alone, he was still calm and composed.

“After so long, I never thought the Demon Lord would once again dare to show his esteemed presence in my Glory City. I wonder what guidances the Demon Lord has brought back?” Ye Mo’s hair fluttered in the wind as the Law of Snow Wind revolved around him and occasionally condense into icicles.

“It seems that Glory City doesn’t welcome me very much. But either way, I was still born in Glory City!” The Demon Lord casually smiled as his majestic aura pressured Ye Mo.

“You betrayed Glory City and was exiled long ago.” Ye Mo furrowed his brows for a brief moment. He could sense that the Demon Lord’s Law Energy was far stronger than before, to the point where Ye Mo could no longer suppress him.

A suffocating pressure made Ye Mo feel as though all the bones in his body were being crushed.

The Demon Lord laughed contentedly as his gaze turned cold, “You’re just a bunch of opinionated bigots! Is it really I who betrayed Glory City or did Glory City betray me? Either way, you lot ought to rejoice; I no longer

care to pursue old stories.”

“Since you no longer have interests in them anymore, then why have you come to Glory City?” Ye Mo coldly stared at the Demon Lord.

“There’s something that I want in Glory City. As long as you bring it to me, all matters between us will be written off. Otherwise, I will cause havoc here!” The Demon Lord had trace of insanity in his expression.

Ye Mo frowned as an inkling thought flashed through his heart. “What do you want?”

The Demon Lord coldly snorted, “You’re asking when you have already know the answer! As long as you hand over the Demon Spirit Stone that contains that demon beast, I will let bygones be bygones. Otherwise, I might just start a massacre!”

Nie Li frowned his brows for a brief moment. The Demon Spirit Stone that contained that demon spirit? Just what was he talking about?

So the Demon Lord came for a demon spirit. However, Nie Li has absolutely no idea as to which demon beast could tempt the Demon Lord so much, despite the fact that he already has the Eight-Armed Darkhell Fiend Demon?

The aura coming from the Demon Lord became more and more powerful and Ye Mo was gradually caving under the pressure. Nie Li soared into the sky, and stood by Ye Mo. He coldly glared at the Demon Lord and attacked with his three Law Energies.

The Demon Lord glared at Nie Li as his slender eyes slightly narrowed.

“You again!” He snorted, “If it wasn’t for you, Glory City would’ve already been mine. If you still insist on getting in my way, don’t blame me for killing you!”

“Demon Lord, it’s not like we haven’t fought before. If you’re capable of killing me, then come!” A stern pressure erupted from Nie Li.

Woosh! Woosh! Woosh!

Yu Yan, Duan Jian, Du Ze, Lu Piao, Ye Ziyun, Xiao Ning’er, Ye Zong, and

the rest flew into the air and surrounded the Demon Lord.

Dozens of different types of Law Energy were released at the Demon Lord.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Intense explosions of Law Energy broke out in the sky.

Although the Demon Lord's Law of Hell is very powerful, it still couldn't withstand all of their attacks. The Demon Lord furiously snarled and roared as he rapidly merged with his Eight-Armed Darkhell Fiend.

The Eight-Armed Darkhell Fiend was scarlet red in colour and issued another furious roar as it waved its arms and bombarded attacks towards them.

Nie Li coldly growled as he mobilised his soul force and merged with his Fanged Panda. He widened his mouth and spat a Yin-Yang Blast towards the Eight-Armed Darkhell Fiend.

An intense fight broke out in the sky as the group joined forces against the Demon Lord. The Eight-Armed Darkhell Fiend wielded a sharp blade in one hand as it fought with the group.

Nie Li furrowed his brows. Although the Supreme Body was powerful, through their current confrontation, he could tell that the Demon Lord himself has risen in strength by another level. The Demon Lord would probably form his first fate soul soon. Inside this Tiny World, any expert who forms a fate soul was extremely powerful. No matter how many Demigod rank experts attack, they would never prove an even match.

Faced with so many people attacking from all sides, the Demon Lord was at a disadvantage. However, because of his powerful physical body, he showed no signs of losing for the time being.

It looks like Nie Li would have to use some secret techniques, if he wanted to defeat the Demon Lord. Nie Li suddenly took out his Thunder God's Meteorite Sword. Instantly, lightning bolts gathered towards his blade.

The Demon Lord's pupils slightly shrank when he recognised the weapon in Nie Li's hand. Indeed, Nie Li had quite a few methods up his sleeve. The Demon Lord sensed a destructive aura from the Thunder God's Meteorite Sword.

This Thunder God's Meteorite Sword is a very frightening weapon. When Nie Li was still at Gold rank, it was already capable of exhibiting a terrifying might; now that he had reached Legend rank, the power unleashed would become even more frightful. An endless torrent of lightning bolts gathered at the Thunder God's Meteorite Sword. Nie Li furiously howled and slashed towards the Demon Lord.

A bolt of lightning the length of several hundred meters shot towards the Demon Lord.

The lightning bolt contained such devastating energy that the allies who stood nearby were forced to back off.

As he sensed the terrifying lightning flying towards him, even the Demon Lord couldn't help changing his expression. He howled in rage as two huge maces appeared in two of his hands and smashed them together. A boundless energy shot towards the lightning bolt that Nie Li had unleashed.

Boom!

The two energies collided as though they were trying to split the sky open. The dispelled energy released from the collision instantly turned a number of buildings into ashes.

Nie Li's lightning bolt slowly won out as it cleaved the opposing energy in two and continued on its path towards the Demon Lord.

The Demon Lord never imagined that the might of the Thunder God's Meteorite Sword would be so terrifying!

Knowing the lightning bolt was about to land onto him, the Demon Lord curled the corner of his mouth into a cold smile as he suddenly disappeared from his place and reappeared a hundred meters away. He then proceeded to charge in their direction.

The lightning bolt had missed. As Nie Li watched the Demon Lord charge towards them, he felt a bad premonition and immediately waved the Thunder God's Meteorite Sword towards the Demon Lord. Ye Mo and the others also sent their attacks towards the Demon Lord.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The Demon Lord charged into the crowd and sent Du Ze flying with a fist. That terrifying energy of his sent Du Ze flying back by dozens of meters and made him spit out blood.

The Demon Lord mowed down everything that stood before him; even Nie Li couldn't withstand the attack entirely, not to mention the others. Ye Ziyun and Xiao Ning'er were also sent flying. Duan Jian and Yu Yan also met the same fate. Then, a frightening aura burst forth from the Demon Lord's body, like a violent spectre.

As he watched the Demon Lord charge towards them, Ye Zong coldly snorted and merged with his Snow Wind Great Ape. A golden light was released from his body as he slashed his sword towards the Demon Lord.

At the same time, Nie Li also slashed his sword towards the Demon Lord.

The Demon Lord coldly snorted and disappeared once again. This time, he reappeared behind Ye Zong and sent Ye Zong's sword flying before he grabbed the man's neck with one hand.

The Law of Hell trapped Ye Zong and even shattered his armour. Suppressed by the Law of Hell, Ye Zong's demon spirit rapidly vanished, returning him to his human form.

Under the pressure of this terrifying energy, Ye Zong painfully groaned.

Just as Nie Li's sword was about to strike, it stopped in midair.

"Ye Zong!" Ye Mo had been prepared to charge, but out of fear that the Demon Lord would hurt Ye Zong, he halted in midair.

"Father!" At the sight of this, Ye Ziyun instantly had anxiety plastered across her face.

The Demon Lord stared at Nie Li and coldly laughed, “The sword in your hands is indeed powerful! If we were to fight, I wouldn’t be able to do a thing to you. However, you have too many weaknesses! Everyone present right now is your weakness. Aside from you, I can kill anyone else here!”

Nie Li tightly gripped the Thunder God’s Meteorite Sword until veins popped from his arm. What the Demon Lord had said was correct. Everyone present was his weakness! Because all of them were important in his life!

He stared at the Demon Lord, and said in a voice that was like eternal frost, “Let him go and I will let you leave. We will mind our own business from now on. But if you hurt any of them here, even if I have to pursue you to the Draconic Ruins Realm, I will utterly slaughter you!”

At Nie Li’s words, the Demon Lord savagely laughed. “You’re threatening me? In all of my hundreds of years, it has always been me threatening others and not others threatening me!”

Right now, Ye Zong was in the hands of the Demon Lord; therefore, Nie Li didn’t dare make any unnecessary movements.

Ye Zong’s neck was gripped by a huge hand that injected Law of Hell into his body, causing his own Law Energy inside to collapse. Only with great difficulty could he even utter a word; Ye Zong’s strength was simply too far from the Demon Lord’s.

“Don’t worry about me, just kill him!” Ye Zong painfully yelled as he gathered what remained of his Law Energy and attacked the Demon Lord.

“Still struggling with the strength of an ant?” The Demon Lord coldly laughed and grabbed Ye Zong’s right arm. With a pull, he ripped Ye Zong’s entire arm off. Blood splatted in all directions. Ye Zong painfully groaned, but a moment later, he forcefully endured it. His expression was twisted from intense pain.

“Father!” At the sight of Ye Zong’s miserable state, Ye Ziyun cried out. She formed icicles, but just as she was about to cast them, she was stopped by Ye Mo.

If she were to charge in right now, not only would she not save Ye Zong, but she would also land herself in danger. Ye Mo took a step forward and unleashed his Law of Snow Wind towards the Demon Lord. “Demon Lord, let Ye Zong go. Otherwise, you can dream of leaving Glory City alive today! Even if I must give my life, I will see you killed!”

“Ye Mo, do you really think your threat will mean anything to me? Leaving me here? Laughable! I will soon form my fate soul. You lot are nothing more than ants in my eyes!” A terrifying killing aura emitted from the Demon Lord’s body as his Law of Hell surged like a tidal wave. “Do you really think that you all can touch me?”

# Chapter 259: Rage

Nie Li tightly grasped the Thunder God's Meteorite Sword. When he saw how pained Ye Zong looked, he felt a sharp pain in his heart. With his current strength, he was capable of engaging in battle Demon Lord; however killing him would still be a difficult task.

After spending so much time together, Nie Li regarded Ye Zong as a second father in his heart.

Ye Zong endured the pain. Even though one of his arms had been ripped off and he was being held in a choke hold, he still had an air of unyielding pride.

Ye Zong solemnly said. "Nie Li, don't worry about me. Use all your strength to kill him! Even if I wind up in hell, I'll go happily!" His gaze moved away from Ye Ziyun. He had spent his entire life protecting Glory City, and would until his last breath. The only thing he would regret was leaving Ye Ziyun behind.

When she saw how much Ye Zong was suffering, tears fell from Ye Ziyun's cheeks. She recalled her childhood, when her father had held her hands and led her along as they watched the distant scarlet clouds.

"Yun'er, did you know? Glory City is the one place we can call home. Countless ancestors have died in order to protect this home. Their spilled blood has contributed to the glory of the Snow Wind Family. You should feel proud of your ancestors. If Glory City meets with danger one day, I will also hand over my life without hesitation."

Back then, Ye Ziyun couldn't understand her father's words. But as she grew up and started to understand, she tried her best to become stronger and help her father. Finally, she had stepped into Legend rank, but right now, she could only watch as Ye Zong suffered.

The Demon Lord laughed and said, "Ye Zong, did you think that if you lot were to join hands, that you'd be able to kill me? Hand the demon spirit stone over to me. Otherwise, not to mention just you, everyone here will die!" As he finished speaking, the Demon Lord grabbed Ye Zong's

other arm and tore it off.

With both of his arms dismembered, Ye Zong's face twisted in pain.

On the contrary, his suffering caused the Demon Lord to be happy. He held onto Ye Zong's neck and continued to exert strength. He could kill Ye Zong whenever he wished, if he cared to apply more force.

Seeing Ye Zong's life hanging on a thread, Ye Mo hastily yelled, "Wait, as long as you let Ye Zong go, I'll give the you the demon spirit stone!"

Ye Mo took out a demon spirit stone.

The Demon Lord coldly laughed, "Throw the demon spirit stone over!"

"Let him go first!" Ye Mo said in solemn voice.

The Demon Lord smiled sinisterly and said, "Ye Mo, it seems that you're still unclear about the current situation. You guys have no other choice! If you don't pass the demon spirit stone over right now, I'll kill Ye Zong first, then take it from your hands. After that, what can you possibly do to me?"

The Demon Lord continued to exert force as Ye Zong's sides continued to flow with blood. If he didn't receive immediate aid, it would be too late!

Ye Mo's eyes widened. Although he was usually extremely strict with Ye Zong, Ye Zong had always made him proud. As he watched his own son suffer, he desired that it would rather be himself who suffered!

"This is the demon spirit stone that you wanted!" Ye Mo threw the stone over.

Pa!

The Demon Lord caught the demon spirit stone in one hand and verified it.

"Now, let Ye Zong go!" Ye Mo clenched both fists tightly and prepared to engage.

"Of course I'll return him to you!" A cruel and sinister smile was plastered on the Demon Lord's face. One of his arms pierced Ye Zong's chest and sprayed blood everywhere. The Demon Lord licked at the blood

that had splattered on his face, “Tsk, tsk. Such a fragrant scent! Ye Mo, both you and I have fought for dozens of years and today, your son will die in my hands. But don’t worry, I won’t let him die alone. I’ll take your life next and let the two of you reunite in the underworld!”

The moment the Demon Lord pierced Ye Zong’s chest, an unwavering determination expressed itself on Ye Zong’s face. His adrenaline spiked and a wild energy spread throughout the surroundings, emanating from his body.

A bone penetrating chill instantly froze the surrounding air.

A relieved smile showed on Ye Zong’s face. “Nie Li, take good care of Yun’er!”

In his heart, he was already very satisfied. To have been able to entrust his daughter to someone like Nie Li, he could now rest in peace.

Ye Zong’s body turned into ice and a terrifying frost instantly extended onto the Demon Lord’s body.

Boom!

Two of the Demon Lord’s arms burst and he instantly issued a miserable shriek, “Damned ant, even in death, you still dared to hurt me!” The Demon Lord furiously roared as Ye Zong’s secret technique caused him to suffer heavy injuries.

“Father!” Ye Ziyun wailed piercingly.

“Ye Zong,” Ye Mo was stunned for a moment. In that instant, he couldn’t bear such an emotional impact. He couldn’t imagine Ye Zong dying.

The others on the sidelines were also dumbfounded. They never thought that the Demon Lord would actually kill Ye Zong after getting his hands on the demon spirit stone.

The Demon Lord had already made his decision. Regardless of whether Ye Mo handed over the demon spirit stone or not, he would have still killed Ye Zong!

Ye Zong had executed the self-destruct technique of the Snow Wind

Family. Once this technique was executed, his soul would be utterly destroyed. As he watched Ye Zong's body turn into ice, Nie Li's eyes reddened. Rage filled his chest, even he never imagined that the Demon Lord would kill Ye Zong without reason.

A frozen expression covered Nie Li's face as his terrifying killing intent spread around him. The Thunder God's Meteorite Sword in his hand issued a blazing luster and filled the sky with lightning bolts.

That glow reflected on Nie Li's face, flickering in his glistening teardrops.

Countless of memories of his time with Ye Zong flashed through his head. From the first time they met and had fought to Ye Zong's attitude towards him slowly changing and gradually admitting his relationship with Ye Ziyun. In Nie Li's heart, although Ye Zong was someone who he'd constantly butted heads with, Ye Zong was still a kind and benevolent father.

That image of Ye Zong still remained in his mind.

The instant Ye Zong died, everyone's eyes turned scarlet red and were prepared to fight the Demon Lord. However, they suddenly felt a terrifying killing aura that caused the blood in their bodies to solidify.

They turned their heads and looked at Nie Li. His clothes were fluttering as his entire body became enveloped in the three frightening types of Law Energy. The Thunder God's Meteorite Sword in his hand also unleashed unimaginable might.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Nie Li's aura surged. Right now, he seemed like a demonic god that had ascended from the underworld.

When he had returned to this time, in this life, Nie Li had intended to change everyone's destiny, including Ye Zong's. However, now he realised that he wasn't able to control everyone's destiny.

Back then, Nie Li had felt a little sympathy for the Demon Lord. After all, the Demon Lord's foster father had been killed; therefore, he betrayed

Glory City. However, Nie Li never thought that the Demon Lord would be so insane. When he thought about Ye Zong's death, Nie Li's heart burned with eternal rage.

“DIE!”

With that soaring killing intent, Nie Li became the demonization of bloodlust, and locked onto the Demon Lord. Countless bolts of lightning shot towards the Demon Lord, making the entire sky look as though it was about to be torn apart by his rage.

The Demon Lord had been injured by Ye Zong and two of his arms were gone. Before he could recover, he sensed an endless sea of killing intent rampaging at him, suffocating him with its pressure. He never imagined that Nie Li would be able to burst forth with such powerful strength!

Nie Li probably executed some secret techniques that allowed him to raise his strength by several folds.

For the first time, the Demon Lord sensed danger; this energy was sufficient to destroy him thoroughly! Before, he didn't place Nie Li with high concern. In his point of view, even if he couldn't kill Nie Li, killing Nie Li's companions would be more than sufficient. If it was Nie Li alone, it was basically impossible for him to pose a threat to the Demon Lord.

However, he was wrong. He never imagined that Nie Li would be able to summon such a powerful aura in this instant.

Nie Li roared in rage as he grasped the Thunder God's Meteorite Sword in his hand and slashed it towards the Demon Lord. A large bolt of lightning pierced the sky and brought a suffocating pressure down on the Demon Lord.

The Demon Lord immediately wielded his pair of maces and used all of his Law of Hell to unleash a wild energy against the lightning bolt.

Boom!

The sky was almost rent apart. The dispelled energy instantly sent Du Ze, Lu Piao, and the rest rolling away. This energy wasn't something they could withstand even at Legend rank. They were like leaves in a tsunami.

“What powerful energy!” Du Ze and the rest were utterly shocked.

A gigantic lightning bolt struck down so hard, it was as though it was trying to smite the world.

The Demon Lord couldn't withstand such a powerful attack with his maces and were sent flying out of his hands. The impact of the bolt devoured his entire body and destroyed several of his arms in an instant.

“ARGHH!” The Demon Lord shriek miserably.

The lightning bolt destroyed all of the Demon Lord's arms. Just as it was about to land on his chest, his chest suddenly glowed with a dazzling light and was sent flying.

The Demon Lord spat a mouthful of blood as deep shock showed itself in his eyes. The power of this lightning bolt was simply too great; it's wasn't something that he could withstand. If it hadn't been for his artifact, he would've been destroyed by that lightning bolt.

Nie Li was like a demonic god that had descended, making others feel like helpless mortals.

When he realized that the Demon Lord was still alive, Nie Li waved the Thunder God's Meteorite Sword once again in an arc towards him.

Boom!

The Demon Lord was sent flying yet again. This time, both his legs and even his head had been destroyed by that pillar of lightning. However, the artifact still barely protected his body, turning him into a streak of light that shot off towards the distance.

“KILL!” Nie Li was still in a raging state as he mobilised his lightning pillar to chase after that streak of light. Countless bolts of lightning rained down.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Innumerable lightning bolts landed on that streak of light; however, it still continued to tear through the sky and eventually disappeared into the horizon.

“Demon Lord, even if you escape to the ends of the earth, I will pursue and destroy you! I will ensure that you never reincarnate for eternity!” Nie Li’s raging voice resounded throughout the horizon.

The Demon Lord’s artifact was at least a Grade 3 Artifact in the Draconic Ruins Realm. In this Tiny World, aside from powerful experts like the Nether Master, no one else could kill the Demon Lord. Right now, Nie Li couldn’t do a thing to the Demon Lord!

Would the Nether Master help Nie Li kill the Demon Lord? That’s practically impossible!

In the eyes of the experts like the Nether Master, both Nie Li and the Demon Lord were in an equal position. They had decent talent, that was all. Only by reaching the Draconic Ruins Realm and wielded sufficient strength, would those experts place them with any amount of high concern.

Nie Li stared at the horizon dumbfoundedly as his tyrannical aura gradually weakened. Ye Zong is dead?

Just earlier this morning he had been chatting and laughing with Ye Zong. Now, in this instant, he was no longer here. Nie Li was still unable to accept that fact.

# Chapter 260: Hope

Nie Li brought out his soul mirror and searched for remnants of Ye Zong's soul. Strands of light flew into the soul mirror; however, they were only traces of Ye Zong's soul aura. With soul aura alone, it would be impossible to revive Ye Zong.

A deep pain slashed through Nie Li's heart.

"This grievance is absolutely irreconcilable! Demon Lord, if I don't tear your body to shreds, then I, Nie Li am not human!" Nie Li tightly clutched the soul mirror in his hands until veins popped from his arm. When he thought of how from today on, Ye Ziyun would be without a father, Nie Li was filled with a sense of shame and guilt towards her. Even though he had come back to life, he still failed to protect her father.

The dust gradually settled.

The intense battle had destroyed half of the City Lord's Mansion. Even the Ten Thousand Demonic Beast Arrays were thoroughly destroyed. For a confrontation of this level, even the Ten Thousand Demonic Beast Arrays were useless.

Ye Ziyun tightly clung onto the things Ye Zong had left behind and cried in grief. As she recalled the times with her father, her pain cut into her soul.

Ye Mo looked as though he had instantly aged by several years. His son had died right in front of him and he was totally helpless against it. His heart was filled with hatred for the Demon Lord.

However, with their current strength, they weren't capable of killing the Demon Lord. Nie Li's attack had destroyed the Demon Lord's head and limbs, but he still managed to escape!

Seeing how broken-hearted Ye Ziyun was, Nie Li hugged her tightly and said to her in a pained voice, "Ziyun, I'm so sorry."

Earlier, when he had used the [Heavenly God]'s secret technique, his soul realm had nearly burst. However, even then, he had been unable to

prevent the Demon Lord from leaving. With Nie Li's current strength, he could rival the Demon Lord; however, he wouldn't be able to protect others at the same time and prevent the Demon Lord from killing them.

As he thought of how Ye Zong had died, Nie Li clenched his fist. "Father-in-law used the Snow Wind Family's secret technique. Now, even his soul has been extinguished. However, if there's any chance of reviving father-in-law, I will definitely find it! I won't give up! But aside from that..." Nie Li's gaze turned chilling cold as he continued, "I swear that once I reach the Demonic Ruins Realm, I will personally catch and annihilate the Demon Lord! I won't allow him to reincarnate for the rest of eternity!"

"Revive? Nie Li, is there really a way to revive my father?" Ye Ziyun's eyes carried a trace of hope.

Although Nie Li actually has no idea, when he saw Ye Ziyun's eyes flickering with hope, he couldn't bear to hurt her again. He nodded his head, "As long as we head for the Draconic Ruins Realm and our cultivation has reached a certain level, we'll be able to find a way to revive Ye Zong!"

He thought about the Temporal Demon Spirit Book, it was that book that allowed him to be reborn. Therefore, it should be able to revive Ye Zong as well, right? However, Nie Li has no idea as to where the Temporal Demon Spirit Book might have gone to.

Ye Ziyun wiped her tears away. Although her heart was filled with pain, her voice was still firm and determined as she said, "Nie Li, I will head for the Draconic Ruins Realm and become stronger, to revive my father!"

The entire City Lord's Mansion are in a mess. Everyone's faces reflected deep grief and pain. To them, Ye Zong was someone who deserved absolute respect; everyone had respected the City Lord!

Ye Zong's death caused the entire city to fall into grief.

Ye Zong strived for the sake of Glory City, all the way up until his death. Every evening, the citizens would see a figure standing on the city walls, looking into the distance and they would feel a strong sense of ease and security. But this God of War who everyone had respected had now left

them; therefore, everyone was filled with hatred for the Demon Lord.

The battle's aftermath ceaselessly tormented Glory City.

The night darkened and rain fell from the sky. This precipitation was a mix of water with hail that caused a bone-piercing chill as it fell onto the faces of people below.

Nie Li stared into the sky as the rain fell on his face. Upon returning to life, many things have gone as he'd expected; however, there were still many things that had occurred entirely out of his expectations. The disappearance of the Temporal Demon Spirit Book and Ye Zong's death. Although he has the soul mirror, Ye Zong executed a secret technique before dying; because of it, even his soul was destroyed. Only a trace of his soul aura was left behind.

'I thought that I could control destiny, but it turns out that I'm deeply tied by destiny itself.' As he thought of Ye Zong again, Nie Li felt an aching pain in his heart.

Ye Zong's study room in the City Lord's Mansion

Ye Mo was quietly seated at a table still piled with files that Ye Zong had been reading earlier. This room still contained remnants of Ye Zong's aura. His eyes turned fuzzy from tears. As the Guardian of Glory City, even when his wife had died, he didn't cry. But now, to see his child die before him, his muddy eyes couldn't help letting out his tears.

The sound of footsteps came and Ye Mo immediately wiped the tears away.

Ye Ziyun appeared in the entrance of the room and raised her head to look at Ye Mo. She paused for a slight moment, then walked in with her head lowered. Her father had stayed in this room for large amounts of time. She could still vaguely feel the lingering and warm presence of her father.

The two did not speak for a length of time.

"Yun'er, your father is gone and your grandfather has also aged. You'll have to take good care of yourself from now on." Ye Mo sighed as he

appeared lonely and grieved.

At Ye Mo's words, Ye Ziyun's tears fell uncontrollably.

"Grandfather... father he..." Ye Ziyun said halfway as she choked on her tears.

"Your father died for Glory City. It wasn't a disgrace to our ancestors. I am extremely proud of him," Ye Mo said solemnly. His aged hand had slowly brushed across the table. Everything in here had been used by his son. From now on, he would only be able to see Ye Zong in his memories. He raised his head and looked at Ye Ziyun and continued, "Yun'er, you guys will be leaving Glory City soon?"

Ye Ziyun pondered for a brief moment, then she nodded her head, "Yes, grandfather! I will head for the Draconic Ruins Realm. I want to kill the Demon Lord and take vengeance for father! I will definitely become stronger and find a way to revive him!"

Ye Mo let out a long sigh as he replied, "Throughout my life, I've constantly been away with business and spent little time with you children. Now that Ye Zong is gone, I will guard Glory City for the time being. When the day comes when your grandfather can no longer move, I will leave Glory City to you all."

"Yes." Ye Ziyun's vision was fuzzy from tears as she looked into her grandfather's face.

Once, she pictured her grandfather's back to be upright and tall. But now, she realised that her grandfather was already getting on in years...

This trip to the Draconic Ruins Realm would take at least five years. However, she had no other choice. Only by heading towards the Draconic Ruins Realm, could she find the chance of reviving her father and taking vengeance for him. No matter where the Demon Lord escaped to, she would still seek him out.

The rain continued to fall.

Nie Li stood in the rain and felt its chill. In just a little while more, he would head for the Draconic Ruins Realm. He wondered what kind of path

awaited him. However, Nie Li had reaffirmed his conviction; he must become stronger as soon as possible. He must not allow the things from his previous life occur again. He must not allow his families, friends, and lovers to leave him one by one.

Even without the Temporal Demon Spirit Book, so what? I will definitely gain control of my own destiny!

Xiao Ning'er was holding onto an umbrella as she walked beside Nie Li, shielding him from the falling rain.

She quietly stood there and stared at the empty space in front of her before she sadly said, "Before, I envied Ye Ziyun that her father was the City Lord. As long she had any wants, her father would definitely be able to fulfill it for her. There wasn't anyone who could force her to do anything and I felt that she was very blessed, unable to understand my pain..."

"It wasn't until later that I understood. The Snow Wind Family had shouldered far too much for Glory City." Xiao Ning'er let out a long sigh filled with pity for Ye Ziyun, "Her mother died early and although her father was there, she was still always alone. However, she still lived on strongly and continued her cultivation, intending to share her father's burdens."

Xiao Ning'er's tone then turned serious. "When I was little, I was really headstrong and would often compete with Ye Ziyun. However, I was never able to win. She is someone who has earned my admiration!"

Ni Li looked at Xiao Ning'er and understood her intentions. Ning'er was the same as Ye Ziyun; both were extremely kindhearted people. After they entered the Draconic Ruins Realm, Ning'er would be together with Ziyun. With that, Nie Li would be able to feel more at ease.

Nie Li stared in front of him. After today, they will leave their hometown. Although they had no idea what kind of paths awaited them, no matter how uncertain or thorny the road may be, they will still rely on each other and move forward hand in hand.

The night gradually deepened.

Glory City had sunk into the deep night. Only a few lights, constantly flickered like stars in the dark sky.

For Glory City, this tranquility was a rare occurrence. Who knows when the dark cloud of war will shroud over them? However, there was one thing for certain; each and every person here was willing to exhaust their lives to protect Glory City, for this was their last refuge.

# Chapter 261: Bid farewell

Another month quickly passed by. After Nie Li and the others bid farewell to their families, they set foot on their journey towards the Nether Realm.

Ye Zong's death still left a vague ache in everyone's hearts.

Although they lived in chaotic times, when death was a common occurrence, humans were not like plants, which are able to live without emotions.

A thought suddenly appeared in Nie Li's mind. Within the Tiny World, the most mysterious power would be the Law of Space and Time and the most mysterious person would be the Spiritual God of Space and Time. Only he would be able to stir the trajectory of time and alter a person's destiny. Perhaps Ye Zong could be saved if they found the Spiritual God of Space and Time!

Even in his previous life, Nie Li had only had heard quiet whispers of the Space-Time Spiritual God, since he was such an extremely mysterious existence. However, Nie Li had heard that this Spiritual God wasn't very powerful in terms of battle strength, since he was forced to pay a huge price every time he altered the flow of space or time.

The garden on the ninth floor of the Nine-Layered Deathlands

Nie Li and the others were gathered, including all seven of the powerful experts, such as the Nether Master.

Nie Li's chilling gaze swept around the area, searching for any trace of the Demon Lord. If the Demon Lord appeared again, Nie Li would kill him without hesitation!

However, the Demon Lord did not show himself!

The Nether Master's gaze fell onto Nie Li and appeared to understand his intentions. He warned Nie Li from the side, "Nie Li, I can tell that you want to kill someone. But I must warn you that even though you are my disciple, I cannot favor you. If you lot started killing each other, the

opposing party's master would definitely have you killed! If someone wanted to kill you, I would also do the same.”

Upon hearing the Nether Master's words, Nie Li clenched his fists tight and said, “Master, I have to ask, even if the other party murdered our parents, are we still not allowed to take action?”

The Nether Master's gaze was directed at Nie Li as pondered for a brief moment, “Not for the time being. If your grudges are absolutely irreconcilable, then I would recommend not taking any action for the time being and wait until you're in the Draconic Ruins Realm. Furthermore, your cultivation must reach a certain level before you settle your grudges. That way, even us masters won't be able to stop you!”

As per the Nether Master's suggestion, it was impossible for them to settle their personal grudges for the time being, unless their cultivations have already surpassed the Demon Lord's master. That way, even the Demon Lord's master won't be able to stop Nie Li. Nie Li suppressed his hatred for the Demon Lord as he nodded his head, “I will heed master's advice.”

At Nie Li's words, the Nether Master nodded in praise, “Not enduring would spoil greater plans. If you are able to endure the personal grudge for now, you will certainly be able to attain huge accomplishments in the future.”

When he saw how indignant Nie Li was, Xiao Yu walked over and comforted him, “Revenge is a dish best served cold [1]!”

[tl: [1] = The literal translation for this Chinese idiom is “ten years isn't too late for a man to take vengeance!” ]

Hearing Xiao Yu's words, Nie Li nodded and didn't say anything else. Ye Zong's death wasn't easy for him to endure. He moved to Duan Jian's side and whispered in his ear, “Duan Jian, you and the Demon Lord have the same master. Be careful, since the Demon Lord might plot against you.”

Duan Jian nodded as a chilling light flashed across his eyes, “Master can rest at ease. I will definitely not let him have a good time. If there's a chance, I'll kill him!”

“With your strength alone, I’m afraid that it’s impossible for you to deal with him. You’ll have to take care and protect yourself,” Nie Li warned. Duan Jian is a rather steady person and with the addition of his physical strength, he should be fine.

“Yes, I understand.” Duan Jian nodded.

When he glanced at Ye Ziyun, Nie Li could sense the sorrow in her heart. After heading to the Draconic Ruins Realm, he won’t be able to take care of her anymore. However, Nie Li understood Ye Ziyun very well. She is a strong person who will be able to walk out of her own sorrow.

Furthermore, Nie Li told Ye Ziyun that reviving Ye Zong wasn’t impossible. Therefore, he believes that she will definitely work harder for her father.

He thought back to his previous life. Although both her grandfather and father had died, Ye Ziyun still remained strong as she led her clansmen through the St. Ancestral Mountain range and never gave up a shred of hope. Back then, her eyes had been filled with unwavering determination that even Nie Li admired. That was also why Nie Li managed to persevere through the desert alone, before finally stepping into the Desert Palace. It was Ye Ziyun’s conviction that influenced him and Ye Ziyun who had taught him to never give up.

Nie Li looked at Ye Ziyun and said, “Ziyun, after you guys reach the Draconic Ruins Realm, you must take good care of yourselves!”

“En.” Ye Ziyun nodded her head.

Nie Li gave her a light hug. After such a short time together, they were going to split up again. However, for the future and the futures of the others, they were all determined to work even harder.

Sensing the warmth of Nie Li’s embrace, Ye Ziyun tightly hugged Nie Li. Her heart drifted off into her memories, if it hadn’t been for him, she would be lost. It was Nie Li who gave her something to rely on and made her feel that she wasn’t alone. It was he who gave her hope.

She gradually realised that Nie Li had already become an irreplaceable

person in her life. Right now, she was his fiancée. As she thought about that, she felt a strong desire. She would wait a little more, until she was older, then she would put on a wedding dress and be forever by his side.

The closer they drew to the farewells, the more unwilling she was to let go.

When the time came, a huge vortex appeared in the sky above the Nine-Layered Deathlands. No one knew where this gloomy and deep vortex would lead them.

At the sight of it, the Nether Master, Ling Yun, Tian Hun, and the remaining experts all raised their heads towards the vortex. Their eyes blossomed with divine light as though they could see through the void.

Suddenly, a silver robed expert, who stood nearby, said, "Alright, the gate of the Tiny World has been connected to a location near the Phaseless Sect. The time has come for us to depart."

This grey robed expert is the master of Wei Nan and Zhu Xiangjun.

Wei Nan and Zhu Xiangjun looked at Nie Li and the others and bid their farewells. "Nie Li, Du Ze, we'll make the trip ahead of you!"

"Alright, take good care of yourselves over there," Nie Li nodded.

Du Ze, Lu Piao, and the others also bid their farewells to the two of them.

The grey robed expert waved his right hand. Together with Wei Nan, Zhu Xiangjun, and another Demigod rank expert, they flew into the sky and entered the vortex.

A brief moment later

"The gate of the Tiny World is now within the vicinity of the Heavenly Note Sect! It is time for us to go as well!" A trace of a smile was expressed on Ling Yun's face as she looked at Ye Ziyun, Xiao Ning'er, and Xiao Xue. When she saw how reluctant Ye Ziyun and Nie Li were to part, she couldn't help letting out a sigh. It was truly nice to be young. After living for so long, she had already forgotten the emotion of love.

Xiao Ning'er quietly stood to the side and looked at Nie Li. Her field of vision had already turned fuzzy from tears. Vaguely, she could see that youth with a brilliant smile who had immersed himself in treating her illness. That image saved her from endless pain.

Ye Ziyun gave Xiao Ning'er a gentle and encouraging push with her eyes.

"Ning'er, when you've reached your destination, you have to take good care of yourself too." Nie Li lowered his head and stared into Xiao Ning'er's beautiful face. This pure girl will one day glow with dazzling light!

At Nie Li's words, Xiao Ning'er suddenly took a step forward and hugged him, burying her head deep in his embrace. Although Ye Ziyun and Nie Li were already engaged, her feelings for him weren't any less than Ye Ziyun's. At this farewell moment, she could no longer suppress the emotions in her heart.

"Ning...er?" Nie Li looked at Xiao Ning'er in his embrace with a slightly stunned expression. When he recovered, there was a gentle expression in his gaze. How could he not know of Ning'er's feelings?

Xiao Ning'er was currently in Nie Li's arms. A brief moment later, she muttered, "Nie Li, you don't have to say anything, I understand. Sometime ago, I had another long dream. I dreamed that I had been turned into a ugly person. No matter how much I struggled, I was in the midst of an endless battle until I met you. Since you gave me the meaning to live, I chose to give myself to you and fought for you until I died on the battlefield. Although I'm aware that all of that was just a dream of mine, I feel that it was predestined. Nie Li, farewell! After reaching the Draconic Ruins Realm, I will definitely become stronger!"

After finishing her speech, Xiao Ning'er turned around, wiped the tears off her face, and walked towards Ye Ziyun.

After hearing Xiao Ning'er's words, Nie Li was still stunned and stood there speechless for a long while. His mind had been slightly blown and he was a little unsure of what had just happened. Suddenly, endless

memories surged up.

In reality, in his previous life, Nie had a woman after Ye Ziyun. At that time, he had already become one of the pinnacle experts of the Draconic Ruins Realm and had encountered a masked woman. Although he didn't know of her origins, the other party recognised him with a glance. Initially, Nie Li raised his guard against the masked woman and didn't dare to get close to her. However, the other party saved him again and again. Because of Ye Ziyun's death, it was already impossible for Nie Li to hold any feelings for another woman. However, in the end, Nie Li accepted this woman and lived with her for a long time. In the end, she died for him during battle.

Nie Li had always felt regret over it. After all, while the two of them were together, he had never truly loved her. In the time after her death, Nie Li would constantly recall her. However, since she had always been wearing a mask, he didn't have any memories of her appearance. He only knew that her name was Xiao Ning.

In this life, Nie Li had the intention of finding Xiao Ning in the Draconic Ruins Realm. At the very least, he wished to make up for their previous life.

But, what was with Xiao Ning'er's dream? Could it be that Xiao Ning'er didn't die in the Black Devil Forest and had gone to the Draconic Ruins Realm? Or had Xiao Ning's memories gone into Xiao Ning'er?

"Xiao Ning'er, Xiao Ning [2]..." Nie Li muttered. Slowly, he fit two and two together. No wonder why she instantly recognised him when they first met. After that, regardless of what he endeavored in or which side he was on, Xiao Ning would always help him without any hesitation or comment.

[tl: [2] = The author uses two different characters for "Xiao". The character for Ning'er's original surname means "similar to", whereas her alias surname means "miserable or desolate". ]

However, back then, it never occurred to Nie Li that Xiao Ning might have actually been Xiao Ning'er. That was because the gap in the timeframe had become so wide that he had already forgotten.

Xiao Ning once mentioned before that her face was destroyed by a dark forest. Her soul had also been ignited and she had sank into an endless curse. That dark forest concealed a very frightening thing that surpassed the limits of all the experts in the Draconic Ruins Realm.

Just what secret was concealed in the Black Devil Forest? How did Xiao Ning'er manage to survive and how did she manage to reach the to Draconic Ruins Realm? In their previous life, just what kind of curse did she encounter?

# Chapter 262: Gift From Nie Li

Nie Li was deeply submerged in his thoughts. If he manages to return from the Draconic Ruins Realm, then he would certainly take a look inside the Black Devil Forest, discover what was concealed there, and unveil the riddle around Xiao Ning'er's previous life!

Xiao Xue and Lu Piao were also bidding their farewells.

"Xiao Xue, wait until I reach the Martial Ancestor realm! Then I'll head for the Divine Note Sect to take you as my wife!" Lu Piao's eyes flickered with tears as he looked at Xiao Xue.

Xiao Xue pulled Lu Piao's ear as she snorted, "Beat it! By the time you reach Martial Ancestor, I would've already turned into an old woman! Lu Piao, are you planning to not take me as your wife?"

"Ow-ow-ow, Xiao Xue! Hurry up and let go! Why would I dare to do that!" Lu Piao immediately replied.

"Lu Piao, what are you implying? Are you saying that I'm forcing you to take me as your wife? You better give me a good explanation!" Xiao Xue placed a hand on her hip, while her other hand pulled on Lu Piao's ear.

Lu Piao could only stand on tiptoe as he quickly followed, "I mean to do it. Nono, I meant that I willing. Xiao Xue, I certainly will take you as my wife."

Xiao Xue coldly swept her eyes over Lu Piao's crotch as she snorted. "Lu Piao, you better listen up. While I'm not around, if you dare take some other woman, then I'll make sure to lay waste to you when I get back!" She then walked towards Ling Yun.

After Xiao Xue left, Lu Piao still felt the chill in his crotch as a bitter expression was plastered on his face. He glanced at Nie Li. They were both men, so why was there such a huge difference between them? They were both bidding their farewells. Nie Li hugged both Ye Ziyun and Xiao Ning'er and neither goddess had an objection. But when Lu Piao bid his farewell, he ended up getting scolded. He had such a bitter life!

Nie Li wanted to ask Xiao Ning'er a question. However, just as he raised his head to do so, he saw Ling Yun fly away with Ye Ziyun, Xiao Ning'er, and Xiao Xue in tow.

He could still see the reluctant expressions of the two girls as their eyes flickered with tears.

Nie Li waved his hand and bid farewell as he watched Ye Ziyun, Xiao Ning'er, and Xiao Xue enter the vortex. "Goodbye! I'll make sure to find you guys after we all reach the Draconic Ruins Realm!"

The two girls who had their destinies intertwined with his own proceeded to disappear into the vortex. He couldn't help feeling melancholy.

So it turns out that both of the girls already occupied important places in his heart.

After another group of people had gone, Du Ze walked to Nie Li's side and said, "Nie Li, I'll have to leave soon!"

"Alright," Nie Li patted Du Ze's shoulders and smiled, "Good brother, we'll meet again in the Draconic Ruins Realm!"

"Yes!" Du Ze seriously agreed with a nod. In his heart, Nie Li had already become his most important brother; this fact will forever stay the same.

As Du Ze and Nie Li were speaking, Hua Huo walked over. She wore a tight-fitting red gown with a high collar. Her fair legs were vaguely outlined, but still harboured boundless temptation. Her tall figure attracted others' gazes and made them unable turn away. She was undoubtedly extremely beautiful and had pointy purple-red ears. All this gave her the unique charm of a lady from a different tribe.

She walked to Du Ze's side and stretched out her hand. "Nice to meet you, my name is Hua Huo. From now on, we'll be in the same sect. Please do take care of me."

Du Ze was stunned as he beheld Hua Huo. Although he was unfamiliar with the other party, when he saw how sincere she appeared, Du Ze stretched out his hand in a handshake and said, "Yes, please take care of

me too!”

“Let’s go.” A smile blossomed on Hua Huo’s face as she turned around.

Du Ze was at a complete loss. Seeing his friend in this situation, Lu Piao, who stood next to him, gave Du Ze a kick in the rear as he lectured, “Stupid, are you not going to hurry up and follow her?”

Lu Piao was simply being resentful towards Du Ze for not acting properly and was impatient to see him fix his behaviour [1]. Such a beautiful lady was taking the initiative to greet him and Du Ze was acting like he was at a complete loss.

[tl: [1] = The raw used a Chinese idiom with a literal translation of “hating iron for not being steel”. ]

Du Ze paused for a moment as he waved his hand and said, “Nie Li, I’ll make a trip first then!”

Right after those words, he quickened his steps and followed Hua Huo.

Du Ze was also gone now.

Thereafter, Zhang Ming also bid farewell to Nie Li and left behind another expert.

Du Ze and everyone else are now gone. Currently, there were only four people: Nie Li, Lu Piao, Yu Yan, and Duan Jian. At that moment, a white clothed youth slowly strolled over. This youth was the Demon Lord that Nie Li had sent fleeing for his life.

The Demon Lord flashed a chilling gaze on Nie Li and his group. Ever since he entered the Abyss Prison Realm at a young age and came out, the only other time he had ever been injured was in his fight at the City Lord’s mansion. If it hadn’t been for his treasured armour and the fact that he had used a special technique to hide his body, he would’ve already died in the hands of Nie Li.

Those who had inflicted injuries on him, he would definitely shred to pieces!

Upon seeing the Demon Lord, a towering rage surged within Nie Li’s

heart and an unsuppressable wrath caused his veins to pop out all over his body. As he looked at Ye Zong's murderer, Nie Li wished nothing more than to be able to able to kill him with his own hands, right here, right now. However, he thought of what the Nether Master said. If he took any actions against the Demon Lord right now, he would be playing into the Demon Lord's hands.

With Nie Li's current strength, he was still unable to confront the Demon Lord's master.

"Enemies are indeed on a narrow road!" The Demon Lord coldly said. His gaze harboured a fathomless killing intent and a bloodlust filled craze as he made eye contact with Nie Li.

"I never imagined that you'd still manage to escape even after having your bitch head chopped off the last time. How about it, do you still want to fight?" Nie Li's frigid glare bore into the Demon Lord.

The Demon Lord lightly smiled, "Last time, you managed to gain an advantage over me. But do you really think that you're capable of killing me? Hilarious joke! You're overestimating yourself a little too much. If I hadn't been reserving some of my cards, do you really think that you'd be able to gain that sort of advantage? I do admit that you're indeed resourceful! But so what? Until now, you're the only one who's been able to arouse my interest. I'll kill those by your side, and save you for last! After all, watching an ant struggle in the water before it drowns is all the more interesting."

The Demon Lord had practically said the same thing that the Sage Emperor had told him in his previous life. Nie Li still remembered the Sage Emperor's words, that he would first kill those around him, one by one. Nie Li tightly clenched his fists until his veins popped out.

Although the Demon Lord had very high talent, Ye Ziyun, Xiao Ning'er, Du Ze and the rest would definitely receive protection from the sects they had joined. They would be safe for at least the next few years. During that time, Nie Li would have to cultivate like crazy and utterly obliterate the Demon Lord's existence before the threat disappears.

His anger would only delight the Demon Lord. Nie Li suppressed his rage as he stared at his enemy and coldly said, "You're so confident just because you have the Supreme Body? What a pitiful joke! All that confidence comes from this body? The Supreme Body is certainly powerful, but so what? If you don't have a compatible soul, then in the end, it's all just a waste. The higher you climb, the more you'll realise that your soul is weak and is unable to match the cultivation of your body. We'll see, if your Supreme Body is stronger or I'm stronger!"

Nie Li's [Heavenly God] cultivation technique was still at its starting stage. Once he reached the Heavenly Fate Realm, the might of the [Heavenly God] cultivation technique would then be released bit by bit. How could the Supreme Physique compare with the might of heaven?

The Demon Lord's expression was chilly as he coldly laughed, "You think that by putting things like that, I'd be concerned? How can the might of a Supreme Body be imaginable by a mortal like you?"

Although the Demon Lord said it so confidently, in reality, he felt uneasy in his heart. Nie Li's words had hit a sore spot. The higher his cultivation rose, the more he could sense how weak and incompatible his soul was with the Supreme Body. But so what? No matter who his enemy was, no one can stop him from getting stronger!

Nie Li coldly smiled as he observed the Demon Lord in silence. If his actions hadn't been restricted here, he would've already killed him. However, not long from now, he'll be able to personally finish the Demon Lord! The Draconic Ruins Realm shall be the final destination of the Demon Lord!

The Demon Lord coldly snorted as he turned around.

Nie Li looked at Duan Jian and said, "While you're in the sect, don't ever fight with him. As long as you're within the sect, it's impossible for him to touch you."

Duan Jian was a little unresigned in his heart. Although the Demon Lord was powerful, he still felt that he could put up a match with the Demon Lord.

“If you want to fight, then do it after reaching 2-Fate, Heavenly Fate Realm!” Nie Li cautioned in a solemn voice, “This is an order!”

“Yes.” Duan Jian lowered his head and seriously answered.

“Go then.” Nie Li said. As he watched the Demon Lord’s back, his eyes became filled with an icy killing intent.

Duan Jian walked towards the Demon Lord. Under the guidance of a powerful expert, they rose into the air and entered the vortex.

Nie Li looked towards the Nether Master.

The Nether Master said to Nie Li, Lu Piao, and one other Demigod rank expert, “The place that you guys are about to go is called the Divine Feathers Sect. I will continue to keep watch in the Nether Realm while Xiao Yu leads you. Once there, there will be specialised experts to guide you! However, upon reaching the Divine Feathers Sect, I trust that you won’t shame me!”

The Nether Master was not going to the Draconic Ruins Realm?

As he thought about it, he realised that he was lucky that the Nether Master wasn’t coming. If the Nether Master headed for the Draconic Ruins Realm with them, then no one would be left to protect Glory City. However, Nie Li was still a little worried. Would Glory City still encounter that large calamity that was supposed to happen in two years?

As long as the Nether Master was still alive, Glory City would remain safe. But if he’s dead...

Just who would be able to kill the Nether Master?

If the opponent was so powerful, then even if Nie Li remained behind, it would still be totally useless. Nie Li thought for a brief moment, then retrieved an item from his interspatial ring and presented it to the Nether Master with two hands [2], “Master, before I head for the Draconic Ruins Realm, please accept my gift!”

[tl: [2] = In Chinese culture, presenting things with two hands is a sign of respect. ]

The Nether Master's gaze fell onto Nie Li. A brief moment later, he took the object from Nie Li and casually said, "I have accepted your gift, you all should be going now!"

Xiao Yu was a little puzzled. Just what did Nie Li give to his foster father? However, he did not enquire.

When he saw that the Nether Master had received his gift, Nie Li stretched his body a bit before flying up behind Xiao Yu. Lu Piao and the other Demigod rank expert had also followed and the four of them disappeared into the vortex without a trace.

Seeing that Nie Li and the others had left, the Nether Master retracted his gaze and glanced at the item in his palm. It was a pouch. Objects from the Tiny World were worthless to the Nether Master; therefore, he naturally did not place Nie Li's gift with much concern. He casually opened the pouch and glanced at its contents.

Instantly, the Nether Master's pupils shrank in deep astonishment. He raised his head towards the sky, but Nie Li had already left.

# Chapter 263: Skysoul Institute

## Draconic Ruins Realm

This is a vast world that contains many powerful forces. Those of the righteous path were united under the Divine Feathers, Heavenly Note, Phaseless, Thousand Flowers, Sky Origin, and the Skyblaze Sects. Those of the wicked path would rally under the Demon God's, Pentabolt Demon, and Scarlet Moon Sects. There also exists a handful of relatively reclusive and unknown banners, such as the Ancestral God Land and the Ancestral Demonic Saint Land, among others.

These forces have coexisted since time immemorable and have gathered countless numbers of experts under their banner, creating an immovable force.

## Eastern region of the Draconic Ruins Realm

This massive territory belongs entirely to the Divine Feathers Sect.

No one knew exactly how long the Divine Feathers Sect has been around. The Sect manages several hundreds of cities with a total population of over several hundred million. By tallying the number of outer disciples alone, the count would already reach several million. No one knows exactly how many experts are in the Divine Feathers Sect.

The Divine Feathers Sect is then divided into the Heaven, Inner, and Outer Division. Ordinary people would only be able to stare at the Outer Division in longing, and would forever be out of their reach. The Inner Division was even more unknown. As far the Heaven

Division went, it was so unknown that it was practically a myth.

Aside from the divisions themselves, there is the Skysoul Institute, located in the Inner Division of the Divine Feathers Sect. The geniuses from the scattered cities and smaller realms would enroll in the Skysoul Institute in order to cultivate themselves. The Skysoul Institute is an extremely large school with millions of students, almost like an independent kingdom.

The Skysoul Institute is located deep within a mountain range. The vague outlines of buildings can be seen throughout the flourishing forest, creating a magnificent scene.

Xiao Yu, Nie Li, Lu Piao, and Guan Yi are walking along a small path through that forest. Guan Yi is a Demigod rank expert who is in his twenties. He originates from Nether City's Xuyu Clan. They appear extremely similar to humans, except their skin is slightly reddish.

Guan Yi had an arrogantly prideful look on his face, which irritated Nie Li. Even though they were both disciples of the Nether Master, neither spoke a single word to the other.

Students of the Skysoul Institution often passed them on the small path. Right now was the recruitment period for the Skysoul Institution, which only happened once every ten years. Therefore, everyone in this area was a prospective new student of the Skysoul Institution.

Xiao Yu continued walking as he explained, "The Skysoul Institution is divided into five districts, each with strict grading. The Central District of the institution is the strongest, East is the second, and West is the third. The South and North Districts are the tail ends. You guys will have to first take a placement test for your district."

He glanced at Guan Yi and continued, "Furthermore, I have one point I need to make clear with you guys. Regardless of whether you're Legend or Demigod rank, you better put away your arrogance. Now that you're in the Draconic Ruins Realm, you guys have barely touched the door of cultivation. The cultivation stages in Draconic Ruins Realm are divided into five major Realms: Heavenly Fate, Heavenly Stars, Heavenly Axis, Dao of the Dragon, and Martial Ancestor. Every Realm is subdivided into nine smaller stages. Those below the Heavenly Fate Realm are called the Earthen Fate Realm. Those who have yet to form their Fate Soul don't have the qualifications to call themselves a cultivator!"

At Xiao Yu's words, Guan Yi was stunned. In the Nether Realm, a Demigod rank expert could already be considered an expert of one area. However, in the Draconic Ruins Realm, they were just pitiful Earthen Fate

Realms. But so what? With my talents in cultivation, I can definitely rise above others.

Guan Yi gave Nie Li a glance. He was very displeased with Nie Li. The two of them were both disciples of the Nether Master and yet, Nie Li had obviously received higher standings from the Nether Master. Furthermore, Nie Li was close with the Nether Master's foster son, whereas Guan Yi himself was a little excluded.

Nie Li was vaguely aware of Guan Yi's hostility. However, he wasn't really bothered by it. His real enemy was the Demon Lord and the overpowered Sage Emperor. Guan Yi didn't have the qualifications to be called his opponent.

Guided by Xiao Yu, the three of them entered a courtyard where some teachers were calling out names. These teachers are wearing long robes and have an aura of prestige emitting from them. They also have powerful auras revolving around them. From those signs, they are at least experts of the Heavenly Fate Realm.

Xiao Yu walked to one of the teachers and said, "This is the referral letter for these three students."

This particular teacher is roughly in his thirties and was wearing a long silver robe. When he raised his head and saw Xiao Yu, a trace of astonishment flashed through his eyes. "So it's Xiao Yu!"

Upon hearing this teacher, the other teachers also turned their attentions towards them.

The first teacher gave a quick once-over of Nie Li and the two others before turning his head towards another teacher. "The referral letter has been received, bring them in."

Xiao Yu nodded and said to Nie Li and the other two, "Follow me."

Nie Li swept a glance over these teachers, who were all shocked at the name of Xiao Yu. So it seemed that Xiao Yu has quite a reputation within the Skysoul Institution. Even though Xiao Yu's cultivation looks as though he still hadn't formed his Fate Soul.

They passed through several corridors and arrived in the main hall where thousands of students have gathered and appear to be engaging in some activity.

Xiao Yu turned his head and said to Nie Li and the other two, “Before the talents from various cities and realms are allowed to join the Skysoul Institution, they must first undergo a test. This test concludes the grade of their Spiritual Root. Spiritual Roots are divided into Heaven, Earth, and Man. They’re then further divided into nine grades. The higher the grade of a person’s Spiritual Root, the stronger their talent would be and the faster their cultivating speed for the Heavenly Energy.”

“What’s the grade of your Spiritual Root?” Lu Piao couldn’t help but to ask out of curiosity.

“I’m a 7-grade Heaven Spiritual Root,” Xiao Yu said in a low voice.

At Xiao Yu’s words, Nie Li stared at him in shock. He never thought that Xiao Yu’s talent would be so high. Therefore, he has no idea why Xiao Yu hasn’t formed his Fate Soul yet. Ordinarily, a 7-grade Man Spiritual Root is already considered quite excellent. 5-grade Earth Spiritual Roots and above could already be considered geniuses. As for Heaven Spiritual Roots, they were extremely rare. Within the entirety of the Divine Feathers Sect, there probably isn’t more than a thousand people who could claim that.

“Is a 7-grade Heaven Spiritual Root really powerful?” Lu Piao turned around as he consulted Nie Li.

At Lu Piao’s words, the people who stood nearby and overheard looked at him with weird looks. Was this person an idiot? To ask such a question! Heaven Spiritual Roots were extremely rare. Those above 3-grade could already be considered powerful talents. Those that are above 7-grade were heaven-defying!

Sensing the weird looks, Lu Piao scratched his head. He was also aware that he had asked a rather unnecessary question.

Nie Li looked at Xiao Yu. By right, if he was a 7-grade Heaven Spiritual Root at his age, he should’ve already formed his Fate Soul. So why didn’t he form his Fate Soul already? Nie Li was extremely puzzled over this.

As for the test that determines one's Spiritual Root, Nie Li had also taken it before in his previous life. At that time, he had only tested as a 7-grade Earth Spiritual root, which was a very ordinary talent. However, because he was in possession of the Temporal Demon Spirit Book, Nie Li had managed to reach the pinnacle of the Dao of Martial.

Although he didn't have the Temporal Demon Spirit Book in this life, he was still in possession of the knowledge from his previous life.

"This Spiritual Root test sounds pretty horrifying. I'm really afraid of those kinds of tests. Aside from the Soul Force test from last time, I always place last!" Lu Piao said dejectedly.

"The test for the Spiritual Root isn't the same as the Soul Force test. Just act accordingly with your cultivation technique. Even if the grade of your Spiritual Root isn't that high, you're still absolutely capable of reaching great heights through cultivation. So don't stress it too much!" Nie Li patted Lu Piao's shoulders as he casually smiled.

Guan Yi glanced at Lu Piao as he chuckled. Lu Piao was actually afraid of tests. Only mediocres would be afraid of test!

The number of people who came to take the test was steadily swelling as the three teachers continued to record scores.

"3-grade Man Spiritual Root, send back!"

"2-grade Man Spiritual Root, send back!"

The voices of the teachers could be heard.

Lu Piao couldn't help looking at Xiao Yu and asked, "What do they mean by 'send back'?"

Xiao Yu explained, "When they say 'send back', that means that the institution won't accept them. The Skysoul Institution only accepts those with 5-grade Man Spiritual grade and above. Those with low talent are rejected.

At Xiao Yu's words, Lu Piao couldn't help pulling his neck in like a turtle. The idea of being 'sent back' was really pretty scary. They wouldn't

be able to return to the Tiny World for the next five years. So if the Skysoul Institution didn't accept them, where else could they go? Lu Piao almost cried out as he thought he would end up with the batch that would be sent back!

Guan Yi glanced at Lu Piao's bitter face and coldly snorted, "Trash!"

At Guan Yi's words, Nie Li's expression turned cold as he glared at Guan Yi and said, "Who are you calling trash?"

Nie Li absolutely didn't allow anyone to insult his friends!

Glancing at Nie Li, Guan Yi shrugged, "Who do you think I'm talking about?"

Xiao Yu furrowed his brows for a brief moment. He was also rather displeased with Guan Yi. However, after one look at Nie Li, Xiao Yu feared that Nie Li would take action and moved to stop him. "The Skysoul Institution doesn't allow any fights to happen within its territory, aside from challenges in tournaments. There are strict punishments for those who don't abide by those rules. They might even lock you up in the Frost Cellar for months!"

Although he was highly annoyed with Guan Yi, Nie Li still understood the rules and didn't pursue the matter.

Xiao Yu looked at Guan Yi and coldly said, "You're all my foster father's disciples. I hope you all won't have any further issues with each other. If anyone tries to start one up, then don't blame me for not warning you beforehand. For those who stir up trouble, don't come crying to me when you hit trouble later on!"

At Xiao Yu's words, Guan Yi immediately apologised, "Young Master Xiao Yu, I just had loose lips for a moment, please don't take it to mind."

Xiao Yu coldly snorted and stewed in silence.

Guan Yi had cold sweat on his forehead. He never imagined that Xiao Yu would side with Nie Li and Lu Piao. He clearly understood that offending Xiao Yu at the moment was definitely not a wise decision. Although he felt plenty of disdain for Nie Li and Lu Piao, it would still be best if he

restrained himself a little to avoid offending Xiao Yu.

As the four of them were speaking, a group of people walked over. The one leading was a youth that held a trace of an evil aura emanating from him. He appeared to be either seventeen or eighteen and showed a provocative little smile.

The youth clicked his tongue as he said in a peculiar voice, “Well, isn’t this the super genius Xiao Yu from our West District? I never thought I’d meet Young Master Xiao in a place like this! What a coincidence!”

“Hua Ling, speak if you have anything worth saying. Otherwise, get lost. I don’t have the time to have an idle chat with you.” Xiao Yu’s face was smeared with a cold look.

Sensing the enmity between the two, Nie Li observed the youth called Hua Ling. This youth, who has dozens of people following behind him, should’ve already formed his Fate Soul and already become a Heavenly Fate Realm expert.

Hua Ling laughed and tried to hook his arms around Xiao Yu’s neck, but Xiao Yu knocked them away. Hua Ling retracted his arms as he chuckled, “Young Master Xiao is still the same as usual, so impolite!”

# Chapter 264: Spiritual Root

Xiao Yu coldly eyed Hua Ling and snorted. “Hua Ling, am I very familiar with you?”

“Young master Xiao, if you’re going to put things like that, then you’re being too cold.” Hua Ling smiled and continued, “Both of our fathers are enforcers in the Divine Feathers Sect. Is there really a need to treat me like an enemy the moment you see me?”

As he finished speaking, Hua Ling swept his gaze over Nie Li and the others, who stood behind Xiao Yu, and laughed, “The Tiny World is indeed withering in terms of talent. Only these three were chosen? The cultivation of these three don’t seem very outstanding. It seems like the Tiny World is incomparable to our Little Heaven Realm!”

Hua Ling’s words were thorny and his gaze carried hints of contempt as he looked at Nie Li and the other two.

Behind Hua Ling stood over twenty experts. Each and every one of them was a Demigod rank expert who were only a tiny gap away from the Heavenly Fate Realm. The looks they gave Nie Li and the other two were tinted with provocations. They’d obviously sensed that their young master Hua Ling wasn’t on good terms with Xiao Yu. Since they planned to rely on young master Hua Ling in the future, naturally, they will side with him.

Nie Li gathered his voice and asked Xiao Yu, “So just who is this Hua Ling?”

“His father is just like my foster father: an enforcer of the Outer Division of Divine Feathers Sect who is fighting over the position of Chief Enforcer. You guys don’t need to be bothered about them, since they won’t be able to do anything to you here!” Xiao Yu voiced to Nie Li.

Nie Li now understood the situation a little better. No wonder Hua Ling wasn’t on good terms with Xiao Yu! So it turns out that the situation was like that. Nie Li was uninterested in these types of conflicts.

Hua Ling’s cold gaze swept over Nie Li. Although he couldn’t hear what

Nie Li and Xiao Yu were talking about, it shouldn't be anything good.

“The Spiritual Root Test will soon begin. I wonder what kind of Spiritual Root the three geniuses from the Tiny World will have!” The corner of Hua Ling's mouth still carried provocations as he swept his eyes past Xiao Yu's group of four. “Since young master Xiao has a 7-grade Heaven Spiritual Root, then I guess that means that these guys from the Tiny World shouldn't be that bad either, right?”

“That's none of your business!” Xiao Yu snapped coldly. It seems that he really loathes Hua Ling; a decent word between the two could be considered a lot to ask for.

When he saw Xiao Yu give him the cold shoulder, Hua Ling coldly snorted and turned away. Xiao Yu was a 7-grade Heaven Spiritual Root, but still hasn't formed his Fate Soul yet. What's there to be proud of in that?

However, even if Hua Ling was already a 3-fate of the Heavenly Fate Realm and Xiao Yu had yet to form his first Fate Soul, Hua Ling was still very nervous in his heart and had considered Xiao Yu a formidable opponent.

First of all, a 7-grade Heaven Spiritual Root was already a legendary existence. The number of people within the entire Skysoul Institution who reached 7-grade Heaven Spiritual Root didn't exceed a hundred. However, for this hundred, all of their cultivations had reached an astonishing degree, becoming tyrants in their cultivation. By rights, the cultivation speed of a 7-grade Heaven Spiritual Root should be extremely fast and impossible for ordinary people to catch up to. However, even now, Xiao Yu still hasn't formed his Fate Soul.

By rights, a person like that shouldn't make Hua Ling feel threatened at all; however there was that legend in the Skysoul Institution. For those with Heaven Spiritual Root, the longer they remain in Earthen Fate Realm, the faster their cultivation speed would be once they achieve their first Fate Soul. It would become something entirely beyond the reach of ordinary people.

The power of Heaven Spiritual Root has always caused Hua Ling to feel

uneasy. He himself had taken the test and was determined to be only a 7-grade Earth Spiritual Root. A talent of his standard could be considered outstanding but he was definitely not a powerful genius.

The number of people partaking the test steadily increased.

“9-grade Man Spiritual Root, send to the South District!”

“7-grade Man Spiritual Root, send to the South District!”

In the total results of these tests, those who were able to reach Earth Spiritual Realm didn't amount to many. The several teachers who were in charge of the test swept their eyes over the remaining disciples with a rather dull mood. In the recent years, the number of geniuses was steadily decreasing. This was also linked to the reason why the Divine Feathers Sect was in decline. The powerful geniuses who were given a choice, had all headed for the other sects instead.

Among the teachers who were in charge of the test, the leader was a middle-aged man who wore a blue robe and was emitting a very prestigious aura. He and two other teachers beside him were swiftly recording the test results.

“6-grade Earth Spiritual Root.” Another test result was revealed.

“Not bad, send to the West District!” The blue-robed middle-aged man said as he gave a slight nod.

Hua Ling furrowed his brows for a brief moment. With thousands of people waiting to take their tests, who knows how long it will be until it was their turn?

He approached the blue-robed middle-aged man as he lightly smiled and greeted him, “Enforcer Gu, it's been a while.”

Upon seeing Hua Ling, the man's expression became a little gentler as he asked, “Young master Hua Ling, why have you come?”

“As a matter of fact, I brought some disciples from my Little Heaven Realm here to participate in the test. I hope Enforcer Gu will take care of us!” Hua Ling smiled and with a twitch of his right hand, he materialised

an object and pushed it over to the blue-robed middle-aged man.

The teacher lowered his head for a quick look, then accepted it without batting an eyelid as he smiled, “You’re too kind! Young master Hua Ling is being too polite!”

This man was just an enforcer of foreign affairs. Compared to Hua Ling’s father, who is an Enforcer that possesses quite an amount of authority, this man couldn’t hold a candle. Since Hua Ling is being so kind, how could he not give him this face?

“If that’s the case, then young master Hua Ling’s disciples can take the test first!” The blue-robed middle-aged man smiled and continued, “The Little Heaven Realm is blessed with talented generations. Therefore, the students coming here must definitely be geniuses with extraordinary talents!”

“Then I’ll say my thanks, Enforcer Gu!” Hua Ling laughed as he turned to his bunch and beckoned, “Come over!”

The disciples of the Little Heaven Realm all moved towards Hua Ling.

At the sight of this, those who were waiting in queue couldn’t help showing displeased expressions on their faces. For a the test with thousands of people, they had already been waiting for so long. Hua Ling and his bunch had obviously come later and yet they could queue to the front.

“Who are those people?”

“Mind your words and beware of causing any trouble. That’s Hua Ling, the son of an Enforcer of the Outer Division of the Skysoul Institute. Just let them take the test first!”

In the end, those left in the queue restrained themselves. After all, within the Divine Feathers Sect, they themselves didn’t amount to much and none of them could afford to offend certain kinds of people.

However, Xiao Yu walked forward and faced Hua Ling and the teacher and asked in a solemn tone, “Enforcer Gu, aren’t you being inappropriate? We’ve come before Hua Ling and they end up in line before us. Such

favouritism, I'm afraid it won't be nice if rumors spread!"

The blue-robed middle-aged man took one look at Xiao Yu and instantly gave an awkward look. If an ordinary person had said such a thing, he would definitely suppressed it down. During the test, he still had that much authority. However, Xiao Yu's father is of the same level as Hua Ling's father: an Enforcer who wields authority. They weren't people that he could afford to offend. Furthermore, if Xiao Yu spread the word of him playing favouritism, he would likely be punished.

"Young master Xiao Yu, you've misunderstood. It's like this. Young master Hua Ling took a number earlier and all this has already been arranged. It's just that he ended up coming slightly later than expected. So how is this inappropriate?" Enforcer Gu said, after being suddenly struck by the bright idea. He was also a smart person, so naturally, he wouldn't let himself fall into another's hands so easily.

Xiao Yu was momentarily at a lost for words. Although he was well aware that Enforcer Gu was lying and felt indignant about it, there wasn't anything he could do.

"Young master Xiao, I forgot to tell you about it. I also reserved a number for you earlier and arranged everything for you. If you guys want to take the test first, we can arrange ourselves behind you." Hua Ling chuckled.

Enforcer Gu couldn't help giving Hua Ling a grateful glance. They were both sons of Enforcers, but Hua Ling had obviously known how to act compared to Xiao Yu; smooth and slick, without a single loophole.

"There's no need. It'll be our turn soon anyways." Xiao Yu knitted his brows slightly for a brief moment. If he were to queue in front of Hua Ling, then doesn't that mean that he's the same kind of person as Hua Ling?

"Oh? So it'll be young master Xiao's turn soon? If that's the case, then Enforcer Gu, you can put us together in the test! That way young master Xiao and I can talk about things!" Hua Ling chuckled.

"Since young master Hua Ling has such intentions, then please wait for

now. The students in front have almost finished their tests.” Enforcer Gu lightly smiled as a trace of an obscure glow flickered in his eyes. It’s been said that their fathers have always been on bad terms, and now it seems that the two sons intend to compete as well. Since this matter was unrelated to him, Enforcer Gu was more than happy to be able to sit back and watch the show.

Xiao Yu furrowed his brows for a moment and appeared a little displeased at Hua Ling’s provocations.

Hua Ling glanced at Nie Li’s trio and smiled, “I wonder, what kind of Spiritual Root these geniuses from the Tiny World have? One must know that Young Master Xiao Yu is an extremely rare 7-grade Heaven Spiritual Root. I suppose that these geniuses from the Tiny World shouldn’t be that bad either!”

Xiao Yu was also unsure of Nie Li and the other two’s talents. Since Hua Ling was being overbearing, he could only sweep a cold glance at him and remain silent.

The students in front had several Earth Spiritual Roots and one of them was even a 3-grade Heaven Spiritual Root. This had triggered a series of cries in surprise.

“It’s actually the Heaven Spiritual Root!”

Everyone looked at that genius with envy.

That genius was also dumbfounded and at a complete loss. Originally, he had accompanied his young master to study and had only followed his young master to participate in this test. He never imagined that he would actually test as a Heaven Spiritual Root.

# Chapter 265: Test

Enforcer Gu had an overjoyed expression on his face. “Send to the West District!” The Skysoul Institute treated every genius as an important individual.

If a Heaven Spiritual Root genius appeared, even Enforcer Gu would be rewarded.

Lu Piao looked at Xiao Yu and asked. “What’s the difference between the West, South, and North Districts?”

Xiao Yu explained, “The North District is the worst. Usually those who score below a 5-grade Man Spiritual Root are rejected by the Skysoul Institute. However, there are some who they can’t turn away because of their identities, or if their parents are in the Divine Feathers Sect. Therefore, they’re sent to the the North District.”

Lu Piao understood it now. Frankly speaking, those sent to the North District were a bunch of useless second generations. If outsiders like them tested below a 5-grade Man Spiritual Root, they wouldn’t even have the qualifications to enter the North District of the institution.

“The South District is slightly better. They’re basically people who are above 5-grade Man Spiritual Root, but below 9-grade. As for the West District, it’s currently the best District you guys can be sent to, as of now. Earth and Heaven Spiritual Roots are usually sent to the West District. Even I’m in the West District right now. Those who are able to raise their cultivation quickly and show sufficient potential will be sent to the East District.”

Lu Piao looked at Xiao Yu and asked, “What about the Central District?”

“The Central District...” Xiao Yu paused for a moment and said in a solemn tone, “That’s an extremely secretive place. No one knows what it looks like. Everything about it is kept confidential and it’s forbidden for the outside world to inquire about it. Only powerful geniuses of the East District might achieve the qualifications to be sent there. They’re also the main force of the Divine Feathers Sect.”

Nie Li went silent. Even during his previous life, he'd only managed to obtain a small quantity of information regarding the Central District of the Divine Feathers Sect.

As they looked ahead of them, they realised that it would soon be their turn to take the test. Nie Li still understood his talent fairly well. In his previous life, he tested as a 7-grade Earth Spiritual Root. Although it wasn't exceptionally strong, it was still relatively outstanding. Spiritual Roots represented an individual's talent for cultivation and was related to things like the toughness of the soul. Under normal circumstances, there wouldn't be any changes in it. Therefore, he predicted that, in this life, he would still have a 7-grade Earth Spiritual Root.

Time dragged on. A few dozen more people finished their tests.

Enforcer Gu looked at Xiao Yu and Hua Ling as he said with a light smile, "Young masters, it will soon be your men's turn."

Hua Ling, who stood to one side, smiled. "I'll go with Enforcer Gu's arrangements. Xiao Yu and I are just bystanders, after all."

Enforcer Gu nodded as he pointed a finger at one person and said, "You, come up here and take your test."

This was a person who had originated from the Little Heaven Realm, a youth in his twenties and who wore a long purple robe.

This youth walked forward. Under the guidance of the two teachers supervised by Enforcer Gu, he slowly placed his hand on a round crystal ball that's the size of a millstone. He then slowly injected his power into it.

The crystal ball glowed faintly, then became brighter and brighter. Faint orange patterns traced throughout the crystal and distributed into six threads.

Enforcer Gu nodded as he said with a light smile. "6-grade Earth Spiritual Root. Not bad. Send to the West District."

Hua Ling walked up to the youth and patted him on the shoulder. "Well done!"

The youth nodded with respect before retiring behind Hua Ling. He didn't seem conceited.

The teachers continued to test the remaining people.

“3-grade Earth Spiritual Root, West District.”

“7-grade Earth Spiritual Root, West District.”

For the next three tests, all had Earth Spiritual Roots and were sent to the West District.

The people behind them discussed about it.

“These people from the Little Heaven Realm are really formidable! So many people have participated in the test and ninety percent have been Man Spiritual Roots. Out of every ten people, barely one or two are Earth Spiritual Roots, yet those three from the Little Heaven Realm all had Earth Spiritual Root!”

“Yeah! Not to mention that one of them is a 7-grade Earth Spiritual Root. That's already rare enough!”

The corner of Hua Ling's mouth twitched upwards. Their Little Heaven Realm had always produced talented younger generations. How could it be compared with other places!

Enforcer Gu pointed at Guan Yi. “You, come and take your test!”

Guan Yi nodded. “Yes.”

Guided by the two teachers, he walked up to the crystal ball and slowly reached his hand over it.

Thanks to Xiao Yu's introduction of the process, he was already aware that this crystal ball would determine his fate. Therefore, he was a little nervous.

As time passed, the crystal ball emitted a faint light before it glowed brighter and brighter. Scarlet-red threads appeared inside and gradually split into nine.

“9-grade Man Spiritual Root, off to the South District.” Enforcer Gu said

after casting a glance at Guan Yi. Although a 9-grade Man Spiritual Root was decent, it couldn't be considered outstanding.

Guan Yi stared dumbfoundedly at the crystal ball in front of him and muttered, "This is impossible! Something has to be wrong with this test. I want to retake it!"

At Guan Yi's words, Enforcer Gu coldly said, "It's impossible for the test to be faulty. Each person can only have one try!"

The two teachers also looked at Guan Yi with anger. Guan Yi could only return the looks with a dazed expression. Although he had passed the test, a 9-grade Man Spiritual Root couldn't be considered much of a genius. This was a little hard for him to accept. Ever since he was young, he'd always been outstanding within his age group and had always been the one with the highest talent.

Watching Guan Yi walk back, Nie Li calmly said, "Don't be too bothered about it. Although the grade of Spiritual Roots is connected to the speed of cultivation, it's not the deciding factor."

At Nie Li's words, Guan Yi felt a mix of emotions.

Hua Ling laughed. "Haha, the grade of Spiritual Roots really aren't the deciding factor. Look at young master Xiao. Although he had a 7-grade Heaven Spiritual Root, isn't he still stopped in the Earth Fate Realm?"

Xiao Yu coldly stared at Hua Ling and said, "What are you trying to say?"

Seeing Xiao Yu's glare, Hua Ling instantly "apologised" as he said, "Young master Xiao, I'm so sorry about that. My mouth ran off without me for a moment there. I shouldn't have mentioned the problem about your Spiritual Root."

Nie Li looked at Hua Ling and casually smiled. "The grade of a Spiritual Root really can't decide a person's future achievements. However, it still has a certain link, especially for those who've reached the Heaven Spiritual Root. Has young master Hua Ling seen anyone with Heaven Spiritual Root who permanently stayed in the Earth Fate Realm? As long as one has a Heaven Spiritual Root, it's basically confirmed that they'll be

able to enter the Heavenly Fate Realm.”

Hua Ling sneered. “So what? Cultivating for decades to reach Heavenly Fate Realm? Such a cultivation speed isn’t any better compared to someone with a Man Spiritual Root!”

“Not necessarily.” Nie Li shook his head and continued, “The soul level of someone with a Heaven Spiritual Root will have already reached an extremely astonishing state. But why do some people with Heaven Spiritual Roots remain in the Earth Fate Realm for so long? It’s because Heaven Spiritual Roots will automatically absorb the essence between heaven and earth to increase that person’s soul level. Is young master Hua Ling aware of the spiritual item called the Amethyst Bamboo? The Amethyst Bamboo is a treasured herb that is rarely seen between the heaven and earth. They’re usually buried under the earth, continuously absorbing the essence between the two. Some Amethyst Bamboo popped out from the ground after being nurtured for several hundreds of years. Therefore, when it began to grow, it’ll only grow in few centimeters in a year. After spending a few thousands, or even tens of thousands of years in the earth, the Amethyst Bamboo will germinate and push its shoots aboveground. Once it does so, it can grow up to several meters in height in just a single day and will continue to grow rapidly.”

Hua Ling was stunned, however he quickly recovered and snorted, “Even if what you just said makes any sense, so what? How can the Amethyst Bamboo be linked to the Heaven Spiritual Root?”

Nie Li gave a light smile and answered, “Although it doesn’t appear to be related, if you don’t believe me, you can consult any Martial Ancestor expert to confirm it. For Earth Fate Realm and Heavenly Fate Realm experts who’ve been stuck for a year, reaching Heavenly Star Realm is definitely possible. Two years would guarantee Heavenly Axis Realm. Those above three years are definitely geniuses who can reach the Martial Ancestor Realm! How long has young master Xiao been stuck for?”

“It’s my fifth year.” Xiao Yu looked at Nie Li in half-belief, as he couldn’t figure out if what Nie Li had just said was truth.

Nie Li looked at Xiao Yu and said, “Then I’ll say my congratulations here to young master Xiao. You’ll be able to break through Heavenly Fate Realm soon. After that, your cultivation will suddenly take huge leaps. It’s absolutely not something that a mediocre can hold a candle to.”

Hua Ling coldly laughed. “Tsk, nonsense. Spouting random words as though they’re facts. Hilarious. Could it be that you’ve met a Martial Ancestor expert before? With just your qualifications, the likes of you could meet a Martial Ancestor Realm expert?” He was left feeling uneasy by Nie Li’s words, but he was still unwilling to admit the truth of what he had just said.

“Then we’ll just have to wait and see.” Nie Li shrugged.

Xiao Yu consulted Nie Li, “Nie Li, is what you just said the truth?”

“I was making it up.” Nie Li replied, but he secretly laughed. Everything that he’d just said was half true. He could see that Xiao Yu’s soul had already been refined to a certain level and that he’d soon break through to the Heavenly Fate Realm. With Xiao Yu’s talent, after reaching Heavenly Fate Realm, his cultivation would definitely soar by leaps and bounds.

Furthermore, Nie Li could tell that Xiao Yu was similar to the Nether Master. Both cultivated the [Myriad Dragonroars] cultivation technique. The tyrannical nature of this cultivation technique doesn’t lose an inch to the cultivation techniques that Nie Li had passed to Du Ze and Lu Piao. However, Xiao Yu and the Nether Master’s [Myriad Dragonroars] should only be a shattered portion of the original. Because it lacked some portions, that was why Xiao Yu had remained in the Earth Fate Realm for so long.

However, it was still possible to break through to the Heavenly Fate Realm. After breaking through, his path should be a smooth cruise to the doorway of the Heavenly Star Realm before experiencing difficulty to breakthrough.

“Okay then.” Xiao Yu bitterly smiled. Nie Li had obviously been bluffing Hua Ling, but his words had momentarily lit a hope inside Xiao Yu.

Nie Li smiled and remained silent.

Hua Ling looked at Xiao Yu before turning to Nie Li and snorted. He's wasn't willing to believe Nie Li; therefore, he turned his head away and observed his men's tests.

“3-grade Earth Spiritual Root!”

“6-grade Earth Spiritual Root!”

“8-grade Man Spiritual Root!”

Another six tests completed and five of them were Earth Spiritual Roots with one 8-grade Man Spiritual Root.

Hearing Enforcer Gu's words, Hua Ling's face instantly turned black and he coldly snorted. “Rubbish, to actually be a Man Spiritual Root! Scram back to the Little Heaven Realm. I don't need any Man Spiritual Root trash here!”

The youth who had tested as a 8-grade Man Spiritual Root felt so ashamed from the scolding that his ears turned red.

# Chapter 266: Results of the Test

Enforcer Gu immediately smoothed things over. “Young Master Hua Ling, although he tested as an 8-grade Man Spiritual Root, and is incomparable to the other disciples of the Little Heaven Realm, his talent is still acceptable. Why is Young Master Hua Ling so irritated?”

Hua Ling coldly glared at the youth with the 8-grade Man Spiritual Root. “We don’t need a Man Spiritual Root trash in my Little Heaven Realm. You should scam back home by yourself. Or do you want me to kick you back? Trash of the Man Spiritual Root level should be too humiliated to show themselves in the Skysoul Institute!”

Upon hearing Hua Ling condemning the youth, Guan Yi tightly clenched his fists. It was as if Hua Ling’s words were also directed at him. In the past, he had always been the one humiliating others; now, the positions were reversed. He felt so ashamed that he wanted to kill himself.

Aside from Guan Yi, the bystanders who tested as Man Spiritual Roots all felt too ashamed to look anyone else in the eye.

Nie Li patted Guan Yi on the shoulder and said, “Don’t take his words to heart. We are cultivators, destined to go against the heaven. If you don’t intend on trying to defy heaven, then there’s no point to cultivating!”

Guan Yi’s lost gaze slowly cleared, then turned firm and determined. He looked at Nie Li with an emotion-filled expression and said, “Nie Li, thank you! Before, I said such rude things, and yet you’re still encouraging me. I definitely won’t give up!”

Hua Ling, who stood to the side, cast a glance at Nie Li and Guan Yi and sneered, “Only trash would sympathise with each other. The strong definitely have no need of other people’s pity!”

After Hua Ling finished his verbal attacks on the youth with the 8-grade Man Spiritual Root, the youth walked away in silence.

“You, come and take your test!” Enforcer Gu pointed at Lu Piao.

Finally, it was his turn to take the test. Instantly, a look of bitter

helplessness crossed Lu Piao's face as he walked towards the crystal ball. Would it be fortune or misfortune? Even if it's misfortune, it's still impossible to avoid. Sooner or later, he'd have to take the test.

Just as Lu Piao was prepared to take his test, a commotion burst out from outside the testing grounds.

“Someone committed suicide!”

“It's that guy with 8-grade Man Spiritual Root!”

“I heard that he tested out as an 8-grade Man Spiritual Root! Then, after being humiliated, he took it too hard and committed suicide!”

The students who were still waiting for their tests all shook their heads with sad expressions on their faces. Although an 8-grade Man Spiritual Root wasn't exceptionally outstanding, it was still acceptable. There was no need for suicide!

At the commotion from outside, Nie Li knitted his brows for a brief moment. The youth probably suicided not because of the results of the test, but because he was unable to accept the humiliation of returning. He chose to die here, rather than go back. This was his pride!

Hua Ling coldly snorted, “He'd rather die than return. At least he had some backbone and wasn't complete trash. There's nothing worth pitying about his death!”

The others from the Little Heaven Realm who stood beside Hua Ling all appeared indifferent. Obviously, such incidents were common for them.

Upon hearing Hua Ling's words, Xiao Yu's face went cross with rage.

Lu Piao and the others also angrily glared at Hua Ling.

The surrounding bystanders also felt angry towards Hua Ling. However, this matter belonged to the Little Heaven Realm; therefore, no one interfered with it.

Everyone retracted their gazes and turned to Lu Piao, who was about to take his test. Hua Ling looked down at Lu Piao as the corner of his mouth curled in disdain. Based on how much Lu Piao was cowering, his talent

definitely won't be much.

Everyone's attention was on Lu Piao, making him feel pressured. He muttered a prayer to himself that we wouldn't be sent back. He slowly placed his hand on the crystal ball.

Just a short while ago, someone had committed suicide. Therefore, everyone now had their attention centered on the results of Lu Piao's test.

Lu Piao injected his power into the crystal ball, making it turn brighter and brighter, glowing with a scarlet light. At the sight of it, Lu Piao immediately closed his eyes. 'I'm doomed, I'm doomed! It's red, it's a Man Spiritual Root! Please don't let it be below a 5-grade Man Spiritual Root!'

Everyone's attention was glued to the crystal ball, watching the light shine brighter and brighter until it became dazzling to the eyes. The light was so piercing that they couldn't help shielding their eyes with their hands. The colour inside slowly turned from pink to a deep red, before settling on a deep violet. The thread inside then split into five.

Lu Piao opened his eyes a crack, then immediately shut them again. He felt like crying. 'Five, it's actually five! I'm doomed, I'm definitely doomed! I'm going to be sent back. Why is my life so bitter!'

Enforcer Gu's expression gradually morphed from calm to astonishment. Violet was the distinct colour of the Heaven Spiritual Root! Furthermore, it was the first time he'd ever seen such a deep violet colour, not to mention the fact that it had actually split into five. It was a 5-grade Heaven Spiritual Root! Enforcer Gu had tested so many people before, and even then, the best he'd seen were one 3-grade Heaven Spiritual Root, one 1-grade Heaven Spiritual Root, and one 2-grade Heaven Spiritual Root. Those individuals were already considered geniuses, but compared to this Lu Piao, they simply couldn't compete.

Hua Ling's expression turned from its former disdain into dumbfoundedness.

That's impossible! This kid had actually reached the 5-grade Heaven Spiritual Root!

Never had he imagined that this mediocre-looking kid would actually have 5-grade Heaven Spiritual Root! Compared to those with Heaven Spiritual Roots, people with Earth Spiritual Roots were a bunch of mediocres! Out of humiliation, Hua Ling flew into a rage as he wondered if these people from the Tiny World were cheating!

The Draconic Ruins Realm had countless numbers of cities and smaller realms. Even then, the number of Heaven Spiritual Roots produced was exceedingly small. Now, the Tiny World had produced another Heaven Spiritual Root, not to mention that this time it was a 5-grade!

After a long period of time, Lu Piao couldn't help opening his eyes. "Is the test over?"

He was still waiting for Enforcer Gu to say the two words to send him back. However, even after such a long period of time, there still weren't any movements from him.

Upon opening his eyes, Lu Piao noticed that everyone was looking at him. The weird atmosphere made him scratch his head. Just what was going on? Did these people eat a dead fish or something? Why are their eyes so big?

Noticing that Lu Piao was looking at him, Enforcer Gu coughed and embarrassedly announced, "5-grade Heaven Spiritual Root, off to the West District."

5-grade Heaven Spiritual Root? Wait. Who? Lu Piao looked around.

It took him a moment to recover his mental state. Then Lu Piao pointed to himself in shock, "Me? 5-grade Heaven Spiritual Root?"

Lu Piao looked down into the crystal ball, where there were only five glowing purple threads. So it turns out that he's a Heaven Spiritual Root and not a Man Spiritual Root! That had certainly scared the hell out of him.

I never noticed it until now, but it turns out that I'm a genius!

In the past, I was a little too low-profiled.

Lu Piao felt like he was floating as he walked back to Nie Li and said with excitement, “Nie Li, it turns out that I’m a 5-grade Heaven Spiritual Root! You never told me that before! My leg nearly gave out earlier because I was so scared of the test.”

Nie Li rolled his eyes and said, “I don’t have a Heaven Spiritual Crystal with me. How would I know that you’re a 5-grade Heaven Spiritual Root?”

Lu Piao scratched his head. “Oh, so that’s why! Hehe.”

At last, he didn’t have to worry about being sent back.

Hua Ling tightly clenched his fists as he indignantly eyed Lu Piao. Hua Ling had always been a narrow-minded person and was unable to tolerate even a little dirt thrown on him. So of course he felt unhappy when he saw that Lu Piao had tested as a 5-grade Heaven Spiritual Root and was acting so proud of himself.

Hua Ling glanced at Enforcer Gu and said, “Enforcer Gu, let’s continue the test.”

Enforcer Gu bitterly smiled. Finding a Heaven Spiritual root in the bunch of geniuses from the Little Heaven Realm was going to be rather difficult. After all, there were simply too few Heaven Spiritual Roots.

The tests resumed.

The geniuses of the Little Heaven Realm finished their tests. The majority of them were Earth Spiritual Roots with only one being a 1-grade Heaven Spiritual Root. Although there was another Heaven Spiritual Root, it was still incomparable to Lu Piao.

Hua Ling felt indignation in his heart. Although he had more people on his side, none of them were worth showing off. No matter how many mediocres he had, they were still incomparable to a genius. That was reality. The life of a thousand Heavenly Fate Realm experts couldn’t weigh against a single Heavenly Star Realm one.

“Your turn. Please come up and take your test.” Enforcer Gu looked at Nie Li and spoke in a gentle tone. Lu Piao and Nie Li were obviously friends and Lu Piao had a 5-grade Heaven Spiritual Root. As long as he

wasn't like Xiao Yu, who remained stuck in the Earth Fate Realm, he would definitely achieve unimaginable heights in the future. Therefore, Enforcer Gu didn't dare provoke someone with such a great future.

Nie Li walked up to the crystal ball. He was already aware that he was a 7-grade Earth Spiritual Root, so there was basically no need to take the test. However, he still wanted to take it in order to qualify for the West District.

Nie Li placed his right hand on the crystal ball and injected some of his power into it.

The crystal ball glowed with a red colour that gradually turned deeper and deeper, into deep violet. At the same time, it split into two, three, four...

There were no signs of stopping until it finally reached eight. Nie Li could tell that if he continued, the colour of the threads would darken from purple to black; therefore, he immediately retracted his hand.

The testing grounds were dead silent.

Everyone dumbfoundedly stared at the crystal ball.

Just a short while ago, they'd had a 5-grade Heaven Spiritual Root. Now, another one appeared with 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root. What a shock!

Within the entire Skysoul Institute, aside from the unknown Central District, there probably weren't more than five 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Roots! In the end, experts of the 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root had all entered into the Central District.

Enforcer Gu felt a cold sweat run all over his body. He never imagined that there would be an 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root expert in the test. A 5-grade Heaven Spiritual Root and an 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root. What a mysterious place the Tiny World must be. For other realms, people from the outside would could enter and leave as they wished. The only exception was the Tiny World, a sealed place where outsiders were unable to enter.

Hua Ling's eyes were fixed on the crystal ball. He really wanted to know

if the thing was rigged! To think that another Heaven Spiritual Root has appeared on the Tiny World's side, and this time, it's actually a shocking 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root!

This kind of genius was absolutely terrifying!

The fact that Xiao Yu had stayed in the Earth Fate Realm, unable to step into the Heavenly Fate Realm, already made Hua Ling uneasy. Now, there was an 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root on top of that. If Nie Li's cultivation proceeded unlike Xiao Yu's, then his speed must be unimaginable.

The others were also utterly shocked, but Nie Li had his brows locked tightly. Just what was going on? In his previous, he had clearly tested as a 7-grade Earth Spiritual Root, but in this life, he was actually an 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root. Could it be that in this life, his talent had changed?

Could the vine in his soul realm be the reason?

# Chapter 267: Spiritual Stone

Moving from a 7-grade Earth Spiritual Root to an 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root was indeed a huge leap.

Although Nie Li was rather surprised, he wasn't overwhelmed by joy. Regardless of what the test results were, Nie Li still had absolute confidence in himself. He believed that his strength would achieve heights that were simply unimaginable by ordinary people.

Enforcer Gu's voice trembled. "8-grade... Heaven Spiritual Realm, to the West District." He'd tested so many students before, but Nie Li was the only 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root who he'd ever met.

The surrounding students were in an uproar. An 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root! Their expressions carried shock and fear when they looked at Nie Li.

This kind of talent was something others could only admire from afar!

Xiao Yu casually glanced at Hua Ling and said, "Your people from the Little Heaven Realm don't seem to be very useful."

Hua Ling snorted and refuted, "I don't know what you guys are doing to get so many Heaven Spiritual Roots. But either way, you better hope that they don't turn out like you, as useful in embroidery!"

Hua Ling and his entourage turned and left. His face was dark, without the slightest hint of light. There wasn't any meaning in staying in this place any longer.

Xiao Yu watched Hua Ling and his crew leave, then pulled his attention to Nie Li and the other two. "Hua Ling's a really narrow-minded person. In the future, you guys should be careful. Don't let him plot against you. Inside the Skysoul Institution, no one can do anything to you. But once you're outside, then it's an entirely different matter."

"Understood," said Nie Li, nodding his head. He hadn't placed Hua Ling with very much regard. But it'd still be better to have his guard up around such a vile person.

Xiao Yu looked at Nie Li and the other two and said, "Let's go!"

Together, the four entered the Skysoul Institute.

Enforcer Gu stared at their backs as Xiao Yu and the other three left the area. The corner of his mouth couldn't help curling into a bitter smile. Nie Li and Lu Piao, one with an 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root and the other with a 5-grade Heaven Spiritual Root. He must have been possessed when he decided to help Hua Ling earlier. It'd definitely be more troublesome if he accidentally provoked these two future talents. He had to think of something to mend his relationship with Nie Li and Lu Piao.

Enforcer Gu was a slick and sly person, always cautious in everything he did. Even if his cultivation wasn't very high, he could still stand up straight without falling.

Xiao Yu looked at Guan Yi and said, "Guan Yi, the South District is right in front. We're only together up till here. Go and report to the two teachers up front and they'll make arrangements for you. From now on, you'll be cultivating in the South District."

Guan Yi went silent for a brief moment, then made a slight bow to Xiao Yu, Nie Li, and Lu Piao before leaving. He was aware that his talent was very lacking compared to those three who stood before him. The three of them had already been very kind to him so far. It'd be shameless of him to continue imposing on them. After all, he still had his own dignity.

After watching Guan Yi enter the South District, Xiao Yu retracted his gaze and said, "Let's head for the West District now. There're two residential areas in the West District. The first area is arranged by Skysoul Institution, so you can stay there anytime you want. The other area is private property that requires you to pay a fee. I've already rented an entire courtyard, so you guys can stay at my place for the time being."

Lu Piao was excited. "Private property? That sounds great!"

At Xiao Yu's words, Nie Li didn't show any reactions; instead he shifted his gaze elsewhere.

Following Nie Li's line of sight, Lu Piao stared into the distance. "Is that

it over there?”

Xiao Yu gave a glance at the plaza they were staring at. Within the plaza was a large group of students from the institution, who were discussing something. Many also seemed to be holding objects in their hands.

“Oh, that’s the market for Skysoul students. The Skysoul Institution’s Cultivation Hall often distributes all kinds of assignments. Those who complete them earn spiritual stones, which are absolutely essential cultivating materials!” Xiao Yu continued, “In addition to that, students also transact various demon spirits and artifacts.”

“In the Draconic Ruins Realm, a Demon Spirit’s growth rate is classified into Poor, Ordinary, Good, Excellent, Extraordinary, and God Levels. Demons with an Excellent Level growth rate are rarely seen; Extraordinaries are even rarer. As for God Level, those are basically nonexistent.”

At Xiao Yu’s words, Lu Piao’s eyes widened. The demon spirits that he and Nie Li had integrated with were God Level demon spirits. He never imagined that a God Level demon spirit would be so precious that it was even considered rare in the Draconic Ruins Realm.

As if he was aware of Lu Piao’s doubt, Nie Li shook his head and said, “Aside from growth rate, the bloodline of a demon spirit is also extremely important. Let’s take Du Ze for example. Both of his had God Level growth rates, but the Abyss Tiger’s rate is absolutely incomparable to Celestial Qilin’s.”

“Then how are demon spirit’s bloodlines classified?”

Nie Li explained, “There are three kinds of demon spirit bloodlines. The first one is the Ordinary demon beast’s bloodline. The second is the Ancient bloodline, which is rarely seen, like the Celestial Qilin demon beast. The third one is the Primordial bloodline, which is basically impossible to encounter.”

Lu Piao nodded. “No wonder Du Ze gave up on the Abyss Tiger when he integrated with the Celestial Qilin. Although the Abyss Tiger had a God Level growth rate, it was still just a demon beast with an Ordinary

bloodline. Compared to one with an Ancient bloodline, the difference is too huge.”

“Under normal circumstances, it’s basically impossible for us to find any demon spirits with Ancient bloodlines. Therefore, the demon spirits that the students usually trade with are just Ordinary bloodline demon spirits,” said Xiao Yu.

Now, Lu Piao understood that it was to their great fortune that Nie Li had given them demon spirits with God Level growth rates. It was difficult for normal students to find a demon spirit with even an Extraordinary growth rate.

“What about those artifacts?” asked Lu Piao.

“Artifacts are somewhat similar to weapons and armour from our Tiny World. It’s just that artifacts harbour Heavenly Energy; therefore, they’re much stronger compared to ordinary weapons and armours. Artifacts are classified from Grade 1 to Grade 9. Above that are Transcendence Artifacts and Overgod Artifacts. It’s already rare enough for an ordinary student to obtain a Grade 3 Artifact. Usually, only Grade 1 Artifacts are traded,” explained Xiao Yu.

“Oh, so that’s the case.” As expectation rose in Lu Piao’s heart, he wondered just how strong the artifacts with Heavenly Energy would be.

“Let’s go and take a look.” Nie Li took the initiative and moved ahead.

Xiao Yu had only hesitated for a moment before following up. Lu Piao also quickened his pace.

There were several thousands of students bartering in the market.

“Does anyone have an Excellent growth rate demon spirit? I’m willing to exchange it for two spiritual stones!”

“Grade 2 Artifact for nine spiritual stones! Who’s willing?”

All kinds of voices rose from here and there.

“If spiritual stones are so precious, I wonder what their uses are towards cultivation?” Lu Piao asked curiously.

“Spiritual stones give huge assists towards cultivation. The higher one’s cultivation becomes, the greater their need would be for spiritual stones.” Xiao Yu continued in a serious tone, “Heavenly Energy is extremely thin in the Draconic Ruins Realm, and is unable to support our cultivation. However, these spiritual stones contain pure Heavenly Energy that greatly supports cultivation,” explained Xiao Yu.

Lu Piao nodded once he gained a rough idea of spiritual stones.

“How much can these elixirs that I’ve brought with me be sold for?” Lu Piao took out a bottle of elixir and enquired.

Xiao Yu smiled as he shook his head, “These elixirs are basically useless in this place.”

“Ah?” Lu Piao said sadly, “If I’d known that, I would’ve brought more demon spirits with me.”

Xiao Yu shook his head and said, “It’s also useless if you bring ordinary demon spirits. In the Draconic Ruins Realm, although demon spirits with Ancient bloodlines are hardly seen, most of the students here are fond of demon spirits with dragon bloodlines. They wouldn’t want an ordinary demon spirit, unless it had a God Level growth rate. But how could one find a God Level growth rate demon spirit so easily?”

“Oh...” Lu Piao was rather dejected at this point. His dream of striking it rich had been utterly shattered.

Demon spirits were already in short supply in Glory City. Therefore, Nie Li didn’t bring any along with him in the Draconic Ruins Realm. The vast majority of the things in his interspatial ring were worthless. That is, aside from several items like the Thunder God’s Meteorite Sword and Green Poison Pearl, among a few others.

It was absolutely impossible for him to trade those things; therefore, it’d be rather difficult for him to gather spiritual stones for cultivation.

However, he had one valuable treasure with him: the Nightmare Demon Pot. Within the Draconic Ruins Realm, demon spirits were extremely important. Therefore, the Nightmare Demon Pot that could refine demon

spirits naturally had great uses. However, for the time being, Nie Li still didn't want to reveal the Nightmare Demon Pot.

Xiao Yu lightly smiled. "Aside from exchanging stuff for spiritual stones, Skysoul students also receive five spiritual stones every month."

Lu Piao had a bitter expression plastered on his face. "Just five?"

Xiao Yu smiled and said, "That's already a lot."

Lu Piao was indeed greedy and is insatiable. Ordinary Earth Spiritual Roots could only collect one spiritual stone, while Man Spiritual Roots, were left entirely on their own.

Nie Li briefly strolled through the area. The artifacts, demon spirits, and various other items that these students were bartering were all ordinary things. Although a few items like the seed of the Scarlet Flower and a mysterious purple metal, among a few others, attracted his attention, his pocket was currently empty. He wasn't in possession of even one spiritual stone, so he couldn't buy anything.

Nie Li pondered for a while, then spoke. "When can we start receiving assignments from the Cultivation Hall?"

In order to cultivate in the Draconic Ruins Realm, spiritual stones were extremely important. The higher one's cultivation became, the larger the need would become. Furthermore, spiritual stones could only be produced at a Deity's Lake. One Deity's Lake could only produce a few tens of thousands of spiritual stones a year. The number of Deity's Lakes was extremely limited inside the Draconic Ruins Realm. Furthermore, the number was reducing as the years passed; therefore, the supply of spiritual stones was perpetually unable to meet the demand.

For a sect as large as the Divine Feathers Sect, although they were in control of a large number of Deity's Lakes, it's was still impossible for them to support the entire sect's consumer needs.

Every year, the large sects would fight an intense battle over the Deity's Lakes.

Following Xiao Yu's lead, the three of them strolled through the crowd

and gradually entered another area of the West District. Tall towers over dozens of meters in height loomed over them. A diverse selection of flora grew beneath these towers, bordering the small paths that criss-crossed through the shaded forest. Many students moved back and forth along the paths.

At the arrival of Xiao Yu and the other two, everyone turned in astonishment as they gossiped in low voices.

“Did you know? They say two people from the Tiny World came. One tested as an 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root and the other has a 5-grade Heaven Spiritual Root! There’s going to be two more Heaven Spiritual Roots in our West District!”

“Give it up. Although Xiao Yu has a 7-grade Heaven Spiritual Root, he still hasn’t broken through into the Heavenly Fate Realm. The situation of the two newcomers from the Tiny World is still unknown.”

The students walked past them quickly.

# Chapter 268: Ying'er

Xiao Yu wasn't at all concerned with what the students were gossiping about as he continued to lead Nie Li and Lu Piao along the small path to an area that was densely packed with structures. There were many courtyards in this area, and Xiao Yu entered one of the more secluded ones.

"Those who live around here are the geniuses of the West District; therefore, it's best if you don't provoke them. Those who're able to live here all have backgrounds," Xiao Yu warned as he didn't feel assured. "You guys should remain here while you cultivate."

Nie Li raised his head to observe his surroundings and saw that there were two buildings in Xiao Yu's courtyard. Nie Li and Lu Piao would live in one of them, occupying a room right next to Xiao Yu's.

Xiao Yu looked at Nie Li and said, "Without my guide, don't wander unnecessarily. You're not allowed to enter my room either."

By comparison, Xiao Yu was far more worried about Nie Li.

"Fine." Nie Li shrugged but didn't put much importance in Xiao Yu's words.

Nie Li and Lu Piao walked around the courtyard. The environment of the courtyard was fairly decent, filled with chirping birds and fragrant flowers. There was also a small artificial mountain with a river flowing down. The two of them were quite satisfied with Xiao Yu's place. He'd probably spent a lot of money on this.

"I'll gift you guys this two spiritual stones. You can go ahead and start cultivating," said Xiao Yu as he passed two stones to Nie Li and Lu Piao. He then continued, "I'll be making a trip outside to help you guys register."

After bidding farewell to Nie Li and Lu Piao, Xiao Yu walked out.

Nie Li took a spiritual stone and sat with his legs crossed. Just as he was about to start cultivating with the spiritual stone, Yu Yan flew out of Nie Li's sleeve with a woosh.

“I nearly died from the stuffiness,” Yu Yan said gloomily. Ever since they came to the Draconic Ruins Realm, she’d been hiding in Nie Li’s sleeve. Although she was aware that she couldn’t keep herself concealed forever, she still didn’t attract too much attention as many students in the Skysoul Institution also brought pets with them. Therefore, the people from the Draconic Ruins Realm also treated her as a pet.

As for Jindan, before coming into the Draconic Ruins Realm, Nie Li had placed him in a pouch. Inside, the little guy seemed to have entered a hibernating state and shrank smaller and smaller until he was only the size of a fist. Therefore, he didn’t attracting any attention when they brought him in.

As for the little guy, Nie Li still hasn’t thought of a better method to deal with him. But since this little guy was sleeping, Nie Li was naturally spared from these worries for the time being.

“There really are a lot of experts in the Draconic Ruins Realm,” Yu Yan sighed. Along the way, she’d sensed several powerful auras that had utterly astonished her. Almost everyone in the Draconic Ruins Realm was an expert of some kind!

“That’s for sure. The Tiny World is only a small realm compared to the Draconic Ruins Realm.” Nie Li smiled. Throughout her entire life, Yu Yan had stayed in the Tiny World; so naturally, she wouldn’t know much about the Draconic Ruins Realm.

Yu Yan felt an intense pressure. Originally, in the Tiny World, even without her strength as a Spiritual God, she was at least still at the pinnacle of Legend rank. Therefore, she had the power to deal with all of the ordinary opponents. But ever since she came to the Draconic Ruins Realm, she realised that she was nothing.

Although Nie Li wished to give Yu Yan a cultivation technique, there was nothing he could do, since she wasn’t an ordinary life form. He could only allow Yu Yan to gain insights on her own. However, Nie Li sensed that her Flames of Life were extremely powerful and that there might be some kind of secret hidden in her body. Therefore, her cultivation would naturally be

different.

“Nie Li, I want to use this time to cultivate. The ambient aura of Draconic Ruins Realm is completely different from the Tiny World’s, to the point that I don’t even know how to absorb it.”

Yu Yan floated in the air as she quietly cultivated. She closed her eyes as flames began to revolve around her. It seemed as though she was submerged in some kind of trance-like state.

Nie Li took out his spiritual stone. He had to use his time efficiently and cultivate, as he aimed to break through to the Heavenly Fate Realm as fast as possible.

Nie Li stirred up his soul realm and slowly absorbed the spiritual stone’s energy and began to refine it inside his body. A majestic energy coursed through his body. Previously, he’d been stuck in the Tiny World; but now, he could finally absorb Heavenly Energy.

As Nie Li practised the [Heavenly God] cultivation technique, he sensed traces of Heavenly Energy slowly flowing through his meridians and nurturing his flesh. All the pores in his body screamed in ecstasy.

Just as the powers of the stone started to take effect, Nie Li realised that he’d already drained the stone dry of Heavenly Energy.

Sensing how empty the spiritual stone had become, Nie Li bitterly smiled. Since he’d cultivated the [Heavenly God] cultivation technique, the capacity of his soul realm has become shockingly vast. One spiritual stone was entirely insufficient for him. It felt like he’d been eating a meal, but before he could have his fill, his meal was suddenly cut short.

‘I have to find a way to acquire more spiritual stones,’ Nie Li thought inwardly. As long as he had enough spiritual stones, his talent as an 8-grade Heavenly Spiritual Root, and his comprehension towards cultivating, he could make a rapid breakthrough into the Heavenly Fate Realm if there are sufficient spiritual stones supplied to him.

After coming to the Draconic Ruins Realm, he absolutely has to shake the Demon Lord off his tail in terms of cultivation!

As Nie Li and Lu Piao were cultivating, a knock sounded on the door.

The voice was sweet and clear. "Big brother Xiao Yu, are you around?"

The voice was so soft that it made the bones in his body go weak.

Upon hearing the voice outside, Lu Piao opened his eyes as a trace of an evil smile appeared on the corner of his mouth. He turned to Nie Li and said, "Nie Li, could this be Xiao Yu's little lover?"

"Xiao Yu isn't here." Nie Li yelled towards the outside as he bitterly smiled in his heart. Lu Piao was too gossipy.

"Hm?" The voice outside was slightly surprised as the door was pushed open.

A pretty girl was seen at the entrance of the door, roughly sixteen or seventeen years old. She wore a yellow silk dress and had pearly white skin. Her eyes were as clear as springwater as they shifted between the two faces before her. This girl appeared as beautiful as a pearl, emitting a jade-like glow. Her brows gave off a witty impression.

The girl curiously looked at Nie Li and Lu Piao. "Big brother Xiao Yu isn't around? Who are you?"

Nie Li looked at the girl and said, "We're friends of Xiao Yu. He stepped out just now. I wonder why you're looking for him?"

Lu Piao looked dazed as he gazed at the girl. He couldn't help sighing with sorrow in his heart. This little lover of Xiao Yu was indeed beautiful. Among the girls who he'd seen before, she was only slightly below Ye Ziyun and Xiao Ning'er.

"Oh, nothing much. I heard that he'd returned, so I came to greet him. I never imagined I'd meet the two of you. Are you new students for this year?" the girl asked as she blinked.

"Yeah." Lu Piao immediately nodded his head.

"Oh, my name is Huang Ying, I'm big brother Xiao Yu's...friend." A scarlet red trace flashed over Huang Ying's face.

At the sight of this, Nie Li immediately understood what was going on.

This girl was probably fond of Xiao Yu.

“Do you want to wait until he returns, or...” Nie Li enquired.

Huang Ying pondered for a brief moment and said, “I’ll wait here for a while then.”

She only waited for a moment before a youth wearing a long white robe walked in. Upon seeing Huang Ying, his face went solemn as he said, “Ying’er, so you’re here! After hearing of Xiao Yu’s return, I guessed that you’d be here!”

“Yan Hao, why do you care?” Huang Ying pouted her lips in displeasure.

“Huang Ying, what’s so good about Xiao Yu that you’re always thinking about him?” Yan Hao said with indignation. In terms of family endowments, he was several folds better than Xiao Yu. In terms of looks... fine, he admits that his looks were slightly inferior to Xiao Yu’s, but he wasn’t terribly far away either.

“I’m happy. I like to do it. Why do you care?” Huang Ying snorted as she appeared to dislike Yan Hao.

Yan Hao’s gaze swept past Nie Li and Lu Piao as he coldly said, “The two of you must be those geniuses from the Tiny World? An 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root and a 5-grade Heaven Spiritual Root?”

Nie Li casually glanced at Yan Hao, but he didn’t answer his question. Lu Piao was also too lazy to bother with a reply.

“I’m asking you!” Yan Hao said in a cold tone as he knitted his brows.

Nie Li coldly swept a glance at Yan Hao as he said, “There doesn’t seem to be a need for us to answer you,”

Yan Hao had been overbearing from the moment he entered the room, which made Nie Li rather unhappy.

“Brat, do you know who you’re talking to? Don’t think you can be arrogant in the Skysoul Institute just because you have a Heaven Spiritual Root. You’d better first ask around and find out who the big shots are around here! I’ve seen plenty of Heaven Spiritual Root geniuses before, but

before you break through to the Heavenly Fate Realm, you're nothing!" Yan Hao's majestic aura surged and used his aura to suppress Nie Li and Lu Piao.

This Yan Hao was already a Heavenly Fate Realm expert and caused Nie Li and Lu Piao to instantly feel a suffocating pressure.

However, Yan Hao had obviously restrained his aura. Even he didn't dare act too rashly inside Skysoul Institute. If he killed someone inside the Skysoul Institute, even his family wouldn't be able to protect him.

Nie Li coldly looked at Yan Hao. In his previous life, he'd encountered lots of experts with backgrounds much stronger than Yan Hao's. However, he'd never backed off before. Even if the opponent was already at the Heavenly Fate Realm, Nie Li's heart still carried a vague trace of bloodlust and intent. It'd been awhile since he crossed swords with a Heavenly Fate Realm expert!

Huang Ying suddenly stood between Nie Li and Yan Hao as she coldly stared at Yan Hao.

"Yan Hao, what're you doing? You're not allowed to treat big brother Xiao Yu's friends like this!"

Yan Hao's aura slightly slugged as he retracted it and gave a meaningful glare at Nie Li, who stood behind her. Nie Li was obviously still an Earth Fate Realm, so why did he sense battle intent coming from him? Could it be that even though Nie Li was being suppressed by the aura of a Heavenly Fate Realm, he still felt no fear?

That blazing battle intent had only flashed through Nie Li's eyes for a brief moment before he reverted to his calm self. If there was a choice, it'd still be better for him not to cause any scenes with Yan Hao.

Yan Hao coldly snorted, "The two of you can hide behind a woman. I'll let both of you off today, but I advise you to leave Xiao Yu. There's definitely nothing for you to gain by following a piece trash like him. But if you guys choose follow me instead, I can still consider taking you in."

# Chapter 269: Acupuncture

Lu Piao's voice sounded next to Nie Li's ear. "Nie Li, why does this Xiao Yu kid keep so much trouble around? With so many enemies, it'll be never-ending! Why don't we join this kid instead?"

"Did you think it through carefully? Our families are still in the hands of the Nether Master," said Nie Li as he rolled his eyes at Lu Piao.

"Alright, then. Honestly, I was just joking." Lu Piao said dejectedly. Xiao Yu seems to be perpetually plagued with things to worry about. Picking up girls was fine, but why pick up a girl who was already taken? Not to mention that this love rival seems to have quite a background.

Nie Li looked at Yan Hao as he shrugged, "No matter how you try to convince us, you still can't touch us inside the Skysoul Institute. Save your pitiful tricks!"

"Unable to touch you?" Yan Hao coldly laughed and continued, "Then you're underestimating me too much!"

Huang Ying angrily glared at Yan Hao as she reprimanded, "Yan Hao, if you dare do anything to big brother Xiao Yu's friends, I definitely won't forgive you!"

Yan Hao coldly eyed Huang Ying. 'Damn bitch, if your father wasn't an elder, who'd be bothered about you? For looks like yours, I can have as many as I want!' However, Yan Hao didn't dare say such words aloud.

"Is that Xiao Yu kid such a coward that he's hiding and sends the two of you to stand guard here?" Yan Hao coldly chuckled.

"Who says that I'm hiding?" Just as Yan Hao's words left his mouth, Xiao Yu's voice came from outside the room. His figure appeared and he looked very elegant in his white clothes. His cheeks were fair and a heroic aura emitted from the center of his brows. His gaze was sharp and piercing. In an instant, he made Yan Hao seem inferior.

Although Yan Hao could be considered handsome, compared to Xiao Yu, he was far more inferior. Indeed, it was impossible to compare the two.

Just trying to size up could make him die from excess anger.

At the sight of Xiao Yu, Huang Ying's face turned slightly red as she looked at him with a star-filled gaze and shyly said, "Big brother Xiao Yu, you're back!"

"Yeah," Xiao Yu calmly replied to Huang Ying. He didn't seem to care that much about Huang Ying as he walked towards Nie Li and Lu Piao.

"After so many years, you still haven't made any progress and still stuck in the Earth Fate Realm. How laughable," Yan Hao sneered.

Xiao Yu swept his gaze over Yan Hao and Huang Ying. "This is private property. Could you please leave?"

Yan Hao eyed Huang Ying, who stood next to him, as he said, "Ying'er, don't you get it? Even Xiao Yu doesn't welcome you here!"

Huang Ying's eyes were fixed on Xiao Yu's face, unmoving. She appeared to be infatuated with him. She loved the way Xiao Yu was, despite the fact that he was a little cold. It carried a unique charm.

Yan Hao was extremely furious. He couldn't figure out in what way he was incomparable to Xiao Yu, aside from the fact that Xiao Yu's looks were slightly better. Are all women infatuated with pretty boys?

Suddenly, two girls walked in. One wore a white dress and had a graceful figure. The other one had a tall and curvy figure.

"Big brother Xiao Yu, you're back..." When the girl in white looked at Xiao Yu, a faint pink swept across her face.

The girl with the tall figure gave Xiao Yu a flirty and coquettish glance.

The girl in white pursed her lips as she smiled. "Big brother Xiao Yu, I've gotten some herbs. They have strong effects that could greatly enhance one's cultivation!"

At the appearance of the two girls, Huang Ying's face turned black. These girls, why are they everywhere?!

As for Yan Hao, he nearly exploded from all the pent-up anger. This pretty boy Xiao Yu is just too popular. The two girls who'd just come in

and Huang Ying all have backgrounds behind them. Therefore, he could only swallow back his anger.

Xiao Yu appeared to have a headache.

At the sight of this, Nie Li patted Lu Piao's shoulder and laughed, "Lu Piao, let's return to our room. This is none of our business."

Lu Piao gave a glance with full of meaning at the scene and looked at Xiao Yu one more time. He couldn't help sighing in his heart. Xiao Yu really was good looking. However, he never expected him to be so popular with the ladies. Yan Hao, who stood to the side, nearly exploded from all the anger that he had nowhere to vent. Therefore, it'd be better if they didn't intrude on this lively situation.

When he saw that Nie Li and Lu Piao were leaving, Xiao Yu immediately said, "Wait!"

"What is it?" Nie Li asked as he looked at Xiao Yu.

Xiao Yu felt gloomy in his heart as Nie Li and Lu Piao wasn't loyal and wanted to escape from the situation.

"I've already completed your registrations. You guys can go and pay respects to your teachers tomorrow! These are your identity plates!" Xiao Yu passed two silver plates to Nie Li.

"Alright." Nie Li took the plates from Xiao Yu, waved, and said, "Thanks!"

The two of them then turned around and went back to their room.

Xiao Yu was left alone to face the three girls and one furious guy. He was in a pit of despair. He'd just returned home and trouble was already here.

Just as Nie Li returned to his room and was preparing to begin his cultivation, Jindan woke up from its slumber. When it saw the spiritual stone on the table, it flapped its wings nonstop as it tried to jump up. But no matter how hard it tried, it was simply too fat!

Looking at Jindan's yearning expression, Nie Li asked as he pointed to the spiritual stone left over on the table, "You want to eat this?"

Jindan immediately nodded its head with excitement written all over its face.

The Heavenly Energy in the spiritual stone had already been fully absorbed by Nie Li. There wasn't any use for it now, as it should've been no different from an ordinary stone. Nie Li took the leftover spiritual stone and tossed it at Jindan. Jindan caught the stone in its mouth and began to crunch on it with an absolutely horrifying sound.

Although the Heavenly Energy inside the spiritual stone had already been absorbed dry, the stone itself was extremely tough and solid, just like an artifact, extremely hard to cut. To Jindan, however, it was like eating stir-fried beans, as the creature crunched and swallowed it down.

After it finished eating, Jindan looked at Nie Li again.

"I don't have anymore with me!" Nie Li said as he spread his hands out. Jindan, this little guy, actually eats even stones.....

In Draconic Ruins Realm, things like the spiritual stones were extremely important; therefore, he had to find some method of getting more of them. Otherwise, there would never be enough to use. However, for the time being, Nie Li still didn't have a better idea. Although he had some treasures on him, there was no way for him to use them.

The day gradually darkened and the moonlight streamed into Nie Li's room, laying a silvery veil over the scene.

Thud! Thud! Thud!

Heavy knocks came from the door.

Nie Li gave the door a glance. "Come in!"

Xiao Yu walked in wearing a white slender robe. Under the reflection of the moonlight, he looked like a floating deity. Nie Li couldn't help staring at him. No wonder those three girls were crazy over him; Xiao Yu looked so beautiful that even women would be jealous of him!

"What can I do for you?" Nie Li asked as he looked at Xiao Yu.

Xiao Yu sat on a nearby seat as he apologised, "Sorry about that, to have

troubled you guys!”

“It really wasn’t much trouble.” Nie Li smiled.

All of a sudden, Xiao Yu could no longer hold back his question and asked, “Since the Spiritual Root test, I’ve been wanting to ask you a question. Do you know how to get my cultivation to break through?”

“Of course.” Nodded Nie Li.

Xiao Yu’s eyes lit up as he looked at Nie Li, full of hope. “You really know of a way?”

Nie Li looked at Xiao Yu and said, “You’re cultivating the [Myriad Dragonroars] cultivation technique, right?”

“That’s right. You can tell?” Xiao Yu said as his body trembled. This [Myriad Dragonroars] cultivation technique was given to him by his foster father, and was an extremely mysterious cultivation technique. He never imagined that Nie Li would actually know of it.

“The [Myriad Dragonroars] cultivation technique that you’re using isn’t complete. That’s why you’re hitting a barrier when you try to break from the Earth Fate Realm to Heavenly Fate Realm,” said Nie Li.

“Then the Amethyst Bamboo that you were talking about earlier on...”

Nie Li laughed. “Obviously just something to bluff that Hua Ling.”

Xiao Yu also couldn’t help laughing too. Nie Li was simply too wicked, tricking Hua Ling like that. That Hua Ling would probably be feeling unease when he get back.

When Xiao Yu smiled, he appeared to be very reserved. His smooth and round lips had an unspeakable taste to them. Nie Li was stunned as he stared at him. If this kid, Xiao Yu, was a girl, he’d probably charm countless men.

Sensing something, Xiao Yu’s ears turned slightly red as he awkwardly said, “Then, I won’t be able to make a breakthrough at all?”

“A breakthrough isn’t impossible, there’s a method that could help you achieve it. However, I have to conduct an acupuncture on you to link your

Jian Jing and Feng Men acupuncture points. That way, you'll be able to make your breakthrough," said Nie Li. Part of the benefits of this acupuncture method was to help one guide their Soul Force or Heavenly Energy to heal internal injuries.

Xiao Yu appeared to be a little hesitant. "Does it really work?"

"Of course. My acupuncture skills are absolutely accurate. With a few needles, I can guarantee a breakthrough to the Heavenly Fate Realm," Nie Li said with confidence. Although, of course, the fact that Xiao Yu was already on the verge of breaking through was the biggest factor. Nie Li was just giving Xiao Yu a hand.

Xiao Yu struggled for a long while within his heart. Finally he nodded. "Alright, then. Let's try this acupuncture!"

Even until now, despite the fact that he'd already exhausted all other methods, he was still unable to reach the Heavenly Fate Realm. Naturally, he wouldn't pass up such an opportunity.

Xiao Yu slowly slipped off his shirt until it hung from his elbows [1] His shoulders were revealed halfway, like an embarrassed girl. He looked extremely awkward.

[tl: [1] = For those of you who're having a hard time imagining it, traditional Chinese-style clothes are bathrobe-like jackets and tied with a sash. Xiao Yu only slipped the "jacket" off his shoulders, but hasn't taken his arms out of the sleeves.]

"You can just take off your shirt. We're both guys. What's there to be embarrassed about?" Nie Li couldn't help saying after seeing how sissy Xiao Yu was.

"There's no need," Xiao Yu said as his entire face flushed red.

Nie Li shrugged. Since Xiao Yu was so unwilling, then he'll just let it be. Nie Li lowered his head to examine Xiao Yu's shoulders. Both of his shoulders were smooth and round with soft skin. His collarbone was exquisite like a jade sculpture, beautiful to the point that even a woman was incomparable.

Nie Li had a weird expression as he examined Xiao Yu. Xiao Yu's skin was a little too well-maintained, even smoother than a girl's. Nie Li couldn't help wanting to touch him, but when he reminded himself that Xiao Yu was a guy, he immediately banished the thought.

He took a fine needle and placed it in Xiao Yu's Jian Jing [2] acupuncture point.

[tl: [2] = Literally "shoulder well". The shallow dip between the shoulder and the neck. ]

Xiao Yu groaned. He didn't know why, but when Nie Li's needle pierced his skin, an intolerable itch ran through his entire body and a soury- numb feeling coursed through his meridians. However, his heart trembled as he felt the aura in his Soul Realm becoming agitated, totally different from when he was cultivating.

It's effective!

Xiao Yu's heart was extremely excited.

After Nie Li placed the first needle, he followed up with a second one at Xiao Yu's Feng Men [3] acupuncture point.

[tl: [3] = Literally "wind door". These are two matching points on either side of the spine, between the shoulder blades. ]

The jade white skin near his Feng Men acupuncture point instantly turned a pale red.

"How're you feeling?" Nie Li asked as he looked at Xiao Yu.

"I can feel it," Xiao Yu said excitedly. The Heavenly Energy in his Soul Realm surged rapidly as it coursed in his meridians and through his entire body.

# Chapter 270: Venerable Redsoul

He never thought that it'd take effect so quickly.

Nie Li was also a little shocked in his heart, but he soon figured out why. Xiao Yu hadn't had a breakthrough for so many years. Originally, with Xiao Yu's 7-grade Heavenly Spiritual Root talent, he should've reached Heavenly Fate Realm a long time ago, but due to certain reasons, he was unable to do so. However, the effects from cultivating so long were still present. Stimulated by Nie Li's acupuncture, the Heavenly Energy burst forth in an instant.

A red light was emitting from Xiao Yu, so that even his skin glowed with a faint rose-scarlet colour. Berserk energy surged up a storm around his body.

"What powerful energy!" Nie Li was jolted by the force and had to take several steps back. As he watched Xiao Yu being enveloped in the storm-like aura, he muttered, "The [Myriad Dragon roars] cultivation technique is indeed powerful. Just where did the Nether Master obtain it from?"

Once Xiao Yu breaks through to Heavenly Fate Realm and forms his Fate Soul, his cultivation would be absolutely shocking.

As Nie Li was thinking those thoughts, Xiao Yu became submerged in his cultivation and the first Fate Soul began to form in his Soul Realm.

Right after this, the second and the third formed. His cultivation only stopped after the third.

When the third Fate Soul formed, Xiao Yu's heart was utterly astonished. He never imagined that he'd be able to make his breakthrough so fast.

The surge of berserk energy quickly settled down, and became as calm as water. Xiao Yu slowly opened his eyes as an extraordinary splendor flashed through them.

The [Myriad Dragon roars] cultivation technique could conceal one's cultivation status, making it undetectable by others. There were no longer any ripples of aura emanating from Xiao Yu. He lowered his head and

could see that his clothes were messy and had fallen to his chest, fully exposing both shoulders. In that instant, he couldn't help feeling awkward.

Xiao Yu put his clothes back on, turned to Nie Li, and said in a sincere tone, "Nie Li, thank you. If it wasn't for you, I wouldn't have been able to make this breakthrough to the Heavenly Fate Realm! If you have any requests for me, just say the word and I'll do my best to help you!"

Xiao Yu was serious with his words. Because of the fact that he hadn't been able to reach the Heavenly Fate Realm for so long, even his teacher had lost patience with him. If it hadn't been for Nie Li, who knows how much longer he would've remained in the Earth Fate Realm for?

Nie Li held out his right hand out and said, "I've healed you, so pay up. I helped you break through to the Heavenly Fate Realm, so you should at least cough up some spiritual stones, right? Otherwise, tonight would've been a waste of time and effort for me!"

At Nie Li's words, Xiao Yu raised his head to look at Nie Li and said, "I have roughly ten spiritual stones left. You can have them all."

"Psh, you're at least the son of an Enforcer! How could you be so poor? Forget it, I'd feel bad if you gave me all of your spiritual stones. I'll take five and we'll call it even. You brought me to the Divine Feathers Sect and I treated you, so we owe each other nothing." Nie Li waved his hand, took five spiritual stones, and continued with a light smile, "Two silver needles earned me five spiritual stones! This night wasn't wasted!"

Xiao Yu looked at Nie Li with a complicated expression. Those two needles were definitely not as simple as Nie Li were making them out to be. After all, they'd helped him enter the Heavenly Fate Realm. Xiao Yu had no idea how he could repay him. Was Nie Li just saying those things because he didn't want Xiao Yu to owe him any favours?

Nie Li just wanted them to be even. Xiao Yu lightly sighed in his heart.

"Hey, Xiao Yu, why're you looking at me like that? It's giving me goosebumps." Nie Li waved his hand, as an uncomfortable expression crossed his face. He continued, "I have no interest in men!"

At Nie Li's words, Xiao Yu's face turned black. Why did he have the sudden urge to bash Nie Li's face in, even though it was Nie Li who'd helped him just now?

Xiao Yu stood up in annoyance and walked outside. As he headed towards the door, he paused his steps for a moment and couldn't help saying in a soft voice, "Anyways, thank you." Ending his words, he walked out and closed the door.

Looking at the door that Xiao Yu had just closed, Nie Li laid down on the bed and stared at the ceiling. "To think he still insisted on thanking me. Why does it feel like I lost by taking five spiritual stones? I should've taken all ten of them!"

The night passed quietly.

Next morning was clear and crisp. The sounds of chirping birds came from the forest like beautiful music.

Morning fog covered the area as fresh air permeated the forest.

Many students had already risen this early in the morning and began training. Nie Li and Lu Piao walked along the zigzagged path. Today they were to report to their teachers and they couldn't help wondering what kind of people their teachers would be?

Nie Li and Lu Piao followed the map that Xiao Yu had given them and eventually reached a courtyard. At the entrance of this courtyard stood a grey robed expert who barred Nie Li and Lu Piao from entering as he demanded, "Your name plates!"

Nie Li and Lu Piao took out their name plates at the grey robed expert's request.

"Enter, then!" The expert said as he nodded his head.

Nie Li and Lu Piao entered. Lu Piao looked around with a very curious attitude as he said, "This place is really different from our Holy Orchid Institute!"

"Yeah." Nie Li nodded in agreement. Upon walking inside, they saw

dozens of students who'd gathered in the courtyard, one of which looked a little familiar. It was one of Hua Ling's underlings who'd tested as a 1-grade Heaven Spiritual Root. That guy was also staring at Nie Li and Lu Piao with a trace of enmity in his eyes.

It seems that all of the students gathered here have Heaven Spiritual Roots!

When Nie Li and Lu Piao walked in, many people turned their attention towards them.

One youth who appeared roughly sixteen or seventeen years old walked over and asked, "Where are the two of you from?"

Nie Li turned his head and glanced at the youth who appeared very conceited in his behaviour.

"The Tiny World." Nie Li calmly replied.

"Oh? So you two are the geniuses from the Tiny World? A 5-grade Heaven Spiritual Root and 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root." The eyes of this youth flashed with a peculiar light as he continued, "I'm Jin Yan, member of the Divine Feathers Sect's Jin Clan! Our family holds geniuses with high regard. If you're ever free, feel free to come and visit our place."

Although Jin Yan's words carried the intention of an invitation, as a member of the Jin Clan, he also wasn't willing to lower his head too much to Nie Li and Lu Piao.

"We can talk about that later," said Nie Li as he and Lu Piao walked away.

Upon hearing Nie Li's words, Jin Yan's expression darkened. To think these two from the Tiny World were actually being so impudent! Jin Yan had a dark expression on his face as he walked away.

"Nie Li, offending him like that doesn't seem to be a great idea, right?" Lu Piao said with a little concern.

"Don't worry about it. Inside the Skysoul Institute, we're safe. Even if someone tries to make trouble for us, they still wouldn't dare be too

excessive. Since we didn't join anyone, we're in the safest place. No faction would easily try to offend a genius standing in the neutral zone. However, if we'd joined a faction, then that'd bring trouble," said Nie Li. Although the Skysoul Institute was only an institution under the Divine Feathers Sect, the confrontations between fractions could be extremely intense.

Otherwise, the Divine Feathers Sect wouldn't have broken apart in the previous life. There's definitely a reason to it.

As they conversed, a white haired elderly man walked in from outside the courtyard, swept his gaze over each student, and said, "Nice to meet you all, I'm your teacher, Venerable Redsoul. From now on, I'll guide your cultivations. Follow me inside and have a seat!"

Following Venerable Redsoul's lead, they entered a wide training room and sat with their legs crossed. Venerable Redsoul sat on the raised platform.

"In our class, we have a total of thirty-six students, all from the new year. Every one of you has extraordinary talent and spiritual roots unattainable for ordinary people. However, I have to make myself clear. In here, you must obey my rules. At the end of the year, the five among you with the highest strengths will have a chance to be sent to the East District. Remember, we're reserving five spots. If you're unable to obtain a place, then I'm very sorry, but you'll have to stay a bit longer in the West District." Venerable Redsoul's gaze swept over everyone as he continued in an imposing tone, "All of you are geniuses and, therefore, none of you here would want to fall behind anyone else. If you're a step behind, then you're behind in every step!"

At Venerable Redsoul's words, everyone looked at each other with trace of enmity flashing through their eyes.

This was a world that prioritised strength. In a year, only five would be sent to the East District while everyone else would have to wait another year. They couldn't afford to wait for a year!

On the road towards strength, if you lagged a step behind someone, then they'd step on your head to climb further up. Experts definitely won't have

a trace of pity for the weak!

Venerable Redsoul's gaze swept over all thirty-six students. Among these thirty-six were people from various cities and the smaller realms. Roughly half of them were from various families within the Divine Feathers Sect, descendents of various clans. There were also some with other considerable backgrounds as well.

However, in this class, Venerable Redsoul still held the absolute authority. Even if he were to punish a few students, the families behind those students wouldn't be able to touch him. As a teacher of the Skysoul Institute, his position was rather high up. His gaze fell on a girl clothed in light blue and was suddenly stunned for a brief moment. He never thought that this girl would also be here.

This girl was extremely beautiful, to the point where she could attract the gaze of others and fix them on herself. However, the expression on her face was very cold and she appeared to carry a faint trace of bloodlust that prevented others from approaching her.

Venerable Redsoul retracted his gaze and slowly said, "All of you are geniuses. Although you've just stepped into the realm of cultivation, all of you possess uncommon talent. The Skysoul Institute forbids internal fights, which I also would not like to see. If you cause too much trouble and injure someone, that'd be equivalent to ruining your prospects. All of you must think clearly about this!" Venerable Redsoul coldly reminded.

On one hand, they intend to pit geniuses against one another. On the other hand, they forbade internal fights. The Skysoul Institute has indeed put a lot of thought into this.

At that moment, although Nie Li was listening from the side, his mind was already working on how to get more spiritual stones. The five spiritual stones that he'd gotten from Xiao Yu yesterday would be finished soon. Since he practised the [Heavenly God] cultivation technique, his soul realm became a bottomless pit.

# Chapter 271: Spiritual Flames

“All of you will meet here once every three days for my lessons. I will lecture you on cultivation and guide you towards breakthroughs. Aside from all that, our Skysoul Institute also has three training grounds, which I’ll explain now,” said Venerable Redsoul.

Venerable Redsoul explained in detail, “for an Earth Fate Realm to reach the Heavenly Fate Realm, one must harmonise with Heavenly Energy by sensing the Heavenly Dao. Everything that exists between heaven and earth is the same as Mother Earth: all formed from concentrations of Heavenly Energy...”

Everyone was listening attentively. Even Lu Piao pricked his ears up to listen.

However, the topics that Venerable Redsoul were explaining were too shallow for Nie Li, who instead pondered over his current situation. The Earth Fate Realm was essentially the same as Legend rank and split into five subdivisions. Right now, Nie Li should be classified as a 3-star. There was still some distance to go before he reached the Heavenly Fate Realm.

Before coming to the Draconic Ruins Realm, the Law Energy inside Nie Li’s body had already begun gradually transforming into Heavenly Energy.

This Heavenly Energy was similar to Law Energy and divided into elements, such as Time-Space, etc. However, Heavenly Energy was the most fundamental of all energy.

At the same time, Nie Li was continuously practising the [Heavenly God] cultivation technique to nourish the mysterious vine in his soul realm.

Venerable Redsoul’s lesson lasted for two hours as he gradually delved deeper into his topics. His explanations fascinated many students.

“Nie Li, can we really have more lives after cultivating to the 2-fate Heavenly Fate Realm or higher?” Lu Piao couldn’t help asking in a soft voice. How could someone possibly die so many times?

Nie Li explained, “Actually, 2-fate and 3-fate doesn’t mean you have two

or three lives. It just means that your soul realm has formed more Fate Souls, which can then be kept somewhere safe [1]. As long as you don't lose all your Fate Souls, you'll be able to revive again. However, the area of effect can't be over a thousand miles from where you've kept your Fate Soul!"

[tl: [1]Like Harry Potter horcruxes, except not evil. ]

"Oh I get it. So what you're saying is that I can hide my Fate Soul somewhere, and if I die, then I'll be able to use that Fate Soul to revive myself?"

"Correct. Every time you're killed, you'll lose a Fate Soul. For example, if you're at 3-fate and you get killed, then you'll turn back into a 2-fate." Nie Li continued, "Once you reach the Heavenly Fate Realm, it's best to plan ahead and place your Fate Souls somewhere safe before you head to a dangerous area. Otherwise, if you get yourself killed, you won't be able to revive anymore."

Lu Piao understood the concept. No wonder the Skysoul Institute had a rule where only those who'd reached the Heavenly Fate Realm could leave on adventures. Before heading out, they were required to place a Fate Soul in the institution's Soul Hall. That way, it'd be impossible for students to be permanently killed, unless Skysoul Institute was breached.

After all, those who're able to enter the Skysoul Institute are all geniuses from various cities and realms. The deaths of any of them would be a great loss.

Wang Yang stood from afar and swept his eyes over Nie Li and Lu Piao, who were conversing. A chill flashed across his eyes. Before coming here, Young Master Hua Ling told him to keep an eye on Nie Li and Lu Piao. Furthermore, he'd been instructed to give both of them trouble whenever a chance arose.

Within the Divine Feathers Sect, the students, who'd come from various locations and families, had formed their own factions and shared glory and defeat together. Hua Ling's father and Xiao Yu's father were still fighting over the position of Chief Enforcer for the Outer Division. As

someone from the Little Heaven Realm, Huang Yang naturally placed Hua Ling's words in his heart.

Within the Divine Feathers Sect, there were at least thousands of experts who were from the Little Heaven Realm. As for the Tiny World, there were only the Nether Master, Xiao Yu and a handful of others.

The fact that Nie Li was an 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root and Lu Piao was a 5-grade Heaven Spiritual Root greatly pressured Wang Yang.

'But regardless, there's no way I'd lose to the two of you!' Wang Yang coldly thought to himself. As someone from the Little Heaven Realm, he had access to far more resources than Nie Li did.

Venerable Redsoul continued his lecture as he pulled the topic to a conclusion and said, "If I explain too much all at once, you guys might not be able to understand, so we'll stop here. Next, we'll practise cultivating for a bit. As Earth Fate Realms, if you can gain something now from cultivating, that'll be extremely useful later in the future, when you're making your breakthrough to Heavenly Fate Realm. However, don't force yourself if you can't gain anything."

His eyes swept over the girl clothed in light-blue, Jin Yan, and a few others as a light smile spread across his face. 'These few should definitely be able to produce results.'

Among the thirty-six Heaven Spiritual Root geniuses, if there were ten who could get results, it'd already be considered pretty good. Furthermore, the faster they could cultivate results, the greater their future achievements would be.

"The first thing that we'll cultivate is the Spiritual Flames!" announced Venerable Redsoul as he slowly reached out his right hand. A brief moment later, a white flame ignited in his palm and he continued, "This is a Spiritual Flame. If you want to create the Spiritual Flames, you must first let your Soul Realm reach the anatta state, then gather your intent onto your right palm..."

The white flame in Venerable Redsoul's hand grew larger and larger, from the size of a small, fiery flower bud to the size of a fist.

“Stronger Spiritual Flames imply a stronger soul. Therefore, when you’re making your breakthrough to the Heavenly Fate Realm, your Fate Soul will also become stronger!” Venerable Redsoul casually smiled and continued, “Okay, now you guys can go ahead and try to comprehend the Spiritual Flames!”

The students standing below the platform all reached out their right hands and gathered their intents on their palms as they attempted the Spiritual Flames.

Although Venerable Redsoul had easily ignited the Spiritual Flames in his right hand, the students didn’t find it so easy. Even after extending their right hands for roughly half a day, they still couldn’t ignite the Spiritual Flames. Everyone had their eyes closed and brows knitted to sense the anatta state.

Suddenly, a Spiritual Flame burst forth on the palm of the girl clothed in light-blue. Although it was just a tiny wisp, she was still the first one who’d managed to ignite the Spiritual Flames. Furthermore, this Spiritual Flame continued to grow larger and larger and soon reached the size of a nail.

At the sight of this, Venerable Redsoul’s brows twitched and a trace of praise flashed across his eyes. ‘Indeed, she is a direct descendant of the Dragonseal Family, with such extraordinary talent. To think that at such a young age, she’s already able to ignite a nail sized Spiritual Flame.’

A brief moment later, Jin Yan also managed to ignite a Spiritual Flame. Although it was only the size of a pea, it was also very pure.

“Not bad.” Venerable Redsoul praised as he nodded.

Thereafter, three more students managed to ignite the Spiritual Flames. One of them also managed to reach the size of a nail, which was very astonishing talent.

Lu Piao constantly agitated his soul realm as he attempted to reach the anatta state that Venerable Redsoul had mentioned. However, he saw flashes of scenes that wouldn’t stop passing through his head; they were scenes of Xiao Xue bathing. Because of those images, he was unable to

reach the anatta state. After a while, he could only give up with a bitter smile, “Now I know why I’m always the slowest in cultivating. It’s because I still have unfulfilled business!”

“You mean unfulfilled lust, right?” Nie Li laughed as he continued, “Those with impure minds won’t be able to ignite the Spiritual Flames!”

Lu Piao coldly snorted. “How are you any better? You’ve got Goddess Ziyun on the left and Goddess Ning’er on the right. I don’t think you’re that much purer.”

The corner of Nie Li’s mouth curled as he reached out his right hand. Spiritual Flames suddenly ignited on his right palm and quickly grew to the size of a nail.

“Fine, you’re formidable,” Lu Piao said dejectedly. Nie Li himself was just a mindfuck.

On the platform, Venerable Redsoul’s eyes flashed with an unconcealable shock as his gaze fixed on Nie Li. Although Nie Li had an 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root, he had investigated Nie Li’s background beforehand. He was from the Tiny World and shouldn’t have any significant background behind him.

Although talent was important in the Dao of cultivation, those with insufficient resources were also useless. Reaching anything on the path to Martial Ancestor, from Heavenly Fate to Heavenly Axis, required a vast amount of cultivating resources.

Therefore, he didn’t pay much attention to Nie Li. After all, Long Yuyin and Jin Yan originated from powerful families and had been given the highest nurturing since they were young. Their bodies had been refined with magical herbs, which was why they could ignite the Spiritual Flames so quickly. Their cultivation speed should’ve also been faster than Nie Li’s.

However, he never imagined that Nie Li would be able to ignite the Spiritual Flames so easily. Furthermore, his Spiritual Flames were already the size of a nail and in no way inferior to Long Yuyin’s and Jin Yan’s.

Furthermore, what caught his attention the most was the fact that

unlike the others who had to close their eyes and meditate bitterly, Nie Li had been conversing with Lu Piao when he casually reached out his hand and easily ignited the Spiritual Flames. Accomplishing it so easily proved that Nie Li's comprehension on states had already reached an extremely shocking level.

He never imagined that there'd be such an outstanding genius among the thirty-six students.

Venerable Redsoul was overwhelmed with emotion and utterly shocked as his attention revolved around Nie Li. Such a genius should definitely be carefully nurtured.

Nie Li had also glanced at Venerable Redsoul. As a new student at the Skysoul Institute, Nie Li was aware that his background was too shallow to be of much use. Therefore, he had to reveal a certain level of talent in order to have them place him with any degree of importance.

Nie Li had already caused a raging wave in Venerable Redsoul's heart, since his displayed talent already far surpassed everyone else's.

Among the thirty-six students, only five managed to ignite nail sized Spiritual Flames, while seven were able to ignite a pea sized flame. The remaining students couldn't ignite a Spiritual Flame, regardless of how hard they tried.

Wang Yang was among the remaining students. He'd already tried numerous methods, but his palm still remained as calm as before, without a single trace of the Spiritual Flames. This made him extremely upset, since he'd seen Nie Li ignite the Spiritual Flames. His lungs nearly burst from all the pent-up frustration.

"Not bad. Those who were able to ignite the Spiritual Flames during this first lesson all have pure mindsets and are genuine geniuses of the Martial Dao. The stronger the Spiritual Flames, the stronger your Fate Soul will be. For those who're still unable to ignite Spiritual Flames, go back and practice more. Today's lesson ends here!" Venerable Redsoul laughed and continued, "We'll continue our lessons in three days."

# Chapter 272: Master Bei

After Venerable Redsoul left, a group of students stood up.

The girl clothed in light-blue walked towards Nie Li and Lu Piao's direction.

Her proud gaze fell on Nie Li as she asked, "You're from the Tiny World?"

Nie Li looked this girl in light-blue over as he nodded, "That's right."

As he studied Long Yuyin, he wondered, 'Where is this girl from? Why does she seem so familiar? Could we have met in my previous life?'

"So you guys are the 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root and the 5-grade Heaven Spiritual Root from the Tiny World?" the girl asked as she studied Nie Li and Lu Piao.

"You're not intending to do what that Jin Yan guy did earlier right? Trying to get us to join you and all?" There's nothing to be fussy on this girl's appearance; however, the subtle way she looked down on them made Lu Piao very unhappy.

That girl clothed in light-blue shot a glance at Lu Piao and said, "Although your talents are rather decent, they're still not enough to get an invitation from my Dragonseal Family. Talents can only affect cultivation to a certain degree. But even if it's a useless person, as long as my Dragonseal Family wants to, we can still nurture them into a genius!"

The sarcasm in her words annoyed Lu Piao even more.

Nie Li's sights landed on the girl before him and an almost unnoticeable chill flashed through his eyes. This girl in front of him was actually someone from the Dragonseal Family!

The Dragonseal Family is an extremely large family with a solid position in the Divine Feathers Sect. They are one of the three biggest families of the Divine Feathers Sect. In his previous life, when Nie Li was in the Draconic Ruins Realm, he was indebted to a certain teacher for taking care of him. However, that teacher was killed by an expert of the Dragonseal

Family; therefore, Nie Li didn't have a very good impression of them.

However in this life, that teacher of his should still be living. Therefore, Nie Li would absolutely not let anything like that happen again.

The girl didn't even spare a second look at Lu Piao, but instead focused her eyes on Nie Li as the corner of her mouth curled into an arc. "Today while we were practising the Spiritual Flames, you piqued my interest. I hope you won't disappoint me!"

Upon finishing her words, she turned and walked off, her beautiful back disappeared once she passed the entrance of the courtyard.

Lu Piao gave Nie Li a curious look and asked, "Nie Li, what did she mean? She walked over to us just to tell you that she had 'interest' in you? Could she be thinking of warming the bed for you?"

At Lu Piao's words, Nie Li couldn't help rolling his eyes at him. Was Lu Piao's brain made of paste?

As Lu Piao finished, a youth with handsome features walked over, turned to Lu Piao, and said, "You've attracted Long Yuyin's attention, but you two are simply being too wishful. Did you actually think that she'd be interested in your friend? Don't you know how cold her personality is?"

"Cold personality?" Lu Piao suddenly nodded as he continued, "No wonder she has that expression all the time. So that's why!"

"Have you guys never heard of Long Yuyin before? Tsk, tsk, those from the Tiny World are indeed ill-informed. That Long Yuyin is a powerful genius from the Dragonseal Family, and rumour has it that she possesses the Blood Dragon's lineage. Her body is so tough that it's impossible for a Grade 2 Artifact to harm her. Two years ago, she got engaged to someone, but in the end, she completely crippled her fiancé in a martial tournament. He can't even live like a normal peasant anymore." The youth shook his head as he sighed, "Long Yuyin's fiancé was also from a powerful family. No one knows why, but he still endured it in the end. That girl is a female tyrannosaurus! It's best not to provoke her!"

Upon hearing the words of this youth, Lu Piao couldn't help cringing.

That girl in light-blue just now was Long Yuyin? Nie Li's eyes abruptly narrowed. In his previous life, it was Long Yuyin who'd killed his teacher!

In his previous life, after Nie Li had reached the Draconic Ruins Realm, Long Yuyin looked like a young woman, although she was already over a century old by that time. Back then, she was already a 3-Stage Martial Ancestor Realm expert and an extremely tyrannical woman within the Divine Feathers Sect.

No wonder he found that girl familiar when he saw her. Nie Li still remembered that in the previous life, Long Yuyin was extremely tyrannical and took the law into her own hands, single-handedly fragmented the Divine Feathers Sect.

At that time, Long Yuyin looked like a young woman, but right now, she was still a young girl. Although there were some similar features, the two still looked quite different. That's why Nie Li couldn't recognize her instantly.

Although the grudge from his previous life wasn't terribly deep, Nie Li still loathed the Dragonseal Family.

Lu Piao decided that he liked the youth who stood before him, and asked, "Hey, what's your name?"

The youth lightly said as he smiled, "You can just call me Master Bei."

"Master Bei?" Lu Piao rolled his eyes. This kid was too narcissistic, asking others to call him a Master. But after reaching the Draconic Ruins Realm, Lu Piao had become more well-behaved. If this kid happened to have some deep background, it wouldn't be good to offend him. "Brother Bei, thanks for your warning today."

Upon hearing the two words 'Master Bei', Nie Li recalled a certain person. He was a well-known loafer in the Divine Feathers Sect, who appeared and vanished unpredictably. His strength wasn't any weaker than Long Yuyin's, the only existence who was on par with her. Everyone addressed him as Master Bei, a direct descendent of the Gu Clan.

Long Yuyin possessed the bloodline of the Blood Dragon and her natural

talent had been pushed to the peak. However, Master Bei completely relied on his insights in the way of swords.

“As for the two of you, I’m already aware of your names. Nie Li and Lu Piao,” Master Bei said as he lightly smiled towards Nie Li.

“You actually know the two of us?” Lu Piao stunned for a brief moment.

Gu Bei smiled. “Of course, the two of you are already quite well-known in the West District. The Divine Feathers Sect naturally sets its sights on geniuses who possess Heaven Spiritual roots, regardless of which city or realm they come from. Not to mention an 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root and 5-grade Heaven Spiritual Root! You have no idea how many people have their eyes on the two of you.”

Nie Li had already expected something similar and it proceeded just as he’d expected. As long as they don’t join a faction, no one would do anything to them. First of all, geniuses of the Skysoul Institute were heavily protected. Secondly, no one was willing to offend a genius with such vast potential for no good reason.

“What about you?” Lu Piao immediately looked at Gu Bei with a guarded expression.

Gu Bei chuckled. “Me? Haha, I’m interested in that Long Yuyin chick and Long Yuyin is interested in the two of you. Therefore, I came over to see for myself what you guys are like!”

This was exactly Master Bei’s style: a loafer who would have his eyes lit up the moment he saw a pretty girl.

“So that’s the case.” Lu Piao suddenly saw the light. “So you’re interested in Long Yuyin!”

Lu Piao glanced at Gu Bei’s crotch. ‘Doesn’t he feel a chill in his crotch? Long Yuyin once crippled her own fiancé. Is Gu Bei a masochist?’

“Hey, hey, hey, just where are you looking?” Gu Bei said with discomfort as he continued, “I’m into Long Yuyin, but that doesn’t mean I’m also into masochism!”

“You’re sure you’re not a masochist?” Lu Piao asked as he glanced at Gu Bei.

“Of course not! Don’t you find women like Long Yuyin more exciting to conquer?” Gu Bei gave a lewd chuckle. “I like that type of woman the most. In fact, those kinds always have hearts blazing in flames!”

At Gu Bei’s words, Lu Piao also chuckled as he hooked an arm around Gu Bei’s shoulders and said, “Really? Then we should discuss it a little!”

“So we’re alike!” Gu Bei looked as though he’d suddenly found a new best friend. “Brother Lu, it’s a shame we didn’t meet earlier!”

When Nie Li saw the two of them chuckling lewdly, he couldn’t help smiling bitterly. He never thought that Lu Piao and Gu Bei would hit it off so well. He looked around and noticed that some people were looking in their direction and seemed to be talking about them in soft voices. One of them was Wang Yang, who’d come from the Little Heaven Realm. Wang Yang stood with five other students who’d gathered together.

Nie Li’s eyes narrowed as he said to Lu Piao and Gu Bei, “This isn’t the best place to talk, let’s go!”

Gu Bei had obviously sensed something as he laughed, “Alright! That way, I can have a good chat with Brother Lu.”

The three of them walked out together.

When Wang Yang and his group saw the trio leave, they retracted their gaze back.

“They left with Gu Bei. A total of five places. Long Yuyin, Jin Yan, and Gu Bei will naturally take three. That means that those two with the 8-grade and 5-grade Heaven Spiritual Roots are our greatest competitors. Now that they’re together with Gu Bei, they’ll be probably even harder to deal with!” one of the youths said with his brows knitted.

In this group of six, the strongest among them was only a 5-grade heaven Spiritual Root. For the sake of mutual benefit, the six of them banded together. The leader was a youth named Han Jing.

Every year, there were only five places for promoting to the East District and the competition had already begun. In order to enter the East District, they would do everything they could to stop Nie Li and Lu Piao from becoming stronger. If Nie Li and Lu Piao were promoted to the East District, they would lose their chance and have to wait another year. That was something that they were unwilling to accept.

Although Nie Li and Lu Piao had 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root and 5-grade Heaven Spiritual Roots respectively, their foundations were, after all, still shallow. Therefore, they would be easier to deal with, unlike Jin Yan, Long Yuyin, or Gu Bei. They wouldn't dare to take any rash actions against those three.

"In order to raise their cultivations, they'll definitely enter the training grounds. Once they have split with Gu Bei, that'll be our chance!" Wang Yang said as the idea occurred to him.

Han Jing frowned his brows. "Indeed. Within the next three days, they'll definitely enter a training ground. But there are three training grounds and we have no idea which one they'll go to."

"I'll be responsible for gathering information. Once I know which training ground they're heading to, I'll let you guys know immediately," Wang Yang said as his brows twitched. The men from Young Master Hua Ling's faction would definitely watch over Nie Li and Lu Piao with the utmost attention.

# Chapter 273: Poisoned?

Cultivation Hall.

After bidding farewell to Gu Bei, Nie Li and Lu Piao strolled through the Skysoul Institute and arrived at the Cultivation Hall.

This was the place where missions were assigned. After students completed their missions, they would return here to receive their spiritual stones, artifacts, and various other rewards.

With their monthly allowance, they would never have enough spiritual stones. Therefore, Nie Li and Lu Piao were forced to find other methods of acquiring them.

The Draconic Ruins Realm is an extremely cruel place where countless experts compete for the scarce resources. Regardless of how high one's talent was, it would be difficult to raise one's cultivation without spiritual stones. One of the best ways of obtaining them was to join a faction; after swearing loyalty, a faction would provide its talented underlings with large quantities of spiritual stones. However, this was definitely not an option for Nie Li and Lu Piao.

Aside from joining a faction, obtaining spiritual stones through the Cultivation Hall's missions was also a valid idea.

The Cultivation Hall was filled with students from various districts of the Skysoul Institute. The hall was also filled with poster walls, each crammed thick with job listings.

Nie Li quickly checked the open missions. Many of them were hunting jobs that asked for the demon spirits of various kinds of demon beasts. Those demon spirits had to have at least an Extraordinary growth rate in order to be exchangeable for spiritual stones; therefore, the mission difficulties were rather high. Aside from these, there were also missions for forging weapons, collecting materials, etc. However, none of them could be called easy.

Lu Piao scanned over the missions and sighed when he found none of

his level. “It seems like it’s pretty hard to obtain spiritual stones.”

“That’s for sure. The Divine Feathers Sect only controls a limited number of Deity’s Lakes. Each lake produces a several tens of thousands stones for the disciples of the Inner Division of the Divine Feathers Sect. That means that once they get divvied up, there won’t be much left for us,” Nie Li explained.

“Obtaining spiritual stones is really hard! So what do we do now?” asked Lu Piao.

Nie Li pointed at a mission on the wall and said, “We can give this mission a try!”

“What mission?” Lu Piao turned to look at the listing that Nie Li was pointing to.

“The Gu Clan’s young miss Gu Lan encountered a problem during cultivation, which made her bedridden. If there’s anyone who’s well-versed in medicine who can cure the young miss’s illness, the reward will be one thousand spiritual stones.” Lu Piao muttered as he re-read the notice, “A thousand spiritual stones. The Gu Clan must be really rich. Gu Bei also seems to be from the Gu Clan. But Nie Li, are you really taking this job just to cure her illness and not to pick up girls? The notice says that they’ve already tried many well-known doctors, but young miss Gu Lan still hasn’t been cured!”

Nie Li rolled his eyes at Lu Piao, “Of course I’m going to cure her illness. Saving someone’s life is better than building a seven floored pagoda [1]. Do you understand?”

[tl: [1] = Chinese idiom. Saving someone’s life earns you more respect and is more useful than when kings build great structures to display their power and fame. ]

Nie Li was rather confident in his Daoyin Technique.

“If you really can cure her illness and earn spiritual stones at the same time, then it’s not a bad idea.” Lu Piao stroked his chin with his right hand and said, “That Gu Bei also seems like a pretty nice guy. He even offered to

treat us to a meal!”

In his previous life, Nie Li had been somewhat aware of Gu Lan. She was Master Bei’s elder sister and a mysterious girl. Rumor was that when she was young, she’d been injured in a cultivating accident and left in a wheelchair, paralyzed from the waist down. She also couldn’t cultivate anymore due to her handicap. However, she still managed to live for two hundred years. Rumors also say that Gu Lan was the one who guided Master Bei in swordplay and that was the reason why he’d been able to reach the pinnacle of the sword.

In his previous life, Nie Li had heard many legends about Gu Lan that circulated throughout the Draconic Ruins Realm. Now, coincidentally, there’s a notice about it here, so it’s not likely a trap. Therefore, there’s no harm in giving it a try.

Lu Piao pointed to several notices that were stuck on another wall and said, “Nie Li, if you’re so confident in your medical techniques, then look over here. There’re at least a few hundred other postings about people who got into accidents during cultivation. If you managed to cure them all, then doesn’t that mean that we’ll have at least several tens of thousands of spiritual stones?”

Upon hearing Lu Piao’s words, Nie Li bitterly smiled and said, “Are you trying to work me to death? Not to mention that the Divine Feathers Sect’s political situation is extremely complicated. We have to be cautious with each step! If Gu Bei didn’t seem like such an honest guy, I wouldn’t even want to show my skills and risk attracting unwanted attentions.”

“Then we’ll talk about it after you’ve cured the Gu Clan’s Miss,” Lu Piao said as he smiled.

Together, Nie Li and Lu Piao left for the address written on the notice.

On the way there, Nie Li carefully recalled all the information related to the Divine Feathers Sect that he’d gathered in his previous life. Within the Divine Feathers Sect, there were three major factions: the Dragonseal Family, the Gu Clan, and the Ashen Flames Family, which is the Jin Clan that Jin Yan belongs to. Yan Hao’s Yan Clan was too low to be compared

to those three major factions.

Nie Li intended to try and cure Gu Lan. Aside from the reward of one thousand spiritual stones, it'd also help pave the future for himself and Lu Piao. If they cured the Gu Clan's young miss, then they'd be able to form a good relationship with the clan, or at least with Gu Bei.

Nie Li followed the address given on the notice and arrived at a vast courtyard in the southern area of the Skysoul Institute.

This was where Gu Bei and Gu Lan stayed, but was just one of the Gu Clan's many properties. The large gate was shut tight, leaving only the side door open for entry [2]. There were also two servants standing guard at the smaller door.

[tl: [2] = In ancient Chinese architecture, there are always two front doors: a large one and a small small one right next to each other. ]

“May I ask who you're looking for?” one of the servants asked.

“It's like this. We saw the job notice in the Cultivation Hall and came here to try and cure your young miss's illness,” said Nie Li.

The servant gave Nie Li a once-over, then he waved his hand and said, “It's better if you leave quickly.”

“Could it be that your young miss's illness has already been cured?” Nie Li asked curiously.

“The young miss has already been examined by many doctors who're exceptionally versed in medicine, but even they could not cure her illness. Do you really think you can cure my young miss's illness? Just leave quickly!” one of the servants said. Recently, the number of physicians who'd come to examine the young miss had already hit a few thousand, or at least several hundred. None of them could help her. Just how old was Nie Li? How could he possibly have much medical knowledge?

Nie Li furrowed his brows. “Your young miss is seeking medical assistance. How would you know if I'm capable or not, if you don't even let me see the situation? Will you take responsibility for preventing her recovery?”

The servant never expected Nie Li to be so overbearing and hesitated for a moment, unsure whether he should bring Nie Li in.

Suddenly, a person walked out from the residence. It was Gu Bei.

“What’s wrong?” Gu Bei asked in solemn tone. He raised his head and saw Nie Li and Lu Piao and was stunned for a brief moment. “What are you guys doing here? Are you looking for me?”

Lu Piao chuckled from Nie Li’s side as he answered, “We’re not here for you. We heard that the Gu Clan’s Miss Gu Lan is ill. We came to take a look and see if we could cure her,”

Gu Bei’s brows twitched as he looked at Nie Li and Lu Piao in astonishment as he asked, “You guys know medicine?”

Nie Li nodded. “Somewhat.”

Gu Bei went silent for a moment. Although he was a little skeptical, he still nodded his head and said, “Then come in.”

Guided by Gu Bei, the two of them entered an extremely vast courtyard. Upon entering, the courtyard opened up into a large garden dotted with pavilions. There was even a small bridge with water flowing below. It was like a scene of paradise. Even the air carried the fragrance of heavenly flowers.

“My sister and I are direct descendents of the Gu Clan. My sister was once considered the most outstanding among our younger generation. However, she encountered trouble during cultivation, which paralysed her entire lower body. No one knows how or why it happened.” Finishing his words, Gu Bei’s eyes flashed with chilling rays.

Nie Li vaguely sensed an undertone to Gu Bei’s words. Gu Lan was probably the victim of the family’s internal conflicts.

Lu Piao pondered inwardly. So Gu Bei and his sister were only two out of many direct descendents. It seems like this Gu Clan was quite a large faction.

Nie Li and Lu Piao followed Gu Bei along the small path and reached a

smaller courtyard. Inside, there was a girl clothed in white who sat quietly on a chair. Her clear pupils were like autumn water and were embedded into her beautiful and delicate face like gems. With a calm and peaceful expression, she quietly stared at a purple flower on a small artificial mound. She had a light-coloured lips that were as pale as water. Beneath the white clothes was her jade-bright skin. Traces of ill-coloured ash showed on her face, like a flower that might wither at any time.

“Beauty that lasts through the spring, the flower withers and people die unknowingly,” the white clothed girl muttered, with a trace of sadness between her brows.

“Elder sister.” A gleam of tears flashed through Gu Bei’s eyes. As he watched Gu Lan, his once high-spirited sister who had been rendered into such a state, Gu Bei felt as though his heart was being torn apart.

“Gu Bei, you’re back?” The girl in white revealed a faint smile. Her eyes then fell onto the two behind Gu Bei as she asked, “These two are...?”

“Both of them are my friends.” Gu Bei didn’t dare say that Nie Li was here to examine her illness. Every time a physician visited, she would always smile and reject them.

“Oh,” Gu Lan calmly smiled and nodded her head at Nie Li and Lu Piao.

Lu Piao couldn’t help wondering just what kind of illness this beautiful lady suffered from. For such a beauty in her prime to be forced to sit in a chair for the rest of her life, it’d simply be a cruel prank of the heavens.

Nie Li looked at Gu Lan with a thoughtful expression.

Gu Lan noticed that Nie Li had been staring at her and she knitted her brows. But because they were Gu Bei’s friends, she didn’t say anything.

“Nie Li, did you find anything?” Lu Piao asked in a soft voice.

“She’s not ill, nor had she run amok during cultivations. She was poisoned,” said Nie Li. His voice was neither too soft nor loud, just enough that it could be heard by Gu Bei and Gu Lan.

After Gu Bei heard this, his emotions were immediately stirred up as he

looked at Nie Li and asked, “Poisoned? You’re saying that my sister was poisoned?”

Nie Li nodded. “That’s correct.”

Gu Bei was puzzled. “But that’s impossible! There have been so many physicians who’ve examined my sister before. If she’s been poisoned, why didn’t any of them notice it?”

Gu Lan, who sat to the side, also couldn’t help staring at Nie Li. This boy appeared even younger than Gu Bei, but could he actually be a physician? If she’d been poisoned, she would’ve definitely noticed it. So why couldn’t she sense it?

# Chapter 274: Reasonable

“Have you guys heard of an herb called the Scarlet Apex Herb? When that herb is mixed with Serpent Fruit, it produces a colorless and tasteless poison. After consuming it, the veins will gradually clog up, halting the progress of cultivation. However, the poison itself is undetectable.” Said Nie Li.

At Nie Li’s words, Gu Lan’s heart trembled and she exchanged glances with Gu Bei. The symptoms that Nie Li had just described were exactly as she’d felt them.

Gu Bei instantly grabbed Nie Li’s shoulders and asked, “then is this kind of poison curable?”

“You don’t have to be so anxious. Your sister has been poisoned for much longer than just one or two days. You don’t have to be so anxious right this moment. Before I came here, I thought she suffered from an ordinary illness that I could easily handle. But now that I’ve seen her situation, I’m certain that she’s been badly poisoned,” Nie Li muttered.

“Nie Li,” Gu Bei’s heart was ignited with hope as he looked at Nie Li and said, “As long as you can heal my sister, no matter what you ask of me, I’ll agree to it all!”

Gu Lan and Gu Bei’s parents had died early. Although the children themselves were direct descendents with extraordinary talent, Gu Lan had lost the qualifications to become the Patriarch’s successor because of her paralysis. Unless Gu Bei’s cultivation suddenly soared, he also won’t qualify as the successor. But in the eyes of others, Gu Bei had always been a good for nothing loafer. However, in reality, Gu Bei had always worked very hard towards his cultivation and his talent wasn’t inferior to his sister’s.

“I’m only here because of the mission and the reward should still be a thousand spiritual stones.” Nie Li lightly smiled as he glanced at Gu Bei and continued, “What I’m trying to say is that, is this place safe? If someone is aware of the fact that I can heal your sister, wouldn’t they find

another method to plot against her?”

“Sir, you don’t have to be worried.” Gu Lan naturally understood Nie Li as she continued, “After this experience, I’m already well aware that even within our family, there are people who are after our lives. If sir can cure me of my poison, we will conceal everything concerning the matter. As far as the outside world is concerned, I’ll still be a handicapped person.”

Although Nie Li was just a young man, even younger than Gu Bei, as a physician, it wasn’t inappropriate for her to address him as ‘sir’.

Upon hearing Gu Lan’s words, Nie Li nodded his head. Gu Lan really was a naturally smart person.

“The poison within your body has been there for at least three years. If I were to give you heavy medications, I’m afraid your veins won’t be able to handle them. I’ll write another prescription first. Once the poison inside your body has been lessened, then we’ll conduct the thorough treatment,” said Nie Li. He retrieved a piece of paper and a pen from his interspatial ring, wrote down a prescription, and handed it to Gu Bei.

Gu Bei took one look at the prescription and instantly held it as if it was a priceless treasure. “I’ll go get these herbs!”

Since Gu Lan had been ill for so long, of course there would be a pharmacy in their homes having all kinds of herbs. Gu Bei immediately fetched them.

Lu Piao asked Nie Li in a soft voice, “Nie Li, how confident are you about this?”

“Since I already know the cause of her illness, of course I am one hundred percent confident,” said Nie Li as he raised his head and smiled at Gu Lan. Gu Lan looked roughly eighteen or nineteen years old. If she hadn’t been sick for so many years and her face wasn’t ashen white, she would’ve definitely been a beauty. However, Nie Li only saw her with eyes of admiration, devoid of any other intentions.

“Thank you, sir, for saving me.” When Gu Lan spoke, her speech was neither fast or slow, making listeners feel as though a cool breeze had

blown by. She was a quiet girl.

“You’re being too polite, miss Gu. It’s only natural for one to be honest when entrusted by someone,” Nie Li said as he lightly smiled.

Gu Lan nodded as she sat in a quiet mood.

Gu Lan pondered for a brief moment before she found a topic to talk about. “I wonder where sir came from?”

“The Tiny World,” said Nie Li.

“Oh? So you’re from the Tiny World.” Gu Lan’s voice paused as she continued on, “When I was young, I had a teacher who was also from the Tiny World.”

Nie Li’s heart slightly trembled as he asked, “I wonder, what’s the name of that teacher of yours?”

“My teacher never revealed his real name and appeared and disappeared as he wished. I also have no idea where he is now. He could reappear anytime.” Gu Lan bitterly smiled as she shook her head, “That teacher of mine hasn’t shown himself for five years now. Otherwise, I wouldn’t have landed myself in this situation. I only know that my teacher had a very high cultivation, such that even a 5-stage Martial Ancestor Realm expert couldn’t match him as an opponent.”

Nie Li wondered who Gu Lan’s teacher could’ve been. He was someone who’d originated from the Tiny World and possessed astonishing strength; thus Nie Li was filled with curiosity towards him. However, since even Gu Lan didn’t know his name, then there was nothing Nie Li could do about it.

As Nie Li and Gu Lan were chatting, Gu Bei quickly ran over with a bowl of brewed herbs.

“This is the medicine that I boiled. Sister, give it a try.” Gu Bei passed the bowl of brew to Gu Lan.

Gu Lan nodded as she received the bowl from Gu Bei, lowered her head, and started drinking. She had such a calm countenance that her

expression remained as placid as ever, even as she drank the medicine.

After consuming the medicine, Gu Lan slightly frowned her brows for a brief moment and shut her eyes as she searched for changes in her soul realm.

Gu Bei looked at Gu Lan anxiously. Even Lu Piao had his eyes fixed on her. Only Nie Li appeared to be extremely confident.

After a brief moment, Gu Lan opened her eyes, looked at Nie Li and said, “This medicine can indeed relieve the poison in my body. I can already sense traces of changes in my veins! Thank you so much for helping!”

She couldn't help the emotionally moved expression on her face. She never imagined that this medicine would take effect so quickly.

“It's good that it can help miss Gu Lan with your illness.” Nie Li lightly smiled as he nodded, “miss Gu Lan should follow this prescription for a month. After that, I'll change it to another prescription. I can guarantee that miss Gu Lan will be rid of her illness!”

Gu Bei was extremely excited. He never imagined that Nie Li's medicine would actually work. But as long as it could cure his sister's illness, he'd be willing to sacrifice anything.

“Nie Li, this is the reward for curing my sister. If you need any help in the future, don't hesitate to say the word. As long as I'm capable of accomplishing it, I will!” Gu Bei patted himself on the chest as he spoke and passed an interspatial ring filled with spiritual stones over to Nie Li.

Nie Li gave the ring's contents a quick check. There were roughly one thousand five hundred spiritual stones inside. Gu Bei was indeed rich.

Gu Bei and his sister were direct descendents of the Gu Clan. Even if they're weren't in the line of succession, the number of spiritual stones that they obtained from the family was also unimaginable for ordinary people.

However, this thousand and five hundred spiritual stones should've been everything Gu Bei had. After all, spiritual stones were still extremely rare, not to mention the fact that Gu Bei also required a large amount for his

own cultivation.

Nie Li took out five hundred spiritual stones from the interspatial ring and returned the ring and its remaining contents to Gu Bei. “On your job posting, you said that the reward was only one thousand spiritual stones. I still haven’t completely cured your sister’s illness either, so I’ll just start by taking five hundred. Let’s wait until I’ve cured your sister’s illness, then you guys can give me the rest!”

Gu Bei received the interspatial ring and looked at Nie Li with grateful eyes. There was no way he could ever repay Nie Li’s favor!

“Nie Li, Lu Piao, from now on, you’re my brothers!” Gu Bei looked at Nie Li and Lu Piao as he said in a serious tone.

“Damn, so that means that up until now, you never saw us as brothers!” Lu Piao couldn’t help sounding out in indignation as he stood to the side.

“I didn’t mean it that way!” Gu Bei immediately waved his hand as he explained.

As she watched the three straightforward youths, Gu Lan couldn’t help showing a trace of a smile on her face. It’d been a long time since she’d been this happy. She’d always thought that her illness was incurable, so she’d gradually sealed away her heart. That is, until today. At last, she could see a trace of light in her life.

“Gu Bei, take care of your sister. We’ll go ahead and take our leave. In the future, be aware of your meals.” Nie Li said with an undertone to his words.

A chill suddenly ran through Gu Bei’s heart as he nodded, “I understand!”

Someone had been able to poison Gu Lan’s food without being caught; there was a high chance that the culprit was someone close to them.

Nie Li and Lu Piao bid their farewells to Gu Bei and Gu Lan before walking out.

Gu Lan watched Nie Li and Lu Piao leave, then looked at Gu Bei and

asked, “Little brother, how did you meet the two of them?”

“They’re my classmates, both geniuses with Heaven Spiritual Roots. Especially that Nie Li, he has an 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root.” Gu Bei continued, “We’ve also just recently gotten to know each other, but I never imagined that Nie Li would be so capable and accomplished in medicine. Those physicians before couldn’t even diagnose Sister’s illness, but he only took a look and knew the cause. He’s indeed formidable.”

“An 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root?” Gu Lan’s eyes flashed with a peculiar light. She never thought that Nie Li’s talent would be at such a frightening height. To have such comprehension in medical knowledge and such astonishing talent, just how high would he reach in the future?

As they walked, Lu Piao asked out of curiosity, “Nie Li, they offered you so many spiritual stones, so why didn’t you accept them?”

“A gentleman loves wealth, but he must be reasonable. Gu Bei has such a deep relationship with his sister that those spiritual stones are probably his entire fortune. Five hundred spiritual stones are already sufficient for us for now, so there’s no need to take all of his spiritual stones.” Nie Li lightly smiled. Earlier, he had taken five spiritual stones from Xiao Yu, because he didn’t want Xiao Yu to spend all his time feeling indebted. This time, Nie Li didn’t take all of Gu Bei’s spiritual stones because he wanted to build a good relationship with him. Gu Bei and his sister would definitely be powerful experts in the future; therefore, building a good relationship now was definitely worth more than the spiritual stones.

“Oh.” Lu Piao vaguely understood. He could sense that Gu Bei and Gu Lan were honest and sincere people. If they’d actually taken all of their spiritual stones, it would’ve been a little too much.

Things like spiritual stones are extremely rare to the point that a Heaven Spiritual Root student could only collect five spiritual stones a month. However, all Nie Li did was take a look at someone’s illness and he ended up earning five hundred spiritual stones. Those five hundred spiritual stones would be sufficient to last them a long time during their cultivation.

# Chapter 275: Soul Brand

Nie Li split and handed a hundred spiritual stones to Lu Piao as the two of them returned to Xiao Yu's home.

Xiao Yu raised his head as the two entered and asked, "Where have you been? I couldn't find you when I returned and was just about to look for you guys, since I didn't know where you were!"

Nie Li was a little touched by the expression of anxiety and concern written on Xiao Yu's face. After all, he and Xiao Yu were strangers who'd only met by chance, yet Xiao Yu had done his utmost for them. Recently, Nie Li's opinion of Xiao Yu gradually changed as he realised that Xiao Yu had a good character and was worth befriending. Although he was a little feminine, it wasn't a terribly big problem.

"We took a little walk around the place and came back with a boatload of spiritual stones. You can have these!" Nie Li took out a bag of spiritual stones and tossed it over to Xiao Yu.

Xiao Yu caught the bag of spiritual stones and was instantly stunned when he saw that there were fifty or sixty of them in there.

Xiao Yu immediately shook his head. "Where did you guys get so many spiritual stones? I can't accept these!"

"We just walked around a little and earned five hundred spiritual stones. Since we're brothers, what are you being so polite for?" Lu Piao chuckled and imitated Gu Bei as he tried to hook an arm around Xiao Yu's shoulders. However, Xiao Yu dodged it without a sound.

Xiao Yu was utterly astonished in his heart. He couldn't figure out how Nie Li could've possibly earned five hundred spiritual stones. Again, he shook his head in determination. "I can't accept these spiritual stones! You guys should take them back!" As he finished speaking, he returned the bag of spiritual stones to Nie Li.

Nie Li grabbed Xiao Yu's hand and pushed the spiritual stones back into Xiao Yu's hand as said solemnly, "Earlier, when we just arrived here, you

gave us two spiritual stones, which we didn't reject. Now what we've gotten so many spiritual stones for ourselves, we're also trying to give you a share. If you reject it, then doesn't that mean that you're not treating us as friends?"

Xiao Yu pulled his hand back and appeared a little embarrassed. "That's not the same. I only gave you two spiritual stones and yet, you're giving me so much more."

"How is it not the same?" Nie Li's brows slightly twitched as he continued, "You had roughly around a dozen spiritual stones and yet, you were still willing to give us two. Now that we've gotten five hundred spiritual stones, it's only natural for us to split a share for you. There's no difference! Not to mention the fact that we're also staying in your place. If you don't accept these, then the two of us will move away immediately!"

Xiao Yu hesitated for a brief moment before he finally nodded. "Fine. Then I'll go ahead and accept these spiritual stones."

"Alright! Now that this is done, we'll head back to cultivate. If anything comes up, we'll talk about it later!" Nie Li smiled and went ahead back to his own room without waiting for Xiao Yu's reply.

Xiao Yu stared at Nie Li's back and opened his mouth as he tried to say something. However, he couldn't think of anything, so he swallowed those words and looked down at the spiritual stones in his hands. Yesterday, Nie Li had taken only five spiritual stones in return for the treatment. Then, after only a single day had passed, Nie Li came back with so many spiritual stones; Xiao Yu was speechless.

Lu Piao smiled back at Xiao Yu, then returned to his room as well.

When Nie Li arrived at his own room, he placed Jindan's pouch on the floor in a corner of the room. With so many spiritual stones, he'll definitely be able to raise his strength quickly!

Yu Yan flew out from Nie Li's sleeve. She'd been hiding in his sleeve this entire time, cultivating. She could sense that Nie Li's aura was extremely useful for her cultivation. Cultivation of Heavenly Energy inside Nie Li's sleeve proceeded several folds faster than cultivation outside; that's why

she hid inside his sleeve and not coming out.

“Big Sister Yu Yan, you can have these spiritual stones for your cultivation!” With a casual smile, Nie Li passed a pile of spiritual stones to Yu Yan.

“Thank you, Nie Li. I’m aware that these spiritual stones are extremely precious.” Yu Yan looked at Nie Li with a moved expression. Since the beginning of her travels with Nie Li, she’d known him to be extremely caring towards his friends and was an extremely reliable person.

Nie Li smiled. “Big Sister Yu Yan is being too polite. You also witnessed it; I only treated someone a little bit and earned myself five hundred spiritual stones. In the future, I’ll treat more people and obtain even more spiritual stones. This here can’t be considered much!”

As she looked at Nie Li’s bright smile, Yu Yan couldn’t help feeling touched in her heart. After living for so long, Nie Li was one of the few who truly treated her well!

Yu Yan landed on Nie Li’s shoulders, kissed him on the cheek, and said, “No matter what, I still have to thank you. If it wasn’t for you, I’d still be sealed in that black spring.”

Kissed by Yu Yan and smelling her faint fragrance, Nie Li was briefly stunned. Ever since the incident in the Black Infernal Tower, Nie Li had sensed that something changed in Yu Yan.

However, the current Yu Yan was more gentle compared to the past, as she had more human emotions.

Nie Li smiled, “Then, I’ll go ahead and start cultivating, Big Sister Yu Yan!”

He took out a spiritual stone and began to absorb the Heavenly Energy inside it. A surge of energy drew forth from the spiritual stone and into his Soul Realm, where he began refining it.

Yu Yan sat on Nie Li’s shoulders as a complicated expression flashed through her eyes. She threw a glance at Nie Li and a scarlet pink flushed across her face. She was wearing a silk dress that showed her fair and

flawless back and slender long legs, giving off a boundless sense of amoury.

When she saw that Nie Li had already entered his cultivation state, she flew over to the pile of spiritual stones and begun her cultivation as well.

Quickly, Nie Li dried his stone of its Heavenly Energy. Yet even though all that Heavenly Energy had entered his dantian, it didn't produce the slightest effect.

There was nothing Nie Li could do, except take out a second spiritual stone and continue absorbing the energy.

The second piece, third piece...

Even after he'd absorbed the tenth piece, the energy in these spiritual stones continued to disappear into his dantian like a clay ox entering the sea [1], without causing the slightest ripple in his Soul Realm. However, the vine in his Soul Realm began to grow stronger from the nourishment of the Heavenly Energy. The flower bud gradually blossomed and became even more beautiful.

ptl: [1] = Chinese idiom. Disappeared with no hope of ever returning. ]

It was probably the Heavenly Energy that had excited this vine, since this vine was constantly absorbing the Heavenly Energy.

After the vine absorbed the energy, Nie Li sensed that his cultivation rose by a little. He couldn't help smiling bitterly; originally he thought that two or three hundred spiritual stones would be enough to last him a long time. But according to this exhausting speed, wouldn't he finish his supply of spiritual stones way too quickly?

Although he didn't have a clue as to the true nature of the vine inside him, he could sense that this vine belonged there as a part of him. If it was nourished and allowed to grow, it'd definitely profit his own cultivation!

Nie Li continued to absorb the Heavenly Energy contained in the spiritual stones.

Twentieth piece, thirtieth piece...

The quantity of spiritual stones being consumed steadily increased in number. As Nie Li absorbed more Heavenly Energy, his cultivation finally showed a substantial increase and qualitative leap.

According to the sub-rankings of Legend rank, Nie Li was already more or less a 4-star Legend rank and would soon reach 5-star. Right now, decreasing his distance from the Heavenly Fate Realm was the most urgent goal for him.

Once he reached the Heavenly Fate Realm, the stages of his cultivation would be entirely different.

Jindan, who was asleep only moments before, suddenly woke up, and appeared to have sensed something. Once it saw the empty spiritual stones scattered on the floor, its eyes glowed as it began to eat through them one by one, as if it was eating through several helpings of stir-fried beans.

Nie Li practised for a long time to consolidate his current cultivation level, not daring to absorb too much Heavenly Energy at once. Only after he'd concluded his training and opened his eyes did he realise that Jindan had already eaten about half of the drained spiritual stones and left messy fragments lying all over the place. Jindan's stomach was plump and round as the creature rolled back and forth on the floor, with a satisfied expression on its face.

This little guy even eats wasted stones!

Nie Li was speechless towards Jindan. After pondering for a moment, Nie Li took out a normal spiritual stone that contained some Heavenly Energy and threw it to Jindan.

The moment that spiritual stone landed beside Jindan, the creature's eyes lit up, as it quickly rolled over to the stone and hugged it tightly, as if it were guarding a valuable treasure and was afraid that someone would steal it. It held the spiritual stone tightly and began chewing; in a flash, the spiritual stone was eaten completely without a single shard left behind.

Jindan immediately lost interest in the drained spiritual stones and stared at Nie Li.

This little guy really knows what the good stuff is. It knew that the undrained spiritual stones were the better goods and had developed a new taste for them in an instant.

Nie Li shook his head and said, "I don't have a lot of spiritual stones, so right now, I can only give you one. If you still want more, then you'll have to listen to me!"

At Nie Li's words, Jindan was like a little chick as it nodded its head.

This little guy was rather easily tricked. Back then, when Nie Li had tried to reform Jindan's aura, his efforts were obstructed by something, so he couldn't accomplish the reformation. This time, Nie Li again took Jindan and injected a trace of his own Heavenly Energy into the creature.

Nie Li once again tried to reform Jindan's aura. This time, his attempt was much smoother, since Jindan wasn't resisting. As he injected his Heavenly Energy, Nie Li slowly became aware that Jindan's bloodline contained a frightening and unimaginable strength.

This power was far stronger than the Celestial Qilin's!

Nie Li was completely astonished in his heart. He couldn't imagine what heights Jindan would achieve when it fully grew up. Bit by bit, Nie Li injected his Soul Brand into Jindan; in return, he sensed his link with Jindan was getting stronger.

Just as Nie Li was about to go a step further, he sensed a powerful rebound of energy inside Jindan that caused a jolt in his Soul Realm.

It looked like the matter couldn't be rushed. The fact that he'd achieved some improvements was already pretty good; marking his Soul Brand inside Jindan's Soul Realm and turning it into his own Spiritual Beast would have to be done slowly.

# Chapter 276: Saint Soul Board

Nie Li put Jindan down, then tossed it a spiritual stone. “This is your reward.”

Jindan immediately hugged the spiritual stone and began chewing on it, crunching away. Halfway, it raised its head and looked Nie Li. Inside Jindan’s clear eyes was an innocent intelligence, making the creature seem like a cute little child.

Nie Li looked at Jindan as he smiled helplessly. “I don’t have very many spiritual stones, so you can only eat two a day, at most. Otherwise, I won’t be able to afford you!” Jindan’s food consumption was simply too frightening!

A trace of grief flashed across Jindan’s eyes as it lowered its head to look at the half-eaten spiritual stone in its embrace, unable to bear the thought of eating the remaining part of its only treasure. It stuck out its tongue and licked the stone several times, leaking drool all over the floor.

Nie Li couldn’t help finding Jindan very funny. As time passed, Jindan’s intellect seemed to increase, at least compared to how he was in the past.

Yu Yan, who was next to him, opened her eyes from her cultivating state. When she saw this scene, even she couldn’t help finding it a little funny. She closed her eyes again and continued to concentrate on her cultivation. She’d already touched the profound nature of the Heavenly Fate Realm and began to form her Fate Soul.

However, she was different from other people. The Fate Soul that she formed was shaped like a bunch of faintly coloured golden flames. Although she didn’t know why her Fate Soul was different, she could sense that these golden flames contained a boundless energy.

Previously, when she encountered the foreign soul that tried to devour her, it was this golden flame that burned the enemy soul until there was practically nothing left. She could sense that these golden flames were deeply connected to her identity.

In just one evening, Nie Li had already used almost half of his three hundred spiritual stones.

It was then that he realised that this stock spiritual stones was simply insufficient. He had to find some way to obtain even more spiritual stones!

The next morning

Nie Li and Lu Piao were up so early that even the fog in the courtyard hadn't dispersed yet. The flowers that lined the path and the artificial mountain were still clothed in dew, appearing very lovely.

Xiao Yu looked at Nie Li and Lu Piao and asked, "Nie Li, Lu Piao, do the two of you want to go to somewhere with me?"

"Where?"

"One of the three major testing grounds of Skysoul Institute: the Saint Soul Grounds!"

Lu Piao couldn't help asking out of curiosity, "Oh? What kind of place is that?"

"The Saint Soul Grounds is the safest testing ground among the three of the Skysoul Institute; however, its requirements are pretty high. Only those who have a Soul quality of a certain degree are allowed in." Xiao Yu lightly smiled as he continued, "Wait until we're there, then you'll know."

The Saint Soul Grounds? Nie Li had never been there in his previous life; therefore, he also wondered what the place was like.

"Alright then, let's go take a look," said Nie Li as he nodded his head. His interest towards the Saint Soul Grounds had been piqued.

Guided by Xiao Yu, the three of them left the courtyard.

Some distance away from the main entrance of Xiao Yu's mansion, a few people were eyeing the three of them as they left and held a discussion in soft voices.

"The three of them left together! We'll go back and report to Young Master Hua Ling. You guys follow them and keep a close eye on them!"

“Yes!” Several people followed after Nie Li’s group.

Nie Li and the other two continued walking the road.

“There seems to be someone following behind us,” Lu Piao said to Nie Li in a soft voice.

Xiao Yu, who was next to him, smiled as he said, “They’re a bunch of clowns. Pay no attention to them. Within the Skysoul Institute, they won’t be able to do anything to us. If we were headed either of the other two testing grounds, perhaps they’d be able to cause some trouble for us. But inside the Saint Soul Grounds, they can just dream of it!”

As the three of them headed towards the Saint Soul Grounds, parties from various factions were already focusing their attentions on their actions.

At the south side of the Skysoul Institute was a valley that was part of a mountain range. The plants and trees that flourished here, reaching sizes that would require several people holding hands to encircle a single trunk. Hundreds of people were gathered in the wide field that served as the entrance of the valley, forming a sea of heads that bobbed back and forth. At the center of this crowd was a huge stone tablet dozens of meters tall that sparkled with a dazzling luster. On the top of this tablet was a line of ancient text that said ‘Saint Soul Board’.

“Over there is the Saint Soul Board. Only students who place within the top two hundred inside the Saint Soul Grounds are listed on the Saint Soul Board.”

The surface of the tablet was densely packed with names. Nie Li swept a quick glance over the list and actually saw some familiar names. That Long Yuyin from the Dragonseal Family was ranked tenth while Jin Yan of the Jin Clan was ranked twenty-third. Hua Ling was also included in the list, ranking sixty-seventh. Xiao Yu’s love rival, Yan Hao ranked one hundred twenty-first. Huang Ying was ranked in the one hundred thirty-seventh spot.

As for Gu Bei, he wasn’t listed at all. However, after considering it for a bit, it also made sense. Gu Bei was concealing his strength and biding for

time; therefore, he definitely won't reveal his strength so casually.

Nie Li knitted his brows as he inquired, "The Saint Soul Board isn't ranked in terms of strength?"

If it had been based on strength, then the ranking definitely wouldn't be like this. At least Hua Ling was currently stronger than Long Yuyin and Jin Yan by a little. However, he was also a lot older than Long Yuyin and Jin Yan.

"It's not ranked in terms of personal strength, but their soul's ability to communicate with the Heaven and Earth energies. To cultivate Heavenly Energy, one must communicate with both Heaven and Earth, thus obtaining energy from them. Under normal circumstances, those with stronger cultivations would be better at communicating, but that's not an absolute rule. Some with extraordinary talent can break through their boundaries. Let's take the top ten for example. Long Yuyin only reached her position a short while long ago." Xiao Yu explained.

Nie Li skimmed over the board attentively. "A competition in terms of one's ability to communicate with Heaven and Earth?"

"The Saint Soul Grounds is a mysterious place; it's a spiritual well with extremely rich Heavenly Energy. Those who cultivate here can strengthen their ability to communicate with Heaven and Earth. However, due to the limited space, each student is only allowed to enter and cultivate for two hours a month. Those who rank within the top two hundred can cultivate for at least six hours; the closer you are to the top, the longer you'll be allowed to cultivate."

This Saint Soul Grounds was actually the location of a spiritual well. The effects would indeed be vast if one cultivated inside a spiritual well.

Xiao Yu continued his explanation. "Aside from that, those who are ranked towards the top receive a reward at the end of every year. The reward comes in the form of spiritual stones, elixirs and artifacts. The one who ranks first receives a Grade 5 Artifact, five spiritual stone essences, an Extraordinary growth rate demon spirit of a dragon bloodline, and a rare bottle of Demon Soul's Essence Elixir! Those who rank among the top 5

receive a Grade 4 Artifact, three spiritual stone essences, an Excellent growth rate demon spirit of a dragon bloodline, and one thousand spiritual stones...”

At Xiao Yu’s words, a trace of light flashed across Nie Li’s eyes. Within the Skysoul Institute, a Grade 5 Artifact was already extremely pricy, worth at least five to six thousand spiritual stones. The effect of a single spiritual stone essence was at least equivalent to five hundred spiritual stones. Not to mention an Extraordinary growth rate demon spirit with a dragon bloodline wasn’t something easily obtainable, even outside the institute. As for the Demon Soul’s Essence, it was also an extremely rare item that could be used to refine the demon spirit.

Lu Piao’s eyes lit up as he enquired, “If we can place in the first seat on this board, then doesn’t mean that we’d be able to obtain those rewards every year?”

“That’s true. However, the top-five reward can only be claimed once by each person. Once you claim the reward, you must withdraw from the Saint Soul Board’s competition.” Xiao Yu continued, “The top five rewards are the hardest to obtain, and are also the most generous. Everyone’s been drooling at it for a long time. There’s still a month left before the cutoff point for this year.”

‘So the top-five reward can only be claimed once...’ Inwardly, Lu Piao found it a pity. However, he was already filled with expectations towards the Saint Soul Grounds. Secretly, he guessed at what number he’d be able to obtain; after all, he was a 5-grade Heaven Spiritual Root genius! Lu Piao couldn’t help thinking of himself with a little narcissism.

Nie Li eyed the Saint Soul Board again. Indeed, it could be a shortcut for obtaining more cultivating resources. Although he could obtain spiritual stones through treating others’ illnesses, that method was, without a doubt, very time-consuming. Furthermore, not every client would be as generous as Gu Bei.

Now that the entire Skysoul Institute was aware that he possessed an 8-grade Heaven Spiritual Root, Nie Li no longer cared whether others find

out even more about him.

Before a sect declines, there would always be signs. Take the Divine Feathers Sect for example. At that time, the internal fights between factions were already very severe; however, they were still somewhat controllable. There were still many rules in the Skysoul Institute that no one dared to cross.

Therefore, no matter how extraordinary Nie Li's talent was, he'd still be safe within the Skysoul Institution.

After he thought it over a bit, Nie Li said, "Let's go in and give it a try!"

If he could obtain a top-five reward, then he'd be able to step into the Heavenly Fate Realm sooner.

Nie Li, Xiao Yu, and Lu Piao followed a zigzag path into the Saint Soul Grounds.

When they saw Nie Li's group enter the Saint Soul Grounds, the group that had been following them from a distance exchanged glances.

"I never expected them to enter the Saint Soul Grounds!"

"Among the three testing grounds, the Saint Soul Grounds is the safest. They're probably afraid; that's why they won't dare enter the two other testing grounds!"

"At the very most, they'll only be able to stay in there for two hours, so they'll be out soon. I doubt they won't give the other two testing grounds a try!"

Rapidly, the news spread that Nie Li, Xiao Yu, and Lu Piao had entered the Saint Soul Grounds. Everyone was paying attention to the two newcomers' performances. As for Xiao Yu, they didn't expect much, since even after so many years, he hadn't been able to charge into the Saint Soul Board's listings. Therefore, he probably won't show many results in this attempt either.

Skysoul Institute, Yan Hao's courtyard

"Young Master Yan, Xiao Yu has entered the Saint Soul Grounds!"

Yan Hao had been holding a book of records as the corner of his mouth curled into a chilly smile upon receiving his underling's report. "For five years now, Xiao Yu hasn't been able to enter the top two hundred of the Saint Soul Board. He probably won't be able to enter this time either!"

"But...Young Miss Huang Ying seems to have run into the Saint Soul Grounds as well!"

At the words of his underling, Yan Hao's face instantly turned green and he was no longer in the mood to read his book. He slapped the book on the table, stood up, and said, "We'll go and take a look at the Saint Soul Grounds!"

# Chapter 277: Master

## Inside the Saint Soul Grounds

This place was encircled by mountains and filled with chirping birds and the scent of flowers, forming a picturesque landscape.

At the center of the Saint Soul Grounds stood a majestic altar. On each of the altar's four sides was a flight of steps that led to the top and at the top, there was also a wide open platform. On the flight of steps where many people sat, cultivating, but none could step foot on the altar's peak.

Xiao Yu explained as he walked in the altar's direction. "Inside this spiritual well, Earth and Heavenly Fate Realm experts can obtain great benefits towards their cultivation. There are a total of one hundred ninety-nine flights of steps. The stronger an individual's ability to communicate with the Heaven and Earth, the closer he or she can approach to the altar's peak. On the contrary, if an individual's ability to communicate with Heaven and Earth is weak, then they won't be able to take even a single step. If they try, they'll suffer a great backlash."

Every step was as distant as a journey towards the Heavenly Dao. Only by overcoming great difficulties can one make progress.

Suddenly, the students on the platform spotted Xiao Yu's group.

"Isn't that the Xiao Yu with the 7-grade Heaven Spiritual Root?"

"I heard that he couldn't even make it up to the fifth step. Is that true?"

"Yeah, it's a fact that he couldn't even make it up to the fifth step!"

Several students mocked in low voices.

However, Xiao Yu paid no attention to those students; he was already used to being mocked by others. As far as he was concerned, he just have to bother about himself and there was no need to care about the views of others.

Xiao Yu looked at his companions and said, "Nie Li, Lu Piao, I'll head up first and start cultivating!"

He headed towards the flight of steps. First step, second step...

At the fifth step, a trace of astonishment flashed through Xiao Yu's eyes. In the past, every time he reached the fifth step, he would feel a heavy pressure that made every movement difficult. But this time, when he reached the fifth step, he still felt as if he was only lifting light weights.

He took another step up, the sixth, seventh...

"How is that possible? Xiao Yu actually made it to the sixth step?"

The other students looked at Xiao Yu in astonishment. In the past, Xiao Yu could only make it to the fifth step and was stopped there; however, today, he was able to make it up the sixth step. This fact stunned them a little.

They watched as Xiao Yu climbed higher, step by step. The heights that were unreachable to Xiao Yu in the past looked so easy right now.

Several students that sat cultivating around the thirtieth step, watched as Xiao Yu approached and instantly felt fidgety and uneasy. Why did Xiao Yu's ability to communicate with Heaven and Earth suddenly rise to such a level? This new development left them utterly shocked.

Xiao Yu glanced at those students and brushed past them as he continued upwards.

Those students were left dumbfounded as they watched Xiao Yu's figure move further and further away. As they thought of all the things they'd said when they mocked Xiao Yu earlier, they felt their faces burn. As far as other people were concerned, they were merely jokes! Xiao Yu didn't even give them a decent look!

Nie Li and Lu Piao also set their feet on the flight of steps.

The instant Nie Li's foot landed on the first step, he felt a majestic energy blowing towards him and his Soul Realm surged. This spiritual well was indeed extraordinary.

Nie Li ascended as he communicated and harmonized with this energy bit by bit. On his way up, he realised that his strength was like a mere

droplet of water in the vast sea of the spiritual well.

The two figures slowly ascended, step by step.

Outside the Saint Soul Grounds

A commotion instantly arose as a new name materialised on the Saint Soul Board, at the two hundredth place.

“It’s Xiao Yu! Xiao Yu actually broke into the top two hundred!”

Once the various factions were made aware of this news, everyone was utterly astonished.

This was the first time that Xiao Yu made it into the top two hundred. In the past, no matter how many times he tried, he could never list his name on the Saint Soul Board.

“How is that possible?!” Hua Ling’s face turned dark as he stared at Xiao Yu’s name on the Saint Soul Board. A trace of murderous intent flashed through his eyes. The fact that Xiao Yu’s name appeared on the Saint Soul Board made him felt huge pressure.

Hua Ling and his men stared at the Saint Soul Board.

Yan Hao arrived after Hua Ling, glanced around the area, but couldn’t find Huang Ying. He raised his head and his pupils suddenly shrank when he saw Xiao Yu’s name on the Saint Soul Board.

“Xiao Yu, that trash, actually made it to the top two hundred of the Saint Soul Board? Just what’s going on?”

Yan Hao’s brows were tightly knitted together as he sensed a trace of abnormality. In the past, Xiao Yu could only pace back and forth on the lower steps of the Saint Soul Grounds, whereas reaching the top two hundred would require one to ascend to at least the fiftieth step. The difference between the former and the latter were simply too great.

Could it be...?

Did that Xiao Yu actually break through to the Heavenly Fate Realm?

Just as everyone was still in shock that Xiao Yu had managed to enter

the top two hundred, his name began to charge forward on the Saint Soul Board. From the two hundredth position to one hundred ninety-ninth, his placing continued to increase.

Everyone's attention was fixed on the Saint Soul Board as Xiao Yu's ranking continued to change.

"How is this possible? Xiao Yu's already in the one hundred sixties!"

"That's impossible! How can he surpass me?!" Yan Hao was raging. In his eyes, Xiao Yu had always been a rubbish. But now, he'd actually been surpassed by that same rubbish!

At that moment, inside the Saint Soul Grounds, Xiao Yu continued to move upwards, slowly and confidently ascending step by step. Even he was astonished at his ability to communicate with Heaven and Earth. He was already in the nineties, but didn't feel any pressure at all.

Xiao Yu was practising the [Myriad Dragonroars] cultivation technique. When he was in the Earth Fate Realm, his cultivation had always been suppressed; but the moment he made a breakthrough and stepped into the Heavenly Fate Realm, the [Myriad Dragonroars] cultivation technique finally revealed its frightening might and raised Xiao Yu's cultivation by leaps and bounds.

Such a pace was simply unimaginable by ordinary cultivators!

Nie Li and Lu Piao followed behind. Nie Li raised his head and looked at Xiao Yu's back. Xiao Yu was already on the ninety-somethingth flight while they were just in the thirties.

Suddenly, Nie Li suddenly noticed a beautiful girl, roughly sixteen or seventeen, sitting cross-legged on the one hundred seventy-somethingth step, cultivating. She was beautiful and wore a light cyan silk dress, with a white muslin robe over her shoulders that spread out on the ground like moonlight. Through this thin muslin robe, one could see the elegant line of her neck and her flawless collarbone.

Her hair was tied with a pink ribbon and a butterfly hairpin and she wore makeup. The skin on her cheeks was as tender and beautiful as

flower petals. Under the faint glow of the spiritual well, her entire body glowed like clear snow.

This beauty was a masterpiece from gods. Compared to her, even Heaven and Earth looked dull.

This beauty, could even be described as 'able to captivate even birds and beasts'.

Her eyes were closed as she cultivated, submerged in a kind of mysterious state, like a fairy who'd fallen asleep. With that holy appearance of hers, others wouldn't dare to profane before her.

Regardless of who saw her, no one could help feeling ashamed and inferior compared to her.

On the steps not far away were many disciples, staring at her from a distance, not daring to approach her. Or perhaps, no one was able to stand shoulder to shoulder with her.

"How beautiful!" Lu Piao was dumbfounded as he stared and muttered. Among the girls who he'd seen, perhaps only Ye Ziyun and Xiao Ning'er could compare to her.

However, at that moment, the glow from the spiritual well shined directly onto her, like a fairy who'd descended into the mortal realm. Even Ye Ziyun and Xiao Ning'er would be a little inferior compared to her.

Nie Li stared at this girl in a daze as countless emotions and memories arose in his mind.

When they'd met in the previous life, Nie Li had suffered heavy injuries and had lost consciousness by the riverside. She was the one who'd saved him. She'd always been unwilling to tell Nie Li her true name. She said that it was because she'd leave one day and it'd be better for him not to know, so that he'd be able to easily forget her. Back then, she appeared as a teenager but Nie Li was well aware that she'd already lived for a long time.

"I don't know who or what is pursuing you, but right now, you're grievously injured. Why don't you accept me as your master and follow me back to the Divine Feathers Sect? There, I can teach you cultivation

techniques.” The girl’s tender smile was as gentle as a spring breeze.

“Disciple, you can’t cultivate like this. If you want to communicate with Heaven and Earth, you must first put down the hatred in your heart! You must be as virtuous as water, for water does not compete. The heart must be like Heaven and Earth, so to achieve the greater Dao.”

Nie Li had never been able to reach the ‘virtuous as water’ realm that his master had spoken of.

He was just a commoner, partaking in the competition and deceptions of the world. He’d never been able to let it go and continued to make enemies everywhere.

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“Disciple, even if you fight, what does it accomplish?”

“But Master, they called you a demoness! That is the root of everything! Saying that the blood flowing within you belongs to the demon clan!”

“Then is your Master a demoness in your heart?”

“No.”

“Then that’ll do. As for what others say, what can words do?”

—

“No Master, don’t leave me, you’re the only one I hold dear...”

Her aura grew weaker. “Nie Li, I’ve said it before, I’ve already performed calculations on my fate with the Divine Fortune technique. You are the calamity of my destiny. My death are unrelated to them, promise me one thing. Don’t take vengeance against them. Let go of the hatred within you. Those who are lost will never be able to return. The more you are unresigned, the more you will lose. You must reach that ‘virtuous as water’ realm!”

“No...!” Nie Li painfully howled as he watched her slowly close her eyes and dissipate within his arms.

His master had always been the one paving the way for him in the

Draconic Ruins Realm. But now, she'd quietly left the world and turned into an intangible breeze.

Nie Li fulfilled his Master's last request and didn't kill those people for vengeance. At the same time he had also protected the last of the fundamentals of the Divine Feathers Sect. However, her death had left a deep regret in his heart.

Even afterwards, Nie Li was never able to reach the 'virtuous as water' realm, never able to be like his master, distanced from worldly affairs.

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In this life, Nie Li's eyes were filled with tears upon seeing her again.

"Nie Li, what's wrong with you?" Lu Piao looked at Nie Li dumbfoundedly. What's going on with him? Why is he crying?

Nie Li shook his head. "It's nothing." Those memories were like a tidal wave, blurring his vision.

# Chapter 278: Rank Change

Xiao Yu, who was walking in front of them, raised his head towards the fairy-like girl and was stunned. Even he couldn't help sighing at such a beautiful girl who existed between Heaven and Earth. Suddenly, the girl opened her eyes. Those eyes of hers were like clear springs, piercing into others' hearts.

The girl gave Xiao Yu a faint smile as she slowly walked down the stairs.

Her steps were light and graceful and her beautiful figure made people's hearts beat wildly. Her clothes fluttered in the wind.

Everyone was staring at her, dumbfounded. Before her, the entire world seemed dull.

The girl walked past Xiao Yu and moved towards Nie Li and Lu Piao's direction. Her clear eyes landed on Nie Li as she revealed a pure smile from the corner of her mouth and asked, "Nice to meet you, what's your name? Do you know me?"

That piercing gaze seemed as though it could see through everything.

"I don't," Nie Li said as he shook his head. He remembered what his Master had once said, that he was the calamity of her life. Then, should he refrain from approaching her, to let her live her a peaceful life?

The girl looked at Nie Li in astonishment. Did he really not know her? Her brows were slightly knitted together. Although her cultivation wasn't terribly high, she had walked the [Heaven's Divination] path; therefore, she could calculate the destinies of those she met. However, Nie Li was the only exception. When she tried to calculate his destiny, all she saw was a muddled chaos.

Why did Nie Li's gaze look as though he'd known her for a so long? That expression didn't seem to be fake.

The girl vaguely sensed something strange, as though she'd seen Nie Li somewhere before.

She pursed her lips and smiled. "My name is Ying Yueru. What's your

name?”

Nie Li was slightly stunned. In his previous life, when he was cultivating with his Master in the valley of the Divine Feathers Sect, his Master never mentioned her name before. So, why did she take the initiative to tell a stranger her name in this life?

When they saw that the girl had taken the initiative to speak to Nie Li, the surrounding disciples all had jealousy written all over their faces. They'd already been paying attention to her for a long time, but no one dared to approach her. They only looked at her from afar. They never imagined that she would actually take the initiative to approach Nie Li.

After pondering for a brief moment, Nie Li answered honestly. “My name is Nie Li!”

“Nie Li, Nie Li...” Ying Yueru muttered with her brows slightly knitted and continued, “Why does that name seem so little familiar? It's as though I've heard it somewhere before.”

Nie Li raised his head and stared at her. Where could his Master have heard his name from before?

“Nevermind, I can't remember anymore.” Ying Yueru shook her head and smiled so sweetly that the bystanders were dazed just from looking at her.

Xiao Yu, who was scaling the hundred steps, turned back. When he saw that Nie Li and Ying Yueru were chatting happily, he slightly paused his steps, and hesitated on the spot before he turned around and walked towards Nie Li and Lu Piao's direction.

“Nie Li, what's going on? Do you know her?” Xiao Yu glanced at Ying Yueru with a wary expression as he transmitted his voice over to Nie Li, “People in the Divine Feathers Sect are complicated. The origins of this girl are unknown, so you have to be careful.”

At Xiao Yu's words, Nie Li only smiled in reply. Although in this life, Ying Yueru didn't know him, Nie Li was well aware of this person. Her heart was pure and kind and she was always the one willing to be hurt

instead of hurting others.

“It’s fine, don’t worry about it. She won’t be a threat to us.” Nie Li smiled as he transmitted his reply back Xiao Yu.

“You’ve only just met her, yet you’re certain that she doesn’t have any ill intentions?” Xiao Yu’s furrowed his brows as he spoke in an unhappy tone.

“Yes,” Nie Li honestly replied as he nodded.

When he saw that Nie Li’s eyes were glued to that girl, without knowing why, Xiao Yu felt frustration in his heart as he said in an infuriated tone, “Since you trust her so much, then it’s none of my business!”

Xiao Yu turned around, ignoring Nie Li, and continued moving upwards.

Looking at Xiao Yu’s figure, Nie Li was a little puzzled in his heart. What’s wrong with him?

Ying Yueru glanced at Xiao Yu as he turned to go, and revealed a meaningful smile on her face. Her eyes turned back to Nie Li as she pursed her lips and smiled, “It appears that your friend doesn’t welcome me. However, I’ve remembered your name, Nie Li. I believe that we’ll meet again before long!”

Ying Yueru had a light and calm smile on her face as she proceeded down the altar. That charming figure of hers attracted everyone’s gaze, fixing them onto herself.

That’s just how elegant she was!

The surrounding disciples all watched Ying Yueru leave before retracting their gazes and glared at Nie Li with enmity. Many of them had already taken notice of Ying Yueru, but they’d all sensed that her identity was definitely not simple. Those who were able to reach the one hundred thirty-somethingth step were not ordinary people!

Many of them couldn’t help feeling inferior whenever they looked at Ying Yueru, forget trying to hit on her. However, Nie Li had actually held a conversation with the goddess of their hearts; this made them deeply

jealous.

Lu Piao looked at Nie Li and bitterly said, “Nie Li, it seems that you’ve become public enemy number one!”

Aside from that, Lu Piao didn’t understand how Nie Li was able to make such a beautiful goddess strike a conversation with him. Could it be that there’s some treasure concealed on Nie Li’s body that attracts goddesses?

“Don’t bother about them. There’s no need to be bothered by another’s gaze or mockery. You just need to worry about yourself, as you have to believe that those who’re more outstanding than you will never pay any attention to you,” Nie Li said as he moved higher on the flight of stairs.

Lu Piao pondered over Nie Li’s words for a brief moment and realised that it made more sense the more he thought about it. Why would Nie Li say such philosophical words? However, he still quickened his steps and continued up the stairs.

Xiao Yu held his breath as he moved to one hundred twentieth step. When he wanted to move higher, he found he was unable to accomplish it, no matter what. It seemed that his ability to communicate with Heaven and Earth was a little inferior to that girl’s. Although he was a little unresigned, he could only stop ascending.

Xiao Yu turned his head back and glanced at Nie Li and Lu Piao, feeling a little annoyed in his heart. Nie Li had just met that girl today and he was already trying to speak on her behalf. He couldn’t help snorting as he sat down cross-legged on the platform and began his cultivation.

Outside the Saint Soul Grounds

The crowd had already broken out in a commotion.

“How is that possible? Xiao Yu is actually ranked eleventh!”

“Is there some mistake in this?! A few of you go into the Saint Soul Grounds and take a look. This is basically impossible! Is Xiao Yu using some sort of underhand trick?” Hua Ling roared in anger. He never expected Xiao Yu’s ranking to soar all the way ahead of his own!

How did trash like Xiao Yu accomplish this?!

Hua Ling was extremely frustrated. He'd always had a vague fear of Xiao Yu; after all, Xiao Yu was a 7-grade Heaven Spiritual Root and who knew when that unimaginable talent of his would burst forth? Now, all of his fears had come true, agitating him to the point that he had the urge to kill someone.

At that moment, Yan Hao, who stood some distance away, saw Xiao Yu's name on the Saint Soul Board and was utterly stunned. Xiao Yu's name had become an unreachable existence. Even at his best, he'd only reached the one hundred and twenty-first ranking. Even then, he'd be easily been pulled down. But Xiao Yu managed to climb to the eleventh spot! That was a height that he'd never be able to reach!

From past records, those who'd entered the top twenty had all become powerful experts when they'd grown up, becoming existences who could control a region of the Divine Feathers Sect!

There was suddenly a wide gap between Xiao Yu and himself!

Yan Hao was a little dazed. In the past, he'd always thought of Xiao Yu as rubbish, a pretty boy with only good looks. Now, it turns out that Yan Hao himself was the real rubbish! How could he compete against Xiao Yu?

Suddenly, another voice sounded from the side.

"Look, two new guys have entered the Saint Soul Board!"

"Nie Li and Lu Piao? Those two seem to be from the Tiny World!"

Everyone's gazes turned to the Saint Soul Board. Nie Li and Lu Piao's rankings were constantly rising. Lu Piao's name stopped when it reached the eighty-sixth spot, but Nie Li's rank continued moving up.

"Good heavens! He managed to send Young Master Jin Yan down a rank!"

Everyone had their eyes glued to the Saint Soul Board as Nie Li's rank stopped at sixteen.

Everyone held their breath as they watched those two names rise so high

on the Saint Soul Board. Nie Li and Lu Piao were still newcomers from this year, unlike Long Yuyin and Jin Yan who had prominent families behind them. Yet they still managed to reach such heights; were they not going to give a chance to other people?

People from the Tiny World were simply too frightening!

One ranked eleventh and one was sixteenth. Not to mention that they'd just joined the board. If they were to continue their cultivation, who knew when they'll be able to make great leaps forward? If they were able to step within the top ten, it'd be defying the heavens.

Top ten, just how many people have dreamed of that!

Furthermore, the rewards for being in the top ten was enough to make anyone drool over.

The experts who could be ranked in the top ten were all absolute, powerful geniuses. Once they made it into the top ten, they'd even attract the attention of the institute's higher ups.

Jin Clan

Jin Yan was currently training as he's practised his demon spirit battle techniques.

A servant hurried in. "Young Master, I have bad news."

Jin Yan frowned his brows for a brief moment as he asked in a solemn voice, "What happened?"

"Young Master, someone has managed to get ahead of you on the Saint Soul Board and your rank has dropped to the twenty-fifth."

"Get ahead of me? Who is it?" Jin Yan appeared to be very calm. After all, it was normal for rank changes to occur; therefore, he was just purely curious.

"One called Xiao Yu, ranked at eleventh and the other is Nie Li, ranked at sixteenth!" the servant reported.

"Nie Li?" Jin Yan furrowed his brows for a moment. He never expected that Nie Li, someone from the same class, would get ahead of him. He was

fine with being ranked beneath Long Yuyin; after all, he was aware that he couldn't compete with her and could only consider himself number two. But now, the fact that he'd been surpassed by Nie Li made him a little frustrated.

Jin Yan's gaze went cold. He had to go to the Saint Soul Grounds to cultivate, no matter what. He has to step over Nie Li, and leave Nie Li beneath his own feet!

# Chapter 279: Long Yuyin

## Dragonseal Family

Long Yuyin also received news that Nie Li and Xiao Yu had both reached the sixteenth and eleventh rank on the Saint Soul Board, respectively.

She didn't care much about Xiao Yu; instead, she was rather interested in Nie Li, who had come from the Tiny World without any background. Not to mention that his cultivating resources were limited. However, the fact that he'd risen to such a height on the Saint Soul Board made Long Yuyin feel an intense challenge.

Ever since she was young, she'd always been the most outstanding among her age group. She'd never felt challenged before.

She stood up and walked out. Back then, she didn't hold Nie Li with much regard. It was only now that she genuinely placed him in high value.

Right now, she wore tight clothes that perfectly drew the outline of her impressive figure. On her slim waist hung a long sword. Her slender legs were filled with vigour. That cold expression of her's would make others feel a suffocating pressure.

Although she had a face that could be said to be perfect, her name was sufficient to make all the boys of her age scared shitless.

A handsome youth that looked sixteen or seventeen walked over and asked her, "Ying'er, where are you going?"

"Hu Yong, do you want me to waste you again?" Long Yuyin snorted as her sharp expression swept over the youth.

The youth was frightened by her words and cringed. He couldn't refrain from closing his legs tighter.

At the sight of this, Long Yuyin coldly said, "a piece of trash like you wants to marry me? If you want to marry me, beat me in a fight, first!"

Finishing her words, Long Yuyin walked off, and her figure disappeared through the entrance.

The youth could only helplessly watch Long Yuyin leave. Beat Long Yuyin? How was that possible? There was no one their age who could accomplish that!

The entrance of the Saint Soul Grounds was bustling with activity as heads moved about.

The most popular topic of discussion was the fact that Nie Li and Xiao Yu had recently raced onto the Saint Soul Board, to such high ranks. This fact astonished them. Lu Piao's results could also have been considered outstanding, but comparatively, he'd been overshadowed by Nie Li and Xiao Yu.

“Ranked eleventh on the Saint Soul Board. Is Xiao Yu really trash? It's unimaginable!”

“Could he have made his breakthrough to the Heavenly Fate Realm?”

“Where is this Nie Li from? Why haven't we heard of this name before?!”

“Where did these people suddenly appear from?!”

As everyone talked amongst themselves, someone suddenly said, “Long Yuyin is here!”

At that, the crowd quickly parted in two as everyone turned to look in fear at a girl with a fiery figure and an icy face. Although Long Yuyin appeared extremely charming, everyone only gave her a stealthy glance before shifting their gazes immediately.

Is that a joke? No one wants to provoke such a frightening girl! She was someone who'd crippled her own fiancé!

Aside from her own cultivation strength, the her body was also extremely strong. She was of the Blood Dragon lineage, and the fact that she was from an unreachable family made Long Yuyin an existence that everyone could only admire from below. On the Saint Soul Board, she was the only one who'd ever entered the top ten as a newcomer.

Long Yuyin's gaze fell on the Saint Soul Board and she narrowed her

eyes before walking towards the Saint Soul Grounds.

“Long Yuyin has entered the Saint Soul Grounds!”

“I heard that Young Master Jin Yan has also entered!”

“Now, this will be interesting!”

When Han Jing, Wang Yang, and his group heard the news, they also rushed to the Saint Soul Grounds. They had never entered the Saint Soul Grounds before; therefore, they also followed the others who went inside.

Inside the Saint Soul Grounds, Nie Li sat on the one hundred twenty-first step as he communicated with the Heavenly Dao and gained insights on the mysteries of Heaven and Earth.

Above the one hundred twentieth step, he could sense a repelling energy. In every step he took, he felt an intense pressure on his Soul Realm. If he continued moving up, his Soul Realm might even explode; therefore, Nie Li didn't dare to continue on.

The Soul Realm within his body revolved as Heavenly Energy entered.

Nie Li continuously absorbed the Heavenly Energy and allowed his body to saturate in it, refining it bit by bit to make it his own.

The Soul Realm within his body was like a vortex that sucked in the surrounding Heavenly Energy.

At the same time, in another part of the Skysoul Institute, several experts chatted as they sat around a stone table.

One of the grey-robed experts said with a light smile, “There are quite a few from this batch with decent talents. Take Long Yuyin of the Dragonseal Family for example. She has the Blood Dragon lineage, a 7-grade Heaven Spiritual Root, and ranks in the top ten at all three testing grounds.” This man's name was Nanmen Tianhai, an Elder of the Skysoul Institute who was in charge of various affairs.

Another white-robed expert smiled as he said, “Long Yuyin is the number one genius of the Dragonseal Family, that's for certain.” This man's name was Huang Yu, also one of the elders. “That newcomer named

Nie Li is also pretty decent. He's already made it to the sixteenth position on the Saint Soul Board!"

Nanmen Tianhai casually smiled. "Indeed, the two from the Tiny World this year are pretty decent. Even Xiao Yu seems to have made a breakthrough."

Huang Yu smiled. "The most impressive thing is that the youth named Nie Li made such a performance without any background or resources like the Dragonseal Family. It seems that the East District will gain a few more people this year!"

They were paying great attention to the situation within Skysoul Institution; therefore, they grasped the performances of all the geniuses. Nie Li and Lu Piao were undoubtedly among those geniuses. In their eyes, those two could definitely become part of the group that would be given extra attention and nurtured.

#### Within the Saint Soul Grounds

Xiao Yu, Nie Li, and Lu Piao were all deeply focused in their training. This spiritual well would greatly benefit their strength. Furthermore, they could only remain in the Saint Soul Grounds for a limited amount of time, so all the more reason to focus as hard as they could. Those who could make it into the top twenty could remain in the Saint Soul Grounds for up to three days a month, at most.

Below the altar, at the fifty-fifth step, Huang Ying looked to the distant Xiao Yu, her eyes dazzling.

"Indeed! I haven't made a mistake in my judgement. Big brother Xiao Yu's talent is the strongest!" A scarlet color brushed over her face. Instead of focusing on her cultivation, she directed all of her attention to Xiao Yu.

After looking at Xiao Yu and giving a furious glance at Huang ying, Yan Hao started moving up, step by step. However, when he reached the fifty-sixth step, he couldn't move any further.

"How can I lose to that trash?!" Yan Hao was furious as he tried to force himself up another step. When his feet landed on the fifty-seventh step, a

powerful backlash slammed into him.

Boom!

He felt a strong impact against his Soul Realm, instantly spat a fresh mouthful of blood, flew backwards, and landed heavily on the ground some distance away.

This was the fate of those who had insufficient strength and yet still wanted to resist the Heavenly Dao!

Yan Hao tightly clenched his fist and heavily punched the ground. No matter how unresigned he was in his heart, there was nothing he could do.

When the bystanding disciples saw Yan Hao spit blood as he flew away, they couldn't help looking at him with pity in their eyes. This was the result of trying to show off. If your talent is insufficient, then you should just obediently cultivate. Why try to force your way up?

“Look, that's Jin Yan!”

“What? Even Long Yuyin, who is ranked in the top ten, has entered!”

Everyone's attention was instantly focused on the entrance of the Saint Soul Grounds, attracted by Long Yuyin's tight outfit. But a brief moment later, they immediately shifted their gazes, lowered their heads, and returned to their own cultivation for fear that they'd be noticed by Long Yuyin.

Long Yuyin ignored those around her and moved up the altar. Her eyes landed on Xiao Yu and Nie Li, who were cultivating. Since these two were actually challenging her position, she definitely wouldn't give either of them a chance!

She wanted to tell both of them who the real genius was around here!

Jin Yan, who stood to the side, gave Long Yuyin a glance. He didn't expect Long Yuyin to come too. As he recalled of her frightening talent, Jin Yan couldn't help feeling a little helpless. He was confident that he'd be able to make Nie Li fall beneath him, but when he was faced the strong Long Yuyin, he didn't stand a single chance.

Nie Li quietly cultivated as his communication with Heaven and Earth became more and more smooth. The vine in his Soul Realm was like a vortex as it constantly absorbed the Heavenly Energy.

At that moment, the two disciples seated not far from Nie Li couldn't help knitting their brows together and opened their eyes.

As they cultivated beside Nie Li, they sensed that the surrounding Heavenly Energy was becoming thin and couldn't help to looking at Nie Li in astonishment.

Just what was this guy cultivating? This was simply too abnormal! The surrounding Heavenly Energy had nearly been completely sucked dry by Nie Li!

If they were to continue their cultivation here, their speed would be greatly affected.

The two disciples stood up and moved away from him, so that they wouldn't be affected by him.

Nie Li could sense that his cultivation was continuously rising. Currently, he was a 5-star Legend rank. After coming to the Draconic Ruins Realm, the speed of his cultivation increased by several dozen folds compared to what it was inside the Tiny World! After continuing for a month, he might be able to form his first Fate Soul and make a breakthrough into the Heavenly Fate Realm!

As his Soul Realm continued to revolve, Nie Li suddenly sensed a trace of a tyrannical aura. He raised his head and saw Long Yuyin walking in his direction. Her beautiful face was like an ice sculpture that wouldn't melt even after ten thousand years. Her eyes were filled with a dense aura.

Why did this girl come here? As he thought of how his Master had been killed by Long Yuyin and few others, his heart turned dull as enmity flashed across his eyes. However, in this life, he definitely wouldn't let such things happen again.

As for this woman, Long Yuyin, he would leave her far behind and forget her, so that she would no longer be capable of causing the slightest ripple

in his new life.

Nie Li would follow what his Master had told him in his previous life: do not seek vengeance against Long Yuyin. However, he also wasn't going to give Long Yuyin another chance. Nie Li would cultivate himself and become powerful, to a height that she would never be able to reach. After that, he'd make sure that Long Yuyin packed up and left for somewhere far away.

# Chapter 280: Three Lashes

Long Yuyin moved up the flight of steps as she walked up to Nie Li's level. She lowered her head, swept a glance at him, and coldly smiled, "I never expected you to reach this level. However, with your lowly status, this should be your limit, right?"

Her words were filled with ridicule towards Nie Li.

At Long Yuyin's words, Nie Li finally snapped, "Long Yuyin, you think you're very talented? You think you're that amazing? If it weren't for the vast cultivating resources from your family, you'd be nothing! It's just like you said, the Dragonseal Family can transform trash into geniuses. Without the Dragonseal Family, you're no different from trash!"

Long Yuyin never expected Nie Li to outright rebuke her!

"You dare to call me trash?!" Long Yuyin's eyes were filled with a frigid bloodlust as she eyed Nie Li. Ever since she was young, no one had ever dared to call her trash!

Nie Li coldly laughed. "Long Yuyin, putting your family aside, you're a thorough piece of waste. You think that your Blood Dragon bloodline is so formidable? Haha, in my eyes, the Blood Dragon lineage is no difference from rubbish!" Nie Li was filled with indignation towards Long Yuyin's arrogant appearance.

Originally, someone with Nie Li's personality wouldn't be easily enraged. However, he kept recalling Long Yuyin's malicious words that had forced the death of his Master.

"Why wouldn't I dare denounce you? Others are afraid of your identity, but I, Nie Li, am not afraid of you. A wretch like you should have your tongue cut out and deep fried!" said Nie Li, coldly.

"You actually dared to call me a wretch..." Long Yuyin's face turned ashen as she pointed at Nie Li, "You actually dared to say such things to me?! I'll annihilate your entire family!" Since when was Long Yuyin criticised like this before? When everyone looked at her, they all showed

fear in their eyes. She'd already been used to looking down on everyone her age. Since when had anyone criticised her so viciously like Nie Li had done?

“Long Yuyin, you're someone who's only strong on the outside but weak on the inside. People like you just keep relying on your family's strength. Without your family, you're just a piece of trash. What genius? Hilarious! If you have the guts, come and compete with me. You think that being ranked tenth on the Saint Soul Board is very formidable? Very soon, I'll let you know that everything you've been proud of is nothing but a mere joke!”

Long Yuyin was angered to the point that her chest heaved up and down. This was the first time that she'd been so enraged by someone.

Long Yuyin furiously glared at Nie Li as she tightly clenched her fist. “You're only good with words. Let me tell you of the huge difference between us! A one on one competition? Haha, how laughable! No one has ever dared to say such words to me, Long Yuyin, before. I'll have you lose so completely that you won't be able to be anything but convinced of our differences! If you lose, I'll give you three severe lashes. So, do you dare accept my challenge?”

Nie Li was someone who hadn't even reached the Heavenly Fate Realm yet. Three lashes from Long Yuyin might even claim Nie Li's life!

“Why wouldn't I dare? I'll throw the same words right back at you. The time limit is until the end of today. If you lose, I'll serve your own three lashes to you!” Nie Li glared at Long Yuyin as he narrowed his eyes, which also contained chilling intent. “Do you dare?”

Nie Li was well aware that because of Long Yuyin's Blood Dragon bloodline, three lashes were basically nothing to her. However, for a girl like Long Yuyin, three lashes would be even harder for her to accept than death.

Long Yuyin coldly laughed. “What a joke! Did you say I'll lose?”

Nie Li coldly stared at Long Yuyin. “The question is, do you dare?”

After staring into Nie Li's sharp gaze, how could Long Yuyin admit defeat? She snorted, "Why wouldn't I dare? I'll wait for you at the top!"

Upon finishing her words, Long Yuyin turned and moved up the steps. One hundred twenty-sixth step, one hundred twenty-seventh step.

With every step up, the Heavenly Dao's repelling force grew stronger against her.

Xiao Yu looked at Nie Li and Long Yuyin and a trace of concern flashed through his eyes. He had no idea why Nie Li would provoke such a woman. If Long Yuyin were to give Nie Li three lashes, it might even claim Nie Li's life! Xiao Yu knitted his brows and looked at Nie Li. He usually wasn't such a rash person.

Like a wildfire, news of Nie Li and Long Yuyin's bet spread across the Saint Soul Grounds.

"What? That kid Nie Li actually agreed to such a bet?"

"Yeah, that kid Nie Li really intends to achieve high results in one go. Simply impudent! Even if his talent is stronger than Long Yuyin's, it's impossible for him to surpass her in one day!"

"One hundred ninety-nine steps. Once you reach the one hundred twenty-somethingth step, every steps afterwards would be as hard as reaching the sky. That fellow Nie Li is being way too arrogant and conceited!"

"Long Yuyin's three lashes will definitely kill that fellow!"

The number of people gathering outside the Saint Soul Grounds steadily increased in numbers. They all came for one reason: to see the results of the bet between Nie Li and Long Yuyin!

Simultaneously, elsewhere in the Skysoul Institute

Nanmen Tianhai and Huang Yu were closely observing the situation inside the Saint Soul Grounds. When they were first made aware of the bet, the two of them couldn't help the solemn expressions that flashed over their faces.

Nanmen Tianhai furrowed his brows. “Although that kid Nie Li’s talent is pretty good, he’s still being too conceited. How could he offend Long Yuyin? If he loses the bet, those three lashes from Long Yuyin will kill him! Even if he manages to win, there’d be no benefit for him, other than the humiliation of Long Yuyin. On the contrary, he would end up offending the Dragonseal Family!”

Huang Yu sighed and said, “It’s unavoidable for youths to be a little rash. Long Yuyin’s excessively arrogant attitude probably made her say something that made him angry.”

They couldn’t help pondering the consequences of this matter. If this incident escalated out of hand, they would be forced to step in!

Back over at the Saint Soul Grounds

Long Yuyin walked up to the one hundred twenty-ninth step before stopping. Upon reaching this step, she could no longer proceed any further. She turned her head and coldly swept her eyes at Nie Li before she sat down on the step. From the one hundred and twentieth step onward, every step would become extremely tough. Each and every genius who’d reached this point would find great difficulty in taking another step forward.

Long Yuyin could sense that if she cultivated for a brief moment, she’d be able to move up to the one hundred-thirtieth step. That meant that on the Saint Soul Board, she’d be able to claim the ninth rank.

Nie Li trying to surpass her was simply a lunatic’s dream!

The first time she entered the Saint Soul Grounds, she’d only managed to reach one hundred twenty-five steps before stopping. Even after cultivating for two or three months, she’d only managed to move four steps up.

At that moment, Nie Li was continuously cultivating his Heavenly Energy before he finally made another step up, ascending to the one hundred twenty-second step.

At the sight of this, everyone who’d had their attention on him, was

astonished. Nie Li had made that movement so quickly. To think he actually took another step up!

One must know that making a step in the one hundred twenty-somethingth steps was extremely difficult. That region was in the lower limit of the Heavenly Fate Realm's communication with the Heavenly Dao. Those who'd yet to reach the Heavenly Fate Realm would only be able to reach the one hundred thirty-eighth step, maximum! That had been the record for over several thousands of years!

Everyone had their eyes glued on the two of them.

The corner of Long Yuyin's mouth twitched. "Hmph. He actually made a step up. But so what? When I first came here, I ascended one hundred twenty-five steps." She continued to quietly cultivate as she forced herself towards the one hundred thirtieth step.

The powerful repelling energy exerted a tremendous pressure on her Soul Realm and she felt as though it was about to burst open. However, Long Yuyin still clenched her teeth and laid her foot on the one hundred thirtieth step.

The Saint Soul Board changed, once again.

Long Yuyin's name went from tenth to ninth.

Those who stood outside, staring at the tablet, immediately broke into a commotion.

"Good heavens! Long Yuyin actually managed to move up a step and became ninth!"

"As a newcomer, those results are too formidable!"

"Nie Li looks like he's destined to lose. That kind of height isn't anything that's easily achievable!"

Undoubtedly, Long Yuyin was the most dazzling genius the institute had seen in recent years. Ordinary newcomers would find it extremely tough to reach such a high position in just a few months.

Nie Li had actually made that bet with that Long Yuyin. That was simply

an ignorant and foolish mistake. Did he really think that Long Yuyin's level was easily achievable through words?

Jin Yan stood on the one hundred nineteenth step. It's already impossible for him to ascend further. He had already tried to push himself further several times, but his soul realm would suffer a terrifying pressure. When he raised his head to look at Long Yuyin and Nie Li's silhouettes, his eyes were filled with jealousy.

Jin Yan was fine if he couldn't win against Long Yuyin; but why couldn't he even win against Nie Li? His heart was filled with dissatisfaction.

No matter how hard he tried, he could only remain where he was, and watch Nie Li and Long Yuyin from afar. He absolutely didn't believe that Nie Li could win against Long Yuyin. Long Yuyin's standards weren't achievable by ordinary people. Wanting to win against Long Yuyin was simply impossible!

Xiao Yu also watched Nie Li in concern. He had no idea why Nie Li would make such a bet.

Nie Li furrowed his brows. When he reached the one hundred twenty-second step, he suddenly felt an intense pressure bearing down on him.

Nie Li thought to himself, 'It's just as Master told me in my previous life. My vicious thoughts are too heavy. There are tens of thousands of creatures that live between Heaven and Earth, and the Heaven and Earth accommodates all their vicious thoughts. But despite that, trying to gain the Heavenly Dao's acknowledgement seems to be too difficult for me.'

However, the one hundred twentieth step was, of course, not his limit.

If he got stuck at just the one hundred and twenty-second step, then wouldn't his two lives have been in vain?

Nie Li stood on the one hundred twenty-second step with both eyes closed and activated the [Heavenly God] cultivation technique. The [Heavenly God] cultivation technique was a powerful technique that could allow him to communicate with Heaven and Earth.

The first chapter of [Heavenly God] cultivation technique: The Heavenly

Dao shines. Heaven shrouds but cannot contain. The Great Dao envelops but cannot dispute. Know all, perhaps, perhaps not.

Nie Li repeatedly muttered the first chapter of the [Heavenly God] cultivation technique as a surge of massive aura emanated from his body and spread throughout the surrounding area.

# Chapter 281: Where to Lash?

The surrounding Heavenly Energy was completely affected by Nie Li and revolved around him in a profound way.

Long Yuyin suddenly sensed something as she opened her eyes and looked at Nie Li in puzzlement. She felt that the surrounding Heavenly Energy was in a chaotic state. Just what was Nie Li doing?

As that happened, Xiao Yu and the rest couldn't help directing their eyes towards Nie Li.

Nie Li was submerged in a profound state. He seemed to have become one with his surroundings, so much that even his aura could no longer be sensed.

"Just what's going on?" Long Yuyin frowned as a trace of concern flashed over her beautiful face. She could sense that, at that moment, there was something strange about Nie Li.

Nie Li carefully sensed his surroundings.

Although there were still vicious thoughts inside of him, no one could hope to match him, especially with his comprehension towards Heavenly Energy. Nie Li opened his eyes as a peculiar flash of divine light crossed his eyes. He raised his head to look at Long Yuyin and continued to harmonise with the surrounding Heavenly Energy as he stepped forward.

Omm!

A surge of majestic energy spread throughout the surroundings, emerging from the soles of Nie Li's feet.

Outside the Saint Soul Grounds, everyone stared at the Saint Soul Board and were discussing amongst themselves.

"Long Yuyin is probably the most outstanding genius in her year. The rest are so far below her!"

"Yeah! It's simply incredible that she's already ranked ninth on the Saint Soul Board with her current strength!!"

“That Nie Li actually dared to challenge Long Yuyin! He’s far too ignorant!”

As they discussed, changes occurred on the Saint Soul Board, yet again. Nie Li’s name went from sixteenth to fifteenth. Although he’d only moved up by one rank, it immediately triggered an uproar from the crowd.

“That kid actually climbed up another rank?”

The competition within the top twenty ranks was extremely intense. Just trying to make a single step forward was already an extremely difficult task. Nie Li had actually managed to ascend to the fifteenth position in just one day.

Everyone exchanged glances and fell silent.

Regardless of whether Nie Li won or lost today, he was still an unreachable existence for all of them. What rights did they have to comment on Nie Li?

Before the crowd settled down, Nie Li’s ranking changed again, going from fifteenth to fourteenth.

In an instant, everyone was dumbfounded as they stared at the Saint Soul Board, feeling as though they were beginning to suffocate. The entire area was so silent that even a pin’s drop could be heard.

Just what exactly was going on? In just a short interval, Nie Li’s ranking had moved up by a total of two. Could Nie Li really surpass Long Yuyin today? From the crowd’s point of view, that was simply impossible. However, at that moment, they weren’t so sure anymore and wondered if, maybe, a miracle would happen.

Previously, they thought that Nie Li’s challenge of Long Yuyin was simply an arrogant and egotistical move; but in such a short amount of time, Nie Li’s ranking had moved forward by two. This fact made everyone shut their mouths.

At the very least, Nie Li was getting closer and closer to Long Yuyin!

Just how did Nie Li accomplish this miracle? Everyone couldn’t help

holding their breaths!

At a corner of the plaza was a chair, upon which sat a beautiful girl with an ashen complexion and white clothes. She raised her head and looked at the Saint Soul Board as a youth quietly stood beside her. The two of them were Gu Lan and Gu Bei.

“I never imagined that Nie Li’s talent would be so frightening. It’s his first day in the Saint Soul Grounds and he already ranks fourteenth. That talent of his isn’t any inferior compared to Long Yuyin’s. When Long Yuyin entered the Saint Soul Grounds for the first time, her rank was also roughly around there,” Gu Lan muttered as she stared at the Saint Soul Board.

Although this white clothed girl sat on a wheelchair with an ashen complexion and appeared very weak, she was still so beautiful that it was suffocating. Several people who stood far away looked at her with stunned and breathtaken eyes. However, after seeing the Gu Clan’s amethyst and gold crest on Gu Lan’s sleeve, they immediately moved away. The Gu Clan wasn’t someone they could afford to offend.

Gu Bei gazed off into the distance as he said, “Among all those I have met, Brother Nie Li is the only one I couldn’t see through. I can sense that he’s still concealing many of his talents and abilities.”

That mysterious youth’s figure had flashed across Gu Lan’s mind. Indeed, she’d felt that Nie Li was still concealing many things up his sleeve. Suddenly, Gu Lan saw several people among the crowd. After a moment of silence, she said, “Little brother, let’s return home!”

“Are we not staying to see the results?” Gu Bei asked Gu Lan in puzzlement. After all, he was still filled with expectations towards Nie Li’s challenge of Long Yuyin.

Gu Lan shook her head as she looked into the distance and said, “They’ve also come.”

Gu Bei followed Gu Lan’s line of sight into the distance, whereupon a figure entered into his vision. He was a youth who wore silk clothes and a crown on his head. It was Gu Heng, the first successor in line to the Gu

Clan. Gu Heng's talent was similar to Gu Lan's before she fell ill; he was a formidable opponent of Gu Lan's. Several youths followed behind Gu Heng, all members of the Gu Clan.

Gu Bei's eyes flashed a chilling trace as he said, "Sister, I'll take you back!"

The news of Nie Li challenging Long Yuyin had spread rapidly. Gu Heng was one of the few whose interest had been piqued by it. Long Yuyin was, without a doubt, one of the most talented among the younger generations of the Dragonseal Family. Someone who was able to challenge Long Yuyin, and at the same time, have no background worth mentioning, was definitely someone Gu Heng would consider as a worthy adversary.

Gu Heng swept his gaze through the crowd and noticed Gu Lan and Gu Bei leaving. The corner of his mouth twitched with an almost unnoticeable chill as he walked towards them, smiling as he said, "Well, isn't it little cousin Gu Lan and little cousin Gu Bei. The two of you also came to watch the fun?"

Gu Bei stared at him, then laughed and said, "Yeah, I never expected elder cousin Gu Heng to be here too. I heard that something interesting was happening here; so my elder sister and I came to take a look."

Gu Lan remained silent with her head lowered, her jade white hands tightly gripping the chair's armrest, in silence.

Gu Heng glanced at Gu Lan and the corner of his mouth twitched in a mocking smile. A brief moment later, he covered it with a pitiful look as he said, "Little cousin Gu Lan's illness still hasn't been cured? Such a pity, originally with little cousin Gu Lan's talent, you could've definitely reached the top of our Gu Clan! Gu Bei, now that your sister has become a cripple, you have to take good care of her!"

Gu Lan's eyes flashed with a hint of rage, but it was quickly concealed. In the past, she had been a dazzling genius who didn't tolerate even a single grain of sand on her pride. But ever since she fell ill, she'd learned to endure.

Gu Bei sighed. "Many thanks to elder cousin Gu Heng for your concern.

My sister's illness has been ever the same, without the slightest improvement. Therefore, I brought her out to relieve her boredom."

Although he was also furious at Gu Heng for insulting his sister and calling her a cripple, he still swallowed it down.

Gu Heng swept a glance at Gu Lan as she kept her head down without saying a thing. Indeed, since this girl had become crippled, she no longer had any fighting spirit.

"Since the two of you have come, there's no harm in leaving after watching the show!" Gu Heng smiled outwardly as he said, "I heard that a talented youth is challenging Long Yuyin. This has piqued my interest!"

Gu Bei considered for a moment before nodding, "If that's the cause of all this, then thanks for elder cousin Gu Heng's good intentions. We'll leave after this show!"

Although Gu Lan's meridians were congested and she'd become crippled, back when their parents were still alive, they still held quite a bit of prestige. Several Elders of the Gu Clan had taken good care of Gu Lan and Gu Bei since then; therefore, although Gu Heng was being very thorny with his words, he still refrained from doing anything to Gu Lan and Gu Bei.

The handful of them stood there, each watching the Saint Soul Board with different thoughts.

Aside from the Gu Clan, the Dragonseal Family and the Ashen Flames Family all had representatives standing outside the Saint Soul Grounds, watching.

This was Nie Li's first time entering the Saint Soul Grounds and he'd already achieved the fourteenth rank on the Saint Soul Board. That was already sufficient to prove his talent. If only they could recruit such a talent, it'd definitely prove a great benefit towards their family.

Inside the Saint Soul Grounds

Nie Li had no idea how massive of a ripple he'd caused as he continued to sense the Heavenly Energy and communicated with Heaven and Earth.

As time passed, he could feel the first chapter of the [Heavenly God] cultivation technique flowing more and more smoothly. Indeed, in order to unleash the true might of the [Heavenly God] cultivation technique, he had to come to the Draconic Ruins Realm to cultivate.

He'd already ascended one hundred twenty-five steps. Long Yuyin watched as Nie Li approached closer and closer and felt a pressuring urgency for the first time in her life. This was his first day and Nie Li had already reached the one hundred twenty-fifth step. Compared to her own results upon first entering the Saint Soul Grounds, it was already quite an achievement.

Ever since she was young, she'd always been telling herself to become the strongest among her age group. Even if they were men, she still wanted to step them beneath her feet.

Long Yuyin's expression was chilly as she watched Nie Li. Since her birth, Nie Li was the most powerful opponent she'd ever encountered!

However, she would never admit defeat. She was Long Yuyin from the Dragonseal Family! She definitely wouldn't admit defeat to anyone in her age group.

Nie Li stopped at the one hundred twenty-fifth step, raised his head, and looking at Long Yuyin.

"I heard that on your first day in the Saint Soul Grounds, you reached where I am now. It seems that your talent is only so-so. One hundred twenty-five steps. Isn't that easy to reach?!" Nie Li didn't mind provoking Long Yuyin a little.

Long Yuyin's face turned ashen green as a cracking sound came from her fists. She angrily glared at Nie Li, "Just because you've reached the one hundred twenty-five step doesn't mean that you can win against me today. If you're unable to surpass me, then you can wait and eat three lashes from me!"

"You don't have to be concerned about that; you should worry about yourself instead. I'm still thinking about where I should aim those three lashes. Someone as beautiful as you, what a waste! However, towards a

beautiful girl with a venomous heart, I will never be lenient!” Nie Li’s gaze fell on Long Yuyin’s face, chest, waist and various other areas of her body as he revealed a cold and evil smile.

# Chapter 282: Who's the Trash Now?

When Long Yuyin sensed Nie Li's violating gaze that swept over her face, waist, and various other spots, she couldn't help feeling a peculiar sensation, as though she was standing naked before him. She'd never felt anything like it before.

The bystanders were all astonished. None of them imagined that Nie Li would say such things to Long Yuyin.

There was actually someone who dared to provoke a demoness like Long Yuyin!

Xiao Yu couldn't help worrying that Nie Li would face extremely severe consequences by offending Long Yuyin. He couldn't understand why Nie Li was so focused on Long Yuyin. It's as though he'd had lots of bad blood with her. Long Yuyin's background ran deep; if only Nie Li could endure it briefly, soon everything would be over.

As for Lu Piao, he was secretly giving Nie Li a thumbs up. An authoritative woman like Long Yuyin needed to be mercilessly brought down. Otherwise, wouldn't Long Yuyin really start thinking of herself as number one of the entire world?

"You...!" Long Yuyin was filled with rage. Since when had someone dared to be so impudent in front of her? Nie Li's gaze made her feel as though her entire body was being pricked with needles. "Lecher, I'll gouge your eyes out!"

"Long Yuyin, do you really think that I'm interested in you? Don't overestimate yourself! You may be from a prominent family and possess extraordinary talent, but in my eyes, you're nothing! Even if a woman like you were stripped naked and placed in front of me, I'm sorry, but I won't have even the slightest interest! You're a woman with a heart that's as vicious as a snake. No matter how good looking you are, it still won't cover the ugliness in your heart!" Nie Li said with extreme contempt.

Nie Li thought about the vicious words that Long Yuyin said to his Master. Right now, he was just returning the favour. As he recalled his

persecuted Master of his previous life, his heart filled with wrath.

Long Yuyin tightly clenched her fists as a surge of majestic aura spread out and bore down on Nie Li.

“Lowly peasant, you dare to insult me?! I’ll kill you!” Long Yuyin was on the edge of going berserk. If it hadn’t been Skysoul Institute’s rule forbidding killing, she probably would’ve already taken action.

Nie Li coldly laughed as he looked at Long Yuyin. “Long Yuyin, your superiority only comes from your birth. What talent? Hilarious!” Under the pressure of Long Yuyin’s aura, he still appeared light-footed and perfectly fine. Long Yuyin thought of herself too highly and never looked at anyone with high regard. Ordinary people were just a bunch of lowly peasants to her.

Long Yuyin gradually calmed down, but she still couldn’t understand why she was so easily infuriated by Nie Li. In the past, no one her age was worth a second glance from her. Perhaps it was because the talent that Nie Li displayed threatened her, and that sense of threat is what made her so infuriated?

Bloodlust burst forth from Long Yuyin’s body. “Let’s see how you’ll surpass me today! If you’re unable to surpass me, then I’ll have you dead!”

“Then watch carefully!” Nie Li’s eyes flashed with a chilly trace, “Not only will I surpass you, I still want to let you know that everything you’ve depended on is simply laughable. You think likes of you can to be so arrogant?”

Once Nie Li’s words landed, the [Heavenly God] cultivation technique in his soul realm activated at high speed.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

A powerful explosion of Heavenly Energy surged from Nie Li’s feet, as if it was trying to turn the people nearby on their heads.

The bystanders’ facial expressions all changed upon sensing that terrifying aura.

Xiao Yu and Lu Piao also stared at Nie Li in shock; the rest were terrified as he stood in the center of the aura explosion, his clothes were fluttering in the wind like a deity descending from heaven.

Just what kind of horrifying energy was this?!

Even Long Yuyin couldn't help being shocked.

Nie Li slowly ascended. One hundred twenty-six steps, one hundred twenty-seven steps. Long Yuyin watched as he approached and felt her breath stop as she sensed the suffocating pressure emanating from him.

This aura was even more powerful than the surrounding Heavenly Energy, causing Long Yuyin to step back before steadying her feet.

How? How could Nie Li pressure her so, when he hasn't even reached the Heavenly Fate Realm? He was even stronger than a 5-fate Heavenly Fate Realm expert!

What Long Yuyin didn't know was that, the pressure that she was feeling wasn't from Nie Li himself; rather, Nie Li had obtained his power from the surrounding Heavenly Energy by communicating with the spiritual well. The ambient Heavenly Energy within the spiritual well was extremely dense. Under Nie Li's direction, it could burst forth with frightening energy.

One hundred twenty-eighth step, one hundred twenty-ninth step...

Nie Li ascended, one foot in front of the other, to the one hundred thirtieth step, finally standing on the same level as Long Yuyin. He swept a glance at Long Yuyin and coldly smiled, "One hundred thirtieth step. Just so-so!"

Long Yuyin was dumbfounded as she looked at Nie Li. She'd always been proud of her talent. As far as she was concerned, it was impossible for someone of the same age to surpass her. However, the pride that she'd held was now heavily scattered over the ground. Nie Li looked down at her coldly, the loathing look in his eyes making her feel like she was trash on the ground.

Nie Li pulled his gaze away from Long Yuyin and didn't afford her a

second glance as he ascended onto the one hundred thirty-first step.

Boom!

When Nie Li's foot landed, a deep and low sound echoed through the hearts of the surrounding disciples.

That was the one hundred thirty-first step!

The area outside the Saint Soul Grounds boiled with voices.

On the Saint Soul Board, Nie Li's ranking had already replaced Long Yuyin's at the ninth rank. Everyone stared in disbelief at the Saint Soul Board.

"This is impossible..."

"That Nie Li actually managed to pull Long Yuyin down!"

"This is too unbelievable! Someone from the Tiny World actually won against Long Yuyin, who has the Blood Dragon lineage of the Dragonseal Family!"

No one could believe the results; however the name on the Saint soul Board was clearly displayed, leaving them with no choice but to believe it.

Among the younger generations, Long Yuyin was a legend. And now, another legend has been born.

Furthermore, this legend was far stronger compared to Long Yuyin, making everyone there even more astonished. Long Yuyin was from the Dragonseal Family and had enjoyed an unimaginably vast horde of cultivating resources since she was young. Everything she had was unreachable to others.

But Nie Li had come from the Tiny World without any background, nor had he been provided with a vast supply of cultivating resources.

However, Nie Li still managed to reach such shocking heights.

Long Yuyin looked at Nie Li's silhouette. At that particular moment, Nie Li wasn't looking back; instead, he continued to ascend step by step.

One hundred thirty-two, one hundred thirty-three.....

His steps were slow but calm, fantastically resonating with the ambient Heavenly Energy.

It wasn't until he reached the one hundred thirty-sixth step that Nie Li finally felt the irresistible pressure and stopped. He had entered into a profound state and decided that he no longer needed to move any higher.

Long Yuyin dumbfoundedly stared at Nie Li's silhouette. There were a total of six steps between her and Nie Li. It was like an unbridgeable gap, a realm impossible for her to reach!

All along, she'd believed that she had the strongest talent. Until now. Her pride and dignity had been mercilessly scattered. Faced with Nie Li who'd managed to ascend to the one hundred thirty-sixth step in one go, she'd totally lost her fighting spirit.

This man before her was like a mountain, bearing down on her head, rendering her unable to breath.

She'd always flaunted herself as a genius. But it was just like Nie Li had said: she was nothing. Compared to him, she was far inferior.

She clenched her fists as complicated feelings flooded her heart. Was that a gesture of the unresigned? Even she couldn't understand her own feelings.

At that moment, Lu Piao and Xiao Yu were observing Nie Li's silhouette high above them, both in a state of utter dumbfoundedness. They'd never imagined that Nie Li would reach the one hundred thirty-sixth step in one go and utterly crush a woman like Long Yuyin under his feet while he was at it.

Long Yuyin faced the six steps before her without even half an intention to attempt another step up.

The surrounding disciples of the Skysoul Institute also stared dumbfoundedly at Nie Li's figure. Was the guy before their eyes really a newcomer? He'd actually managed to climb up to the one hundred thirty-sixth step on his first try! This was simply too frightening! Was he going to give anyone a chance?

Some of the students outside the Saint Soul Grounds were flared up in a commotion as others stared blankly at the Saint Soul Board.

On the Saint Soul Board, Nie Li's name had already reached the third rank.

Nie Li was still a newcomer from this year who'd yet to reach the Heavenly Fate Realm. If his ability to communicate with Heavenly Energy had already reached this current height, how terrifying might he be once he reached the Heavenly Fate Realm?

The stronger one's ability to communicate with the Heavenly Energy was, the faster their cultivating speed would be. The results were easily predictable. Before Long, Nie Li would reach the Heavenly Fate Realm. Once there, his cultivation would suddenly experience a huge leap and reach an unimaginable height!

Gu Bei and Gu Lan exchanged glances as deep shock filled their eyes. Previously, they'd underestimated Nie Li!

Nie Li's talent had utterly surpassed Long Yuyin's, making him the most dazzling genius among the newcomers! Even Gu Bei couldn't help feeling a little ashamed. Even he might not be able to win against Nie Li.

Gu Heng studied the Saint Soul Board as his gaze flickered. Even he couldn't help harboring a deep jealousy for Nie Li's talent.

He definitely must recruit this individual and take him under his wing! A chilly light flashed through Gu Heng's eyes as those thoughts crossed his mind. If he couldn't recruit Nie Li, then he had to destroy thoroughly him. Otherwise, Gu Heng won't be able to feel at ease in his heart!

At that moment, a fairy-like girl, who was some distance away, raised her head and looked at the Saint Soul Board. She couldn't help the trace of shock that flashed through her eyes. She never imagined that Nie Li's talent would be so powerful. However, it also made sense, since this was the one person whose destiny she couldn't see through.

Earlier, when she first met Nie Li and saw his expression, Ying Yueru had a feeling in her heart that their fates would cross in some way.

She took one last glance at the Saint Soul Board, then her figure disappeared into the nearby forest.

# Chapter 283: You asked for it!

Wang Yang, Han Jing, and their entourages entered the Saint Soul Grounds, but exited very quickly. With their talents, they could only make it to the tenth or twentieth step before they were forced to stop. When they looked at the Saint Soul Board and saw Nie Li's name so high up in the rankings, they were completely dumbfounded.

All of them knew firsthand of how difficult it was to communicate with the Heavenly Energy inside the Saint Soul Grounds. Therefore, Nie Li's high rank gave them an unreachable feeling. By the time they exited the grounds, Nie Li was already ranked third on the Saint Soul Board.

Rank three? What kind of joke was that?

Even the strongest newcomer, Long Yuyin, was pushed down!

Compared to Nie Li, she was trash!

Everyone else couldn't help feeling a little dazed. The quota for this year had been taken by Long Yuyin, Jin Yan, and Gu Bei. Now, did that leave the remaining two for them? Obstruct Nie Li? What could they possibly use to obstruct him? Compared to Nie Li, they weren't even on the same level!

Hua Ling was enraged as he looked at the Saint Soul Board. It was fine if Xiao Yu alone managed to reach so high. But right now, Nie Li actually managed to climb even higher than Xiao Yu, to a point that people could only look up to, where others couldn't even think of challenging him! He felt like vomiting blood.

Although there were many people here from the Little Heaven Realm and all of them had decent talent, they were all trash compared to Nie Li!

Hua Ling felt gloomy and disheartened. It was as if he'd been slapped in the face by someone. Ranked third. Not one of those from the Little Heaven Realm could reach such high rank!

At the same time, the teachers who were paying attention to the Saint Soul Board were all shocked.

As a newcomer, charging to rank three on the Saint Soul Board in one go

was simply defying the logic of the heavens! Such talent was rarely seen in recent decades.

Nanmen Tianhai pondered for a brief moment, then said to Huang Yu, “I never expected this Nie Li to give us such a huge surprise.”

Huang Yu replied, “Yes. He’s indeed given us a huge surprise. Ranked third on the Saint Soul Board. Such talent is something we should especially protect. As for the Dragonseal Family, even they won’t be able to touch Nie Li easily!”

Now that Nie Li had displayed his shocking talent, the Skysoul Institute would definitely protect him well.

At that moment, even Venerable Redsoul had his attention on the situation at the Saint Soul Grounds.

Venerable Redsoul lightly sighed. “Back when they were igniting the spiritual flames, I had already sensed his extraordinary talent. Now that I’ve seen it in action, he’s indeed extraordinary. It’s a pity that I can only have him as a student for a single year.”

With such shocking talent, Nie Li would soon attract the attentions of the various factions.

Nie Li didn’t know how big of a commotion he’d caused outside. Also, due to the surge in his cultivation, he’d already reached the 5-star Legend rank stage. Inside his Soul Realm was also a trace of the refined scarlet blood Soul Intent.

This Soul Intent, might it be the soon-to-be-formed Fate Soul?

An ordinary person’s Fate Soul is colourless. In his previous life, Nie Li had also formed a colourless fate soul. However, in this life, it held a trace of scarlet-blood colour.

Right now, he was still unable to fully form it; he will only be able to know the Fate Soul’s color once it’s fully formed. Although he could sense the strangeness in his soul realm, Nie Li didn’t pay much attention to it. When he opened his eyes, they met Long Yuyin’s eyes by coincidence.

Long Yuyin made attempt after attempt to ascend to the one hundred thirty-first step; however, the massive rebound she faced each time prevented her from taking the step forward.

Nie Li watched her and a trace of loathing flashed across his eyes. “You’ve lost!”

Long Yuyin tightly clenched her fists. Although she was unwilling to accept this reality, the truth was glaring right in front of her eyes. She bit her lip until a small bloodstain appeared as her light-brown eyes contained an odd kind of blankness.

Nie Li had mercilessly trampled her pride.

“If one agrees to a bet, then one must accept the defeat!” Long Yuyin took out a whip and threw it over to Nie Li. She raised her head towards him as she continued, “I may have lost today, but from today onwards, I, Long Yuyin will not lose to you a second time. I, Long Yuyin, will not use any of Dragonseal Family’s power. I will win against you forthright in a one to one competition!”

As Nie Li looked at Long Yuyin and recalled all of the events of his previous life, he couldn’t help furrowing his brows. Although the previous Long Yuyin had forced the death of his Master, the current Long Yuyin who stood before him was still fourteen or fifteen years old. Even if she was an overbearing person, right now she was still a young lady, different from the vicious woman from his previous life.

This time when he came back to life, he’d vowed that he wouldn’t let anything like his Master being forced to death happen again.

A woman like Long Yuyin needed to be mercilessly taught a lesson, then sent packing for as far away as possible!

Nie Li accepted the whip and looked at Long Yuyin. He lifted the whip, but just as he was about to lash her, he suddenly recalled the words his Master had told him in his previous life.

“Virtuous like water, for water does not compete.”

“Let grudges vanish like smoke, into the thin air!”

In his previous life, he had entirely forgotten many of the teachings his Master had imparted to him. Back when his Master had died, although he didn't kill Long Yuyin, he still caused chaos to the Dragonseal Family.

However, in this life, the vicious woman who was over a hundreds years old had turned back into a fourteen or fifteen-year-old girl. Although she was still overbearing and arrogant, the killing intent in Nie Li's heart gradually dampened down. Since he'd come back to life, Long Yuyin was no longer able to threaten his Master anymore!

He put the whip down, looked at Long Yuyin, and said in a cold voice, "Go. I no longer have any interest in giving you three lashes. You're not worth it!"

"You..." Long Yuyin's eyes widened as she stared at Nie Li, enraged to the point that her face ashened. Nie Li's words were a thorough humiliation to her! In Nie Li's heart, she didn't even have the qualifications for him to take action?

Nie Li tossed the whip down in front of Long Yuyin and descended in measured steps without giving her a second glance. That was absolute disdain!

"You're not allowed to leave." Long Yuyin stopped Nie Li as she firmly stared at him.

Nie Li frowned his brows for a brief moment as he said in a solemn voice, "I have no interest in wasting my time with you. Beat it!"

Long Yuyin had a stubborn expression on her face as she handed the whip back to him. She coldly stared at Nie Li and said, "I'm willing to accept my defeat. As for those three lashes of yours, even if you're unwilling, you still have to do it. After these three lashes, I, Long Yuyin will challenge you again and take those three lashes back! I, Long Yuyin, am true to my words. I will repay my grudges, and repay my grievances! The words that you've used to insult and humiliate me, I will return them all to you!"

Her character was still the same as in the past, which made Nie Li deeply loathe her.

“Since you asked for it, don’t blame me for being impolite!” Nie Li took the whip from Long Yuyin as he coldly stared at her and yelled, “Long Yuyin, who do you think you are? You think your talent is so formidable that you can treat others like ants? Without the slightest kindness in your heart, you treat lives like grass! Then, when something doesn’t go your way, you kill them. For a woman like you, calling you vicious is already considered light!”

All the grudges in Nie Li’s heart burst forth!

“Is the Dragonseal Family very formidable? If so, why won’t they go all out against the Demon God’s Sect? Aside from suppressing the geniuses within the sect, what good are they? A family like that should be better off destroyed so the Divine Feathers Sect won’t fall into your hands!” Nie Li angrily shouted at Long Yuyin.

At Nie Li’s words, the surrounding disciples couldn’t help feeling satisfied. Indeed, the Divine Feathers Sect had strict scales on status that made ordinary students feel suffocated. They all had grievances towards the Dragonseal Family, but none of them ever dared to show it. Today, Nie Li had said it all for them.

“And you! You think you’re a genius, but in reality you’re just a parasite of the Dragonseal Family, a parasite of the Divine Feathers Sect! You’ve always had an unimaginable supply of cultivating resources. Just because you’ve made a tiny achievement in your cultivation, you think you have the right to be overbearing and treat others like trash?” Nie Li coldly smiled as he continued, “From my point of view, those without cultivating resources but have been hardworking despite the fact, climbing their steps one by one, are the real talents! People like you are the real garbage; garbage that only wastes cultivating resources!”

Long Yuyin’s face ashened and both of her hands were clenched in tight fists. However, she only lowered her head in silence.

Nie Li waved the whip and lashed it over Long Yuyin’s cheeks and shoulders, “This lash is for all the disciples who you’ve bullied in the Divine Feathers Sect!”

Although Long Yuyin had the Blood Dragon lineage, this lash still left a red mark on her cheeks and shoulders. Nie Li's whip contained powerful energy that directly entered Long Yuyin's body.

Nie Li waved the lash again and a crisp smack landed on Long Yuyin's chest. The clothes around her chest were instantly ripped open, leaving a scarlet whip mark inside and showed her fair skin.

"This lash is for me. At first, when you made the bet with me, you intended to use those three lashes to kill me. Just giving you back your lashes is letting you off cheap!" Nie Li coldly glared at Long Yuyin.

This was thorough humiliation!

Long Yuyin held her chest as tears flickered in her eyes. However, she only stubbornly turned around and faced Nie Li with her back.

"Originally, I wasn't even in the mood to hit you. Hitting you is simply dirtying my hands. This is what you've asked for! As for the last whip, it's for my Master..." Nie Li recalled the events of his previous life, when his Master was forced to death by Long Yuyin. And yet, his Master still told him to let go of vengeance as she died in his arms.

Although he'd experienced two lifetimes, that scar remained in Nie Li's heart.

Nie Li lifted the whip in his hands and mercilessly lashed down Long Yuyin's back. The whip rode the sharp gale and bored down on Long Yuyin, issuing another crisp smack. The places where this whip had contacted were marked by torn cloth, trailing all the way from her shoulder to her butt.

This lash contained the wrath in Nie Li's heart; therefore, it definitely wasn't light.

Even with Long Yuyin's strong body, she still couldn't help the groan that escaped. Her beautiful face turned a little ashen as the three lashes from Nie Li burned with pain. Since her youth, she'd never been humiliated like this before!

# Chapter 284: Blocked

The pain on Long Yuyin's body was secondary; Nie Li's words were like sharp blades that carved the pain straight onto her heart.

That was the greatest humiliation!

Was she really so vile in the eyes of others? Long Yuyin raised her head and looked at the nearby students, who immediately lowered their heads when they noticed her gaze.

So in the eyes of others, she was exactly that venomous woman Nie Li had described!

From Long Yuyin's point of view, she only wanted to be stronger than anyone else.

So it turned out that she was the trash who attracted the loathing of others!

Her eyes are flickered with tears. Although she was overbearing, she didn't easily beat or kill anyone. She never intended to kill Nie Li with her three lashes; in fact, it was impossible. She only wanted to teach him a lesson, so why did Nie Li call her a venomous person?

The third lash was the heaviest and most merciless. Nie Li said that he did it for his Master, but she didn't even know who his Master was!

Long Yuyin's heart was filled with grievances. She turned her head back towards him as her eyes flickered with tears, grounded her teeth, and said, "Nie Li, I hate you!"

Upon finishing her words, Long Yuyin wiped the tears from her eyes and quickly ran down the steps.

Nie Li furrowed his brows as he watched Long Yuyin's figure disappear through the entrance of the Saint Soul Grounds. So it seems that Long Yuyin would definitely not leave the matter as it was. However, there was nothing he should be afraid of, regardless of what methods she came up with. After all, Long Yuyin had forced the death of his Master, so in this life, it could be considered serving justice.

If Long Yuyin left the matter as it was, then Nie Li decided that he would also forget it and cease pursuing the grudges from his previous life. However, if she still wanted to tangle with him, then he'd teach her another lesson.

Xiao Yu looked at Nie Li with a dazed expression. He kept sensing that the Nie Li of today was a little off. Although Long Yuyin was overbearing, it still wasn't to the point that it warranted such a huge reaction from Nie Li. He should be someone who could contain his anger.

Furthermore, Nie Li had said that the third whip was for his Master. But who was this Master that Nie Li had spoken of? Could it be his foster father? But his foster father didn't have any grudges with Long Yuyin!

Lu Piao also watched Long Yuyin run out, then pulled his gaze away and gave Nie Li a thumbs up. Watching Nie Li give that girl three lashes simply felt great for the rest of them! Even Lu Piao couldn't stand that pride and arrogance of hers.

Now that the show had ended, they all decided to resume cultivating. Those ranked within the top ten could remain in the Saint Soul Grounds for three days; naturally, Nie Li wouldn't waste such precious time. Thus, he focused on training and cultivating.

Dragonseal Family, Long Yuyin's courtyard

Long Yuyin sat by her bed, holding a bottle of medicinal salve. She dipped into the medicine and slowly applied it to her wounds. There were clear wounds on her face, chest, and various other parts of her body. Although she possessed the Blood Dragon lineage, Nie Li's lashes felt as though they could cut through her body, leaving her in burning pain.

By now, she'd already changed out of her torn clothes and put on a silk set that vaguely outlined her voluptuous figure. When she applied the medicine to her chest, she couldn't help groaning in pain.

When she thought of the places where Nie Li's whip had landed, she felt extremely humiliated. He was the first person who'd dared to do that to her!

Her right hand tightly gripped the whip as she recalled Nie Li's loathing expression. It was as though her entire body were rotten, that even a single glance could be considered too much to bear. Such an expression of despise filled her heart with anger.

She clenched her teeth and wiped the tears from her face as she applied more medicinal salve down her back.

"En." Long Yuyin couldn't help letting out another groan from the piercing pain.

The medicinal salve permeated her wounds, and after a period of time had passed, she felt a little better. This kind of fiery hot pain was now engraved deep into her memories. No matter what, she'll always remember that Nie Li was the first and only person who'd ever whipped her.

She took out a set of violet clothes and changed into them. Draped in a violet cloth, her mesmerizing figure and beautiful face would give others a charming temperament. Except that there was a wound on her face that had yet to fade.

She looked at the mirror that was set some distance away. Although she'd never paid much attention to her own appearance, she was undoubtedly very beautiful. If it hadn't been for her overbearing character, there might've been quite a long line of young suitors asking for her hand.

However, the wound on her face couldn't be covered.

She recalled the words that Nie Li had said earlier. No matter how beautiful the exterior was, it'd still be impossible to cover up the ugliness in her heart. She picked up an object and pegged it at the mirror. With a shattering sound, the mirror broke into pieces.

Long Yuyin felt so indignant that she wanted to cry. Since she was young, this was the first time that she'd been so wronged.

Soon after she'd finished changing, she left her room and Hu Yong rushed in.

Hu Yong was instantly enraged upon seeing the wound on her face.

“Ying’er, what’s wrong with you? I heard that you were beaten? Who was it? I’ll exterminate his entire clan!”

At his words, Long Yuyin was stunned for a moment. Not long ago, such words sounded absolutely normal to her. Whoever dared to harm her would definitely have their entire clan exterminated by her. In the past, she’d believed such things to be absolutely normal.

But at that moment, Nie Li’s insults echoed in her ears. “...beating and killing as you wish, treating lives like grass...For a woman like you, calling you vicious is already considered light!”

Suddenly, deep loathing rose up in her at Hu Yong’s words.

“Hu Yong, mind your own business!” She threw a loatheful glance at Hu Yong as she continued, “I’m going back to cultivate. Get lost!”

“Ying’er, someone hit you and you’re not going to take revenge? I’ll help you take vengeance!” Hu Yong said immediately.

She threw a glance at Hu Yong as she coldly said, “Vengeance? Even I can’t match up as his opponent. How are you going to take revenge?”

Hu Yong said in a solemn voice, “I’ll send the experts from my family to take revenge for you!”

Long Yuyin threw him a furious glare. “Getting help from the experts of your family whenever you hit a wall. Are you trash? Your family aside, you’re just trash! Could it be that the problems that I, Long Yuyin, am unable to handle can be solved by a piece of trash like you?”

Hu Yong was choked by Long Yuyin’s words. He paused for a brief moment before saying in a weak voice, “Yin’er, could the other party’s family really be that powerful? Is it the Ashen Flames Family? Or the Gu Clan?”

As she looked at Hu Yong, a deep loathing rose in Long Yuyin’s heart. Now, she was beginning to understand why she’d been loathed by others. In others’ point of view, she was the member of a prominent family that had a bottomless supply of cultivating resources. The moment she gained an achievement in cultivation, she would mock the origins of others and

serve beatings and killings as she wished.

In the eyes of others, her achievements today had all been gained by relying on her family's cultivating resources. There was little link to herself.

"I don't want to see you. Get lost!" Long Yuyin rebuked.

When he saw that Long Yuyin was about to flip out, Hu Yong cringed and he backed away.

Only after seeing Hu Yong take his leave did Long Yuyin's heart slowly calm down again.

She thought about how Nie Li looked down at her from above. She thought about the things she'd done in the past. She'd always thought that such words were fitting and expected of her; that was, until Nie Li's lashes whipped down on her. Now, she reflected on her words and actions.

"No matter what, I will definitely surpass you. The grievance I felt today, I'll definitely return them to you!" Long Yuyin promptly sat down and began cultivating Heavenly Energy.

Surges of majestic Heavenly Energy entered her body. Long Yuyin sensed that somehow, her cultivating speed was now a lot faster than it was in the past.

"Virtuous like water, for water does not compete..." Long Yuyin recalled the words from the Foremaster Divination and finally gained a some insight into it.

Saint Soul Grounds

Nie Li continued to cultivate as he communicated with Heaven and Earth, now only a step away from fully forming his first Fate Soul.

One day, two days...

Two days later, Nie Li sensed that he'd already reached the doorstep of the Heavenly Fate Realm. However, breaking through to that realm still wasn't that easy.

Lu Piao stood up, looked at Nie Li, and said, "Nie Li, I have to leave now."

He'd already used up all of his time and was no longer permitted to remain in the Saint Soul Grounds to cultivate.

"We'll leave together, then," Nie Li said. It was impossible for him to make a breakthrough in the short amount of time he had left. He could only take it easy while searching for any potentials for a breakthrough.

The two of them, and Xiao Yu, walked down the steps and headed towards the exit of the Saint Soul Grounds.

The surrounding students watched as the three of them left and couldn't help sighing in their hearts. Those three monsters were finally leaving. Cultivating with them was simply too much of a blow to their confidence.

### Outside the Saint Soul Grounds

The three of them had remained inside the grounds for such a long time that the people outside had already dispersed. Only a few people remained.

When Nie Li and his group exited the Saint Soul Grounds, a group of people immediately walked towards them and surrounded them.

Nie Li furrowed his brows for a brief moment and swept his eyes at the approaching individuals. There were a total of ten people, nine of whom had already stepped into the Heavenly Fate Realm. There was one who was approximately the same age as Nie Li.

"Who are you people?" Xiao Yu looked at them as he went on high alert and made preparations to engage in battle.

The youth walked over as his gaze fell onto Nie Li. "You're Nie Li?"

Nie Li's eyes narrowed. "Correct. Who are you people and why are you looking for me?" It seemed that the other party had approached because of him.

The youth closed in on Nie Li as he coldly snorted, "Brat, you must be tired of living. Someone from the Tiny World actually dared to be so impudent in the Skysoul Institute!"

Nie Li contemptuously curled his lips, "Long Yuyin sent you guys?"

# Chapter 285: A Chicken Feather for an Authoritative Token

This youth, Hu Yong, was Long Yuyin's fiancé.

Hu Yong took a step forward as he grabbed Nie Li by the collar. "Nie Li, you actually dared hurt Long Yuyin! You must be tired of living!"

Nie Li snorted as he eyed Hu Yong and his lackeys. "You're all from the Dragonseal Family?"

Hu Yong furiously glared at Nie Li. "Today, I'll have you die in full aware. My name is Hu Yong, Long Yuyin's fiancé!" His heart was burning in a raging fire from Nie Li's unafraid countenance.

Lu Piao looked at Hu Yong's crotch and gave three short laughs. "Long Yuyin's fiancé? The one who was rumored to have been laid to waste by her? I never thought you'd actually stick your head out for her. Threatening us is useless. Don't think that we're unaware of the Skysoul Institute's rules. I'd really admire you if you actually had the guts to take action right here, right now."

Hu Yong was shamed into anger as he continued to clutch Nie Li's collar, looking ferocious, and said, "Don't think that I'm afraid to touch you guys!"

Nie Li casually looked at him. "Then, I dare you to!"

Right now, Hu Yong was extremely furious. Before coming here, he'd gathered so many Heavenly Fate Realm experts so that Nie Li wouldn't have a chance at retaliating. If only the Skysoul Institute's damned rule that he couldn't take any action within the school grounds didn't exist!

Hu Yong released his grip and looked at Nie Li as a chilling light flashed through his eyes. "Don't think that because of the institute's rules that I won't be able to do anything to you. Trying to mess with me? You're still too tender! Hu Tian, take the three of them to a secluded place and have a good chat with them!"

“Yes!” Hu Tian revealed a merciless smile at the corner of his mouth as he said, “Three Young Masters, shall we go?”

Although Hu Yong and co. were unable to kill the three of them without having the Skysoul Institute pursue the matter, teaching them a lesson is still possible.

The aura of the nine Heavenly Fate Realm experts utterly suppressed Nie Li and Lu Piao, rendering them unable to retaliate as they tried to herd the three of them into a secluded corner. On the contrary, Xiao Yu wasn't affected by them at all. He was only a step away from being a 4-fate Heavenly Fate Realm expert. However, he didn't make any movements as he tried to think of a countermeasure for the situation. Even if he were to take action, it'd definitely be impossible for him to take on so many Heavenly Fate Realm experts.

He never imagined that Hu Yong would actually use such a method to scrape back some face.

“Hoo, it seems that you're just playing some kiddy games.” Nie Li glanced at Hu Yong in disdain, “Just like kids fighting, you punch me and I punch you. How childish!”

Hu Yong was ready to explode at Nie Li's disdainful expression. He snorted, “You're just being stubborn now that your back's against a wall!”

Nie Li crossed his arms as he smiled in disdain at Hu Yong. “Do you really think that I can't take you all on today? For the likes of you, I don't even need to take action myself!”

“The three of you haven't even reached the Heavenly Fate Realm. If I can't take care of you today, then I'll start writing my name backwards!” Hu Yong furiously snorted. He already knew that he himself was very arrogant, but he never thought that Nie Li would actually be more arrogant than him. Faced with so many enemies, he still dared to say such words. “Take the three of them away!”

The moment Hu Yong's words landed, a deep and aged voice sounded from behind. “Young Master Hu, I'm afraid that you can't take the three of them with you!”

Hu Yong furiously snorted. “Today, I will take the three of them! Who dares to hinder me?”

He turned around to see just who would be bold enough to help the three of them! However, when he turned around, he couldn't help being dazed at the sighted before him.

Two silhouettes approached them slowly, both of which Hu Yong recognised. One person was named Nanmen Tianhai; the other was Huang Yu. Both Elder-rank figures, higher-ups of the Skysoul Institute. Even the higher-ups of the Hu Clan treated them with respect. Furthermore, Hu Yong was currently a disciple of the Skysoul Institute and subject to the institute's restrictions!

“Young Master Hu, I'm afraid that in this Skysoul Institute, you cannot act as you wish. These three are from the talented generation of our Skysoul Institute. No one is allowed to take any action against them. Even if they are in the wrong, the institute will oversee the punishment.” Huang Yu looked at Hu Yong as he said in a solemn voice, “Young Master Hu is also a disciple of the Skysoul Institute. Regardless of now or in the future, those who dare to violate the rules of the Skysoul Institute cannot fault us for giving out punishment!”

In his heart, Hu Yong was extremely dejected. Only now did he understand that he'd fallen into Nie Li's trap.

With Nanmen Tianhai and Huang Yu present, he definitely won't be able to do anything to Nie Li today. Furthermore, these two elders now had their eye on him; from now on, he could only dream of taking action. He furiously glared at Nie Li and his party.

Lu Piao laughed as he looked at Hu Yong. “Earlier on, Young Master Hu mentioned that if he couldn't take us out, he'd start writing his name backwards!”

“You guys better watch out. I definitely won't let you guys off! Especially once you've reached the Heavenly Fate Realm, don't even think about stepping out of the Skysoul Institute. Otherwise, you'll die every time you go out!” Hu Yong furiously rebuked, then swept a glance at his nine

Heavenly Fate Realm underlings, and ordered, "Let's go!"

The Hu group afforded Nie Li and co. one more furious glare before turning and leaving after their master.

What Hu Yong meant was once Nie Li and his group finally reached the Heavenly Fate Realm and headed outside the institute grounds to explore, that was when he'd attack the three of them. But by then, Nie Li would've already placed his first Fate soul into the Soul Hall. When that time came, what would there be for him to be afraid of? Nie Li lightly smiled. He couldn't think of a time when he'd actually been afraid of anyone!

The best Hu Yong could do was to hinder their cultivation a little by trying to obstruct Nie Li from breaking through to the Heavenly Star Realm. Even still, that Hu Yong was thinking too highly of himself.

Hu Yong and his group arrived looking awe-inspiring, but left with their tails between their legs. Hu Yong himself was extremely disheartened. Long Yuyin had been bullied and when he came to stand up for her, he ended up getting ash smeared on his own nose instead.

But because the two Elders of the Skysoul Institute were present, his party could only leave in a dejected fashion.

Nanmen Tianhai and Huang Yu retracted their gazes from Hu Yong. Nanmen Tianhai wore a stern face as he said, "You three, too. In the institute, cultivation comes before everything else. Running around, attracting trouble, how inappropriate! If there's a next time, then we'll expel you from the Skysoul Institute!"

Lu Piao immediately cried out in grievance, as he thought that this Elder was unable to distinguish between right and wrong. "But Lord Elder, we didn't start it! They started it!"

Nanmen Tianhai coldly snorted as his strict gaze swept over the three of them. "A housefly will never bite a seamless egg! If you guys don't attract trouble, how could trouble look for you?"

Huang Yu, who stood to the side, gently smiled at the three of them and said, "The three of you are rather decent talents, with unmeasurable

prospects. Therefore, keeping a low-profile is a must. The Dragonseal Family, the Gu Clan isn't a group you guys should easily offend. It's best to endure for the future. Not enduring a small matter will spoil the bigger plans!"

Nie Li and Xiao Yu exchanged glances. The two of them were intelligent people. One Elder had an angelic face, while the other one had a devilish face; their meaning was crystal clear. These elders had come to tell them not to pick up any more trouble with people like Long Yuyin and Hu Yong.

In fact, while Nie Li was cultivating inside the Saint Soul Grounds, he'd already had an inkling of how dazzling his performance would be on the Saint Soul Board. Since he'd proved himself a lot stronger than Long Yuyin, there was no reason that the higher-ups of the Skysoul Institute wouldn't know about it. Since that was the case, he'd teach Long Yuyin a lesson. The Skysoul Institute's higher-ups would still think of methods to overlook this. After all, talents were extremely important to the Skysoul Institute!

Indeed, the two Elders had appeared after Hu Yong. Although the Elders were subordinate to the Grand Elder, they were still authoritative figures of the Divine Feathers Sect.

Nie Li said in a tone neither servile nor overbearing, "Thanks for the two Elders' teachings. We will not take any initiatives to provoke trouble. However, if some people are being rude and unreasonable and insist on find trouble with us, then we can't blindly endure. Otherwise, they'll ask for a mile once you give them the inch!"

Nanmen Tianhai and Huang Yu exchanged glances and both bitterly smiled in their hearts. Indeed, geniuses all had their own temperaments. Nie Li's words were neither soft nor hard. He was implying that if Long Yuyin or Hu Yong came looking for trouble again, he'd still fight back.

Xiao Yu nodded and said, "If some people are being overbearing and unreasonable, we have the right to protect ourselves. Take today for example. Hu Yong and his group wanted to take us to a secluded place to 'take care of us'. If it weren't for the two Elders, who knows what the

outcome might've been? How can we endure such behaviour?"

Nanmen Tianhai said in a solemn voice, "If someone wants to cause trouble for you, we'll naturally help you resolve it. However, all of you have boundless prospects, I suggest that you don't waste your strength on internal fights. We, the Divine Feathers Sect still have many other enemies. You, the geniuses of the Divine Feathers Sect, should be united!"

Nie Li was waiting for those words from Nanmen Tianhai.

Nie Li smiled. "Since Elder is willing to help us stand up for ourselves, then of course, it'd be better. We couldn't be bothered to waste our time with those senseless people!"

Nanmen Tianhai snorted, "That depends on your performances!"

The two Elders turned around and left.

Nie Li watched them go before he turned and lightly smiled at Xiao Yu and Lu Piao and said, "Let's go back. After our lessons are complete, we'll head for the second testing ground! With those two Elders watching us, there shouldn't be anyone who dares to touch us in the testing grounds. Otherwise, those two Elders would be going back on their word!"

Xiao Yu couldn't help smiling at Nie Li's words. Nie Li really was taking a chicken feather for an authoritative token.

Just outside the Saint Soul Grounds, Nanmen Tianhai and Huang Yu paused their steps.

Nanmen Tianhai bitterly smiled as he asked Huang Yu, "Old Yu, have we fallen for that kid's trap?"

Huang Yu spread his hands out and said, "It seems to be the case. We definitely fell for that kid's trap. With his eye-catching performance in the Saint Soul Grounds, it'd definitely attract the attention of those higher ups within the Skysoul Institute. That's why they didn't show any fear when facing Hu Yong."

Nanmen Tianhai dispiritedly responded, "I've seen the forms that Xiao Yu filled out for them. They're still only fourteen. After this year, they'll be

fifteen at most, and yet, they're already so cunning. Long Yuyin and Jin Yan were the most outstanding among the younger generation; but compared to him, they're indeed a little inferior.”

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1. Chinese idiom. Assuming unwarranted authority on slim pretext.

# Chapter 286: Heavenly Fate

Just as Nie Li and his party were about to leave, another group of people walked towards them.

Nie Li slightly narrowed his eyes. It's indeed: 'waves come just after the last one calms'. It seems like he won't be able to have any peace from now on!

The leader, Gu Bei's older cousin Gu Heng, walked towards Nie Li.

"You must be Nie Li!" Gu Heng's face had a faint smile, "Obtaining rank three of the Saint Soul Board as a newcomer and mercilessly stepping over Long Yuyin, you're indeed formidable! I'm Gu Heng of the Gu Clan!"

At Gu Heng's words, Nie Li glanced at the group of people standing behind Gu Heng and narrowed his eyes. "I wonder what your distinguished countenance seeks me for?"

Nie Li had never heard of the name 'Gu Heng' before. In his previous life, the strongest person of the Gu Clan was Gu Bei!

A youth who stood to the side proudly announced, "Our Young Master is the first in line to succeed the Gu Clan!"

First successor? But in the end, he failed to succeed the Gu Clan? The corner of Nie Li's mouth curled as he eyed the arrogant youth. It seemed that this Gu Heng would be Gu Bei's competitor.

Gu Heng waved his hand, signaling his underling to silence himself. He then lightly smiled and said, "My purpose in coming here is to make friends with you geniuses!"

Lu Piao slapped his chest and straightforwardly said, "Make friends? I like making friends, we're friends now!"

Gu Heng paused. Did Lu Piao really not hear the hidden intent in those words, or was he just acting as though he didn't understand?

Nie Li laughed inwardly. Lu Piao was acting like a nitwit, but he knew what he was doing. Nie Li smiled, "I have the same intentions. If Young

Master Gu wants to be friends, we'll be glad. From now on, we can get along as friends!"

Gu Heng's face turned slightly cold; however, he patted Nie Li on the shoulder and said, "I like your character. If you have some spare time, do make a visit to our Gu Clan. We of the Gu Clan would definitely be more than happy to welcome geniuses such as yourselves!"

Nie Li maintained some distance with Gu Heng as he said monotonously, "We also like being friends with people like Young Master Gu. Except that we're all used to being free, so joining the Gu Clan might not suit us."

At Nie Li's words, Gu Heng's eyes flashed with a ray of chilling light as he smiled, "With talents like yours, you could reach the Heavenly Fate Realm in half a month if you have sufficient cultivating resources! Please do consider the offer! The Gu Clan will forever keep its door open to you!"

Gu Heng finished his words and walked past Nie Li and his group. Upon seeing that, the people from the Gu Clan also dispersed.

Nie Li turned his head back to watch Gu Heng's silhouette.

It seemed that this Gu Heng was from the Gu Clan as well. Lu Piao furrowed his brows and asked, "Nie Li, that fellow intends to recruit us? Based on his tone, he's an extremely proud type of guy. He's trying to recruit us, yet he still has that superior look. He's absolutely different from Gu Bei. What's his relationship with Gu Bei, anyways?"

"Don't worry about him." Nie Li lightly smiled and continued, "He's just another opinionated fellow. Trying to recruit us under his wing and without even understanding if he himself is capable of it! He's just the first successor to the Gu Clan. He doesn't even have any real authority within the Gu Clan, and yet he's already treating the entire Gu Clan as his!"

Xiao Yu was silently standing to the side. He hadn't spoken a word since the beginning. After pondering for a while, he finally said, "Nie Li, you have to be careful. Since you've displayed such astonishing talent on the Saint Soul Board, the major families will definitely have their eyes on you!"

“There’s no harm. We should find someone to spread the news that we’ll only consider joining families after we’ve completed our training in the Skysoul Institute!” Nie Li said, “It’ll be fine if we just keep delaying it. We’ll talk about it later, after we’ve finished our training. Before our training has completed, those families probably won’t try to offend us too badly and risk pushing us towards the other families!”

Xiao Yu nodded after giving it a thought, “That’s a pretty good idea.”

Gu Heng stood some distance away with a sullen expression.

“Those arrogant bastards. They really thought I wanted to make friends with them? How could they be fit to be friends with me?” Gu Heng coldly laughed. How could he not perceive the faint rejecting from Nie Li? “It’s already considered to be a praise to be on terms as friends as for those that had pledged allegiance to me! Those who’re unwilling don’t even have the qualifications to be my friends!”

A youth who stood next to him agreed with his words. “Indeed, those three don’t know how to appreciate kindness!”

Gu Heng cursed uncontrollably. “So what if he’s talented? In the end, all the so-called geniuses still joined one family or another. It’s absolutely impossible for a single person to shake a family. Our Gu Clan can let him be or have him dead. If it wasn’t for the Skysoul Institute’s rule, they’d already be dead!”

The power struggle between the various families of Divine Feathers Sect was too intense; therefore, Gu Heng didn’t want to make too much gossiping material for others.

Gu Heng’s eyes flashed with a chilling light. “Since you’re unwilling to pledge allegiance to me, then you can just dream about reaching the Heavenly Star Realm for the rest of your life!”

Within the Draconic Ruins Realm, cultivating was an extremely hard task. If one didn’t actively go out to train and obtain spiritual stones for themselves, the Skysoul Institute wouldn’t be able to provide the sufficient cultivating resources for them. However, going to the various places in Draconic Ruins Realm meant high danger and there would be constant

death.

Naturally, once a student reached the Heavenly Fate Realm and placed their first Fate Soul in the Soul Hall, they wouldn't have to worry about their soul dissipating. However, every death would consume a level of cultivation in exchange. Therefore, trying to step into higher realms without the help of others would be an extremely tough task.

Once they entered the Heavenly Fate Realm and obtained sufficient cultivating resources, they'd be able to rapidly raise their cultivation. However, every level would exhaust large quantities of cultivating resources. Since there were countless other experts fighting over the limited cultivating resources, there would naturally be deaths among them.

At that point, it would become very easy for a family to control a single person's cultivation.

Regardless, Nie Li's refusal had angered Gu Heng. It's just that Gu Heng hadn't fully fallen out with Nie Li yet.

In a deep valley of the Divine Feathers Sect stood a straw hut surrounded by peach blossoms, like a garden full of peaches.

Such beautiful scenery was beyond spectacular!

A variety of mysterious, glowing arrays wandered around this straw hut.

Inside the hut, was a beautiful girl who sat in silence. There were six mysterious devices around her, each with round balls that revolved like stars. Each device formed and released pulses of mysterious energy.

This girl was Ying Yueru.

Both of her eyes were closed and brows were furrowed; she seemed to be deep in thought over something.

After a few hours had passed, she suddenly opened her eyes.

Ying Yueru looked as if she'd figured everything out. "So that's what's going on! No wonder I sensed such familiarity when I looked at him." She smiled lightly and muttered to herself, "The Temporal Demon Spirit Book

is indeed extraordinary, to reverse time and space. However, if you're unable to defy the heavens and change your destiny, then everything will turn back into nothing. Once you reach the Heavenly Axis Realm, the Sage Emperor will slowly begin to sense your presence. What I can do to help you is shift your fate to myself. When the Sage Emperor performs his divination this time around, it will be me he finds, not you! Your Master can only help you this far; as to whether can you truly defy the heavens and change your destiny, that all depends on you!"

Ying Yueru's gaze fell into distant space.

"My mother was a human, but the blood of the Demon God also flows within me. My existence was already destined to be intolerable. I hope that you can continue to live with my teachings and expectations."

She remained there like a fairy that had descended into the mortal realm, uncorrupted by the world's dust. Her gentle gaze was as clear as water.

She was a woman who was as serene as the moon.

Ever since she was born, she'd been an observer of destiny. She'd performed divinations on too many people; from her perspective, the lives and deaths were too normal. Because of this, she didn't even view her own life and death with much importance.

She continued her calculations as Nie Li's fate and her own started show little changes.

A day passed quickly. Inside Venerable Redsoul's courtyard, the majority of students were already seated and waiting for Venerable Redsoul to arrive.

Nie Li and Lu Piao walked into the training room and sat in their own seats.

When the students saw Nie Li and Lu Piao enter, the quiet training room instantly burst into a commotion.

"Are you aware? That guy called Nie Li totally crushed Long Yuyin beneath his feet on the Saint Soul Board!"

“Shh, lower your voice. Aren’t you afraid that Long Yuyin will hear us?”

“I heard that Long Yuyin even got served with three lashes. She was so proud, so now that she was lashed three times, the shame is probably even harder for her to bear than death!”

As of this moment, nearly every student directed their attention towards Nie Li and Lu Piao.

Long Yuyin quietly sat there, wearing a tight-fitting outfit. She was the most beautiful girl in the class due to her impressive figure and flawless looks. The only flaw was that, at this point of time, she bore a rather ugly expression as she tightly clenched both fists on her knees.

How could she not hear the students’ discussions?

But on the Saint Soul Board, she’d indeed lost. However, the fact was that she was still very prideful in her heart.

Long Yuyin looked at Nie Li as her eyes flashed with a fighting spirit. ‘It’s only the Saint Soul Board, it can’t prove that your talent is stronger than mine. I will thoroughly beat you in other ways!’ She definitely wouldn’t allow herself to lose to anyone else that’s the same age as herself.

She’d been brought up by her mother. And throughout childhood, her mother had always told her that a woman must depend on herself. She must be a true expert and crush all men beneath her feet.

Ever since she was young, she’d displayed a powerful talent. Right now, she was already the seventh in line to succeed the Dragonseal Family. This was her glory; however, it was still far from enough. She wanted to become the most powerful!

Now, on the Saint Soul Board, Nie Li had crushed her mercilessly, which nearly made her go insane. However, she definitely won’t admit defeat!

# Chapter 287: Physical Strength

Gu Bei approached Nie Li, gave him a thumbs up, and softly whispered in his ear, “Nice job, Nie Li! Haha! To think you actually managed to step over Long Yuyin! I’ve always wanted to be on top of her, but I was helpless since she was so powerful. But it seems you’re far more powerful than that.”

“It’s only a competition on the Saint Soul Board!” Nie Li shook his head as he glanced at Gu Bei and said meaningfully, “You should also be able to do the same thing, right?”

At Nie Li’s words, Gu Bei smiled as he shook his head, “I’m confident that I won’t lose to that woman, but crushing her completely is still too hard for me. You’re the only one who’s earned my admiration!”

“The Saint Soul Board competition can’t be considered much.” Nie Li wasn’t really concerned about everything that had just happened. Within his heart, Long Yuyin was just a passer-by; his true opponent was the Sage Emperor!

Gu Bei chuckled. “That’s already very impressive. The Saint Soul Board is also a symbol of strength! It must feel terrific to conquer a cold and icy woman like Long Yuyin. I originally wanted her as one of my concubines, but since you’re interested, I’ll let you have her!”

Nie Li didn’t know what to say at Gu Bei’s nonsense. Although it wasn’t unexpected, since Gu Bei was a little too unrestrained in character. Even though he was just fourteen or fifteen years old, rumors circulated that he already had over twenty wives hidden at home. However, Nie Li had no idea whether if it was all just an act or if it was really just part of his personality.

“I have no interest in her,” Nie Li lightly said.

Gu Bei was stunned for a moment, then snuck a glance at Nie Li’s crotch. “You’re not having those problems, right? She’s such a beautiful woman, but you’re not moved by it?”

Nie Li was simply speechless. He thought of Ye Ziyun and Xiao Ning'er; if he was going to take a wife, she should at least be of Ziyun or Ning'er's standard. For a woman like Long Yuyin, Nie Li wasn't interested at all.

Nie Li figured that there'd be no end to the discussion if he let it continue, so he changed subjects. "Someone from the Gu Clan, called Gu Heng, came looking for us."

At Nie Li's words, Gu Bei immediately wiped the sloppy expression off his face and thought about what Nie Li had said. "Nie Li, regardless of what you and Lu Piao decide to do, you'll still be my friends. That Gu Heng isn't a good guy; it's best if you keep some distance from him. But if he ends up recruiting you guys under him, I hope that you'll still be the same people I've always known."

"I've already rejected him." Nie Li said calmly, "Not only him, we've also rejected many others!"

Gu Bei raised his head and looked at Nie Li in astonishment. A brief moment later, he recovered and responded, "Gu Heng is very narrow-minded. Since you guys rejected him, then you must be wary of his underhand tactics!"

Nie Li casually said, "We're not worried about that. Even if an army comes, we'll block it with generals. If he sends a flood, we'll block it with earth!"

Gu Bei considered Nie Li's expression for a moment before saying, "Nie Li, as far as that goes, I really admire you. From now on, if there's ever anything you need from me, just say the word and I definitely won't shrink away from the task!"

Nie Li waved his hand. "We'll talk about it later!"

Gu Bei was a good person; therefore, Nie Li didn't want to build their friendship just on mutual benefit.

Some distance away stood Han Jing, Wan Yang, and their groups, who were watching Nie Li, Lu Piao, and Gu Bei with deep jealousy. However, none of them dared to casually offend Nie Li. Their talents were simply

not on the same level. Nie Li's talent already made them feel deep fear; asking for trouble from him was the same as asking for their own deaths!

Nie Li was someone who even dared to hit Long Yuyin!

Venerable Redsoul walked into the courtyard and swept an eye over his students.

When his eyes landed on Nie Li, he paused for a brief moment before smiling. "I already know that some of you have already entered the training grounds. There are also some students who've achieved pretty good ranks and shown talent surpassing my expectations. Excellent! Everyone else must work hard as well. Because of the East District's maximum quota of five, if you cannot obtain a position this year, you'll have to wait until next year. Next year, there'll be even more students joining us from the South and North Districts. Who knows? This might be your last chance!"

Han Jing, Wang Yang and the rest all clenched their fists. There were only five spaces and the difficulty of this competition was way too high. Even still, Venerable Redsoul's words felt threatening to them. If they were unable to reach the East District this year, did that mean that they'd lose that chance forever? Their hearts were filled with agitation. They were all geniuses who possessed Heavenly Spiritual Roots; how could they lower their heads and allow others to step over them?

"During the lesson three days ago, we tried to ignite Spiritual Flames. I wonder if you all practised it when you went home? If you've managed to ignite the Spiritual Flames, please report your name to me. Igniting the Spiritual Flames is one of the cards you can use to enter the East District. In today's lesson, we'll talk about how to refine the physical body. A powerful cultivator should first possess a powerful physical body; only then, can the body contain a powerful soul! However, strengthening the physical body isn't a simple matter!" Venerable Redsoul continued, "Now, I'll teach you guys how to strengthen your physical bodies!"

Upon finishing his words, Venerable Redsoul retrieved several armguards from his interspatial ring. "This is the Profound Weight

Armguards; like its name, it's filled with profound weight. The armguards are divided into five types: 250kg, 500kg, 750kg, 1000kg, and 1250kg. Each of you will choose a pair and wear it!"

Venerable Redsoul brought out a pile of armguards, placed them in front of him, and said, "You are not allowed to exert Heavenly Energy. You may only rely on your physical strength. Naturally, you should choose a pair of weights that are around eighty percent of your limit. Now then, come and take a pair!"

As soon as Venerable Redsoul finished speaking, several students walked forward and picked up some of the 500kg Profound Weight Armguards. Instantly, their faces turned red and they immediately switched stances to better support the armguard with both hands. One armguard weighed 500kg; a pair would weight 1000kg. These students were completely unable to support such weight; therefore, they were forced to stick with the 250kg Profound Weight Armguards.

Only now, after being restricted from using Heavenly Energy, did they realise how weak their physiques were.

At first, the students who walked up were unwilling to take the lightest armguards; however, most of them quickly realised that their physical strength was too weak. Only after that did they pick up the lightest. Only a small number of people were able to wield the 500kg Profound Weight Armguards.

As Long Yuyin walked up to the pile, almost everyone was focusing their attention on her. Everyone knew that she possessed the Blood Dragon lineage, and therefore had a powerful physique. However, none of them knew just how strong she actually was.

Long Yuyin lowered her head and picked up a 750kg pair of armguards and easily slipped them on.

She'd usually use the Profound Weight Armguards before, so she easily found a suitable pair for herself. Furthermore, even though she was wearing the 750kg armguards, one could still say that she was reserving a portion of her strength. Back when she cultivated with her family's

resources, she trained with the 1000kg armguards.

The strength of her physical body was her pride.

Jin Yan walked up and chose the 500kg armguards. He gave a depressing glance at Long Yuyin. He was already straining to wear the 500kg armguards, forget about the 750kg ones. He'd always been a hair behind Long Yuyin.

"It's our turn now!" Lu Piao said as he walked up to pick up the 500kg Profound Weight Armguards and weighed it in his hand. Although it was a little tough for him, he still managed to wear them with a red face.

Gu Bei picked up the 500kg armguards and wore them effortlessly. He chose to keep them on instead of exchanging them for a heavier set.

Nie Li had also chose the 500kg Profound Weight Armguards and put them on. He knew that even without Heavenly Energy, he was capable of supporting the 750kg armguards, although it might be a little too much. It was better to know your own limits.

After all, in terms of physical strength alone, Nie Li was a little inferior to Long Yuyin, who possessed the Blood Dragon lineage. With that bloodline alone, she was as strong as a 2-fate Heavenly Fate Realm expert.

"After you train without your Heavenly Energy, you guys will know how weak your body is!" Venerable Redsoul slowly circled around them as he smiled, "You guys may train in this cultivation room, while I guide you in refining your physical bodies!"

Gu Bei, Lu Piao, and Nie Li began a training menu that included vertical skims, somersaults, and various others. Although the actions themselves were all very simple, the tasks had greatly increased in difficulty, since they were restricted from using their Heavenly Energy and were forced to depend on their physical strength. No one had it easy. In just a few minutes, they were all sweating all over.

Venerable Redsoul said as he walked around, "When cultivating the body, breathing is the most important. Inhale with force and then slowly exhale. Toughening the physical body is also a technique for

communicating with Heavenly Energy. Thus, when your physical body is again nourished by Heavenly Energy, it will become stronger!”

Nie Li stayed in a one-finger handstand. Like a monk who’d entered meditation, he made no unnecessary movements.

Since they were working on refining the body, Nie Li decided that he wouldn’t waste such a good chance to use his own method to refine himself. He remained in his pose without making any visible movements; however, all the muscles within his body were trembling.

This was the physical body refining technique of the [Heavenly God] cultivation technique.

Use the heart to refine the breath; use the breath to refine the body!

As his muscles trembled, Nie Li felt his physical body growing stronger. Indeed, the [Heavenly God] cultivation technique’s method of refining the body was rather quick to show results.

Venerable Redsoul paused as he walked past Nie Li. He’d noticed that Nie Li was using a unique method to train his body, a method that was unknown, even to him. He sensed that Nie Li’s aura was extremely thin, to the point that it was almost undetectable.

The Venerable Redsoul was rather surprised. Just what kind of body refining technique was this? However, he did not enquire. Everyone had their own cultivation techniques; therefore, they also had their own insights towards cultivation. As a teacher, he could only sit to the side, provide tips, and not interfere. Furthermore, asking about a student’s cultivation technique was rather unethical as a teacher.

# Chapter 288: Clash

Venerable Redsoul had no idea what cultivation method Nie Li was using, but he could sense that his refining method was very profound.

Indeed, a genius will stand out from the masses. Venerable Redsoul didn't find it necessary to give Nie Li any pointers; instead, he only observed his student for a moment before moving on.

Everyone continued training their bodies. Roughly a few hours later, aside from Nie Li, everyone had received tips from Venerable Redsoul and had some upgrade.

Before this, Nie Li had been working on cultivating Heavenly Energy. Now that he was focusing on his physical body, he could sense that his physique was improving at an extremely fast pace.

As Long Yuyin trained her physical body, she periodically glanced at Nie Li. Nie Li's training method was different from the ones she'd known in the past, thus arousing her interest. Her heart blazed with fighting intent. No matter what, she had to erase her previous shame.

She wanted to tell Nie Li that although he had surpassed her on the Saint Soul Board, he still wasn't her opponent in terms of strength. She wanted to return all the shame that he'd given her.

The wounds on her body were vaguely aching, but they didn't matter much to her. It was the disgrace within her heart that was the most unbearable.

She had to return those three whips to Nie Li!

Venerable Redsoul nodded and said, "You are all geniuses who possess Heaven Spiritual Roots; therefore, your comprehension speeds would also surpass others'. This year's geniuses have already greatly surpassed my expectations. However, you guys must still guard against pride and impatience. Keep in mind that within the Draconic Ruins Realm, there will always be someone more powerful than yourself. You may be top-tier inside the Divine Feathers Sect; however, there're still many other

geniuses in the other sects of the Draconic Ruins Realm who continue to train as you rest. Your goal is to surpass them!”

Venerable Redsoul looked at the crowd of students and said, “Right now, you must familiarise yourself with your own strength. We will soon begin the combat drill. Each of you will find yourselves a partner to spar. It’s best to pick a friend who has strength comparable to your own!”

Lu Piao was stunned for a moment. “Combat drills?”

Gu Bei, who stood beside him, smiled and said, “Brother Lu, why don’t we train together?”

Lu Piao immediately nodded. “Sounds good!” He never wants to train with Nie Li; that guy’s strength was simply a world apart from his.

Just then, a beauty wearing white training clothes approached Nie Li. She had a voluptuous figure, but a cute appearance. Although she was a little inferior compared to Long Yuyin, she was still a great beauty.

She shyly asked, “Nie Li, I was just looking for someone to train with. Why don’t we train together?”

There were a total of thirty-six students in the class, eleven of whom were young women. Aside from Long Yuyin who was a loner, the other girls interacted quite a bit. These girls had been closely observing their male classmates, so, Nie Li was undoubtedly on their radars.

Nie Li was ranked number three on the Saint Soul Grounds and had crushed Long Yuyin beneath him. Such talent was definitely the most dazzling, becoming a delicious cake in the eyes of many girls. However, the other girls didn’t dare approach Nie Li, with the exception of He Yinyin. She was from a rather good family; furthermore, she had good looks. In the entire class, she was only second to Long Yuyin.

A beauty had requested for to train with him, that must certainly be an alluring invitation. Lu Piao’s eyes lit up as he blinked at Nie Li. Why couldn’t Lu Piao encounter such good fortune?

Suddenly, Long Yuyin walked over, coldly looked at He Yinyin, and said, “He Yinyin, move aside. He’s my opponent!”

Nie Li couldn't help frowning his brows for a brief moment when Long Yuyin suddenly appeared. This girl really didn't know when to stop! Was the lesson he taught her earlier not enough, so was she coming back for more? Long Yuying might possess the Blood Dragon Lineage, but Nie Li wouldn't fear her in a one-on-one fight.

He Yinyin frowned. Of all the people in this class, she hated Long Yuyin the most. He Yinyin wanted to take advantage of the opportunity and turn Nie Li into a dog that followed after her skirt; however, Long Yuyin just had to jump in and ruin everything. Although He Yinyin's family wasn't an ordinary one, it was still incomparable to the Dragonseal Family. Therefore, she didn't dare provoke Long Yuyin.

He Yinyin pursed her lips, smiled, and spoke with a soft tone that would turn anyone else's bones into jelly. "Senior Brother Nie Li, I'll take my leave then. If there's some time after class, we'll chat then."

Nie Li casually replied, "Maybe later."

Naturally, he wouldn't fall for her appearance. He understood that people like He Yinyin were embodiments of viciousness and greed. Long Yuyin may be rude, but at least she was straightforward, and thus easily countered.

Long Yuyin couldn't help snorting inwardly as she looked at He Yinyin.

He Yinyin felt rather dejected that Nie Li was being so cold to her. She gave one last indignant glare to Long Yuyin before turning around and leaving.

Several girls began chattering in soft voices.

"What's wrong with Long Yuyin? To think she actually sought out Nie Li for a combat drill! Maybe she has her eyes on him?"

"What are you talking about? Are you not aware of that incident a few days ago? Nie Li mercilessly crushed Long Yuyin beneath him and even gave her three lashes. How could she possibly endure it with her proud character? She obviously went to Senior Brother Nie Li for revenge!"

"Nie Li gave Long Yuyin three lashes? I've been busy cultivating for the

past few days, so I don't know a thing about it! Quick, tell me what happened!"

"Nie Li is really amazing to have actually make Long Yuyin suffer a loss!" Several girls discussed in soft voices. "Now she's trying to find her dignity again?"

"That Long Yuyin woman possesses the Blood Dragon lineage. Since she has such a powerful physical body, Senior Brother Nie Li will probably suffer this time around!"

Long Yuyin's face was ashen as she stared at Nie Li. She could feel the wounds on her chest and butt still aching. This bone aching pain definitely won't be forgotten. She'll definitely return them to Nie Li in person! Nie Li had called her trash that only knew how to use her family's power, so she wanted to prove that even without her family's influence, she was still much stronger than him!

Venerable Redsoul couldn't help smiling bitterly as he watched Nie Li and Long Yuyin.

Nie Li was a genius who possessed unimaginable talent compared to ordinary people. Based on his observation, Nie Li's talent was greater than Long Yuyin's. As for Long Yuyin, that girl had a prominent birth and astonishing talent; However, her personality was a little too strong and she didn't allow anyone to surpass her. Now that she'd encountered Nie Li, the two would definitely clash. Unless Nie Li utterly suppressed Long Yuyin or she managed to defeat Nie Li, that girl definitely won't let the matter rest.

"In the next Combat Drill, you are only allowed to use your own physical strength. Heavenly Energy is forbidden!" Venerable Redsoul then continued, "The strength of your body is the root of everything. In the process of combat, you must also pay close attention to the movements inside your meridians."

Gu Bei walked up to Nie Li, patted him on the shoulder, and bitterly smiled. "Nie Li, good luck! Long Yuyin is someone who possesses the Blood Dragon lineage, so she has a powerful physical body. I'm afraid you won't be her match!"

Nie Li shrugged, "I know what to do!" How could he be afraid of Long Yuyin? Although his physical body was inferior to Long Yuyin's, Nie Li still wasn't looking at her with much regard!

Long Yuyin coldly looked at Nie Li. She'd always been proud of her physical body. Although she couldn't win against Nie Li on the Saint Soul Board, she definitely won't lose to Nie Li in terms of physical strength.

Battle intent surged between the two of them.

Venerable Redsoul pondered for a brief moment. He was worried that once Nie Li and Long Yuyin began fighting, their clash would spiral out of control and affect the entire cultivating room. He spoke up, "You will be given a three meter area marked by a barrier that I will lay down around you. As you train, you're only allowed to move about in that area!"

Venerable Redsoul then began to lay down the barriers, which the disciples entered.

A determined expression flashed across Long Yuyin's face as she glared at Nie Li. "The shame that you gave me, I'll return it back by several folds! Today, I'll utterly defeat you!"

Nie Li calmly replied, "You're welcome to try anytime!" How could he possibly be afraid of Long Yuyin?

The other students had already begun their fights as Long Yuyin simply stood there. She wore an extremely serious expression and her body was slightly arched, like female leopard accumulating its power and waiting for action. The desirable body hidden under her clothes brimmed with energy. Both of her long, slender legs were filled with tension.

"Ha!" Long Yuyin gave a small roar as her body suddenly shot upwards. Her left leg caused a powerful gale as she aimed her kicks towards Nie Li's head.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

When Long Yuyin swung her leg, it caused a howling gale.

Nie Li saw that Long Yuyin's foot was about to hit his head, and raised

his right arm to block. With a huge boom, Nie Li took several steps back as he felt pain from his right arm.

Long Yuyin's physical strength was indeed astonishing.

The moment her feet were back on the ground, she aimed another series of kicks towards Nie Li.

If Nie Li fought Long Yuyin head-on, he definitely wouldn't be her match. Not to mention the fact that Long Yuyin's attacks felt as though she was fighting with her life on the line. She was exerting her strength to frightening degrees.

Her legs were very long and made powerful roundhouse kicks. However, regardless of how strong an attack was, as long as it was based on physical strength alone, there was a loophole to winning. Nie Li retreated and dodged Long Yuyin's second flying roundhouse kick. Her leg whistled past Nie Li's face.

Upon missing, Long Yuyin twisted in midair and swept a third roundhouse towards Nie Li.

The moment her third roundhouse kick grazed Nie Li's head, he immediately found the flaw and threw a punch to Long Yuyin's inner thighs.

# Chapter 289: Confrontation!

Long Yuyin aimed three consecutive kicks that exhausted her strength and energy. It was in that moment that she revealed an opening.

When a person kicks, they exert force through the foot and calf. Since people usually train these parts of the body, it's extremely tough to attack there. Therefore, the inner thighs are the weak spot.

Nie Li only gave a light punch on her inner thighs, but this caused Long Yuyin to completely lose control and fall.

Even though it was only a light punch, its force directly reverberated through her body.

Long Yuyin groaned as she landed to the side with her face ashen. A soury pain and numbness came from her inner thighs, making her unable to stand steadily. She was also embarrassed by where Nie Li had struck her. However, she was the most surprised by the fact that Nie Li's strength was obviously below her own; so why did she suffer such heavy damage from such a soft punch?

She possessed the Blood Dragon lineage! An ordinary person's punch wouldn't be able to cause any damage to her!

However, the stronger Nie Li proved to be, the more intense her fighting spirit would burn. She was Long Yuyin! She definitely wouldn't lose!

As soon as she fell, she stood up again and whipped more kicks towards Nie Li.

Nie Li sensed that Long Yuyin was becoming more forceful and was a little enraged by it. This woman really didn't know when to quit! Did she really think he couldn't hurt her just because he didn't go with a heavy attack?

Right now, almost everyone couldn't help dumbfoundedly watching Nie Li and Long Yuyin. Long Yuyin was someone with the Blood Dragon lineage! All the bystanders originally thought that Nie Li was the one who would've been given a beating. However, in this confrontation, it wasn't

Nie Li who had the underhand; it was Long Yuyin who appeared to have suffered damage.

This was too shocking!

Forget defeating Long Yuyin on the Saint Soul Board, that girl was the strongest in physical strength. Was Nie Li also stronger than her in that sense? That talent of his was borderline heaven-defying; was he still going to give others a chance to compete?

However, Venerable Redsoul could see that Nie Li's physical body was actually inferior to Long Yuyin's. However, Nie Li's insights on the Martial Dao surpassed Long Yuyin by far. Nie Li knew how to effectively use his own strength to achieve 'using weak to win against the strong!'

Long Yuyin's attacks were very swift and heavily pressured Nie Li. After all, she was also talented in the Martial Dao. She immediately readjusted herself after receiving the small attack from Nie Li.

Long Yuyin continuously struck out with such speed that her attacks left afterimages.

Nie Li's eyes were slightly narrowed as he backed off without taking any action. Just as Long Yuyin prepared to change attacks, he suddenly moved his right hand and grabbed Long Yuyin's calf.

Long Yuyin tried to pull back, but she was too late and was grabbed by Nie Li. She could no longer pull away.

"Let me go!" Long Yuyin said in embarrassment. "Otherwise, don't blame me for being heavy with my attacks!"

Since this was only a combat drill, Long Yuyin didn't exert the power of her Blood Dragon lineage. She originally thought that she could defeat Nie Li without using the Blood Dragon lineage; however, his strength greatly surpassed her imagination. The moment they clashed, she suffered a small loss. Now, he was holding onto her leg.

"Hmph, let you go? Why should I? Aren't you supposed to be very powerful?" Nie Li's anger still hadn't subsided. Not only did he not release her, he even took a step towards Long Yuyin, lifting her leg higher.

“Let go right now! Otherwise, I won’t hold back!” Long Yuyin’s leg was raised until it almost touched her chest, forcing her to hop a step back. Her heart quaked from the embarrassing position she’d been put in. Her face paled as there were many people watching.

“Long Yuyin, you think that your Blood Dragon lineage is very powerful? It’s just so-so! What methods do you still have up your sleeve? Why don’t you take them all out and let me see just how much ability you have!” Nie Li took several steps forward as his right hand gripped the meridians in her calf. His grip weakened Long Yuyin and she couldn’t help hopping several steps backwards.

Long Yuyin kept backing away as Nie Li forced her closer and closer to the boundary, until finally there was nowhere else to back up to.

Long Yuyin’s face turned pale and she bit her lips at Nie Li’s words. She tried to pull her leg back again, but failed.

Long Yuyin’s struggle didn’t soften Nie Li’s heart. From his previous life, he was well aware of what kind of person she was. Just like how earlier, when Nie Li had come out from the Saint Soul Grounds, Long Yuyin had impatiently sent people from her family to deal with him.

A woman like Long Yuyin would return a tooth for a tooth. He had to crush her entirely, and make her shrink back in fear. Only that way, she wouldn’t be a threat to his master anymore!

Nie Li definitely wouldn’t be gentle when faced with an enemy. He had to let Long Yuyin sense fear so she wouldn’t dare to be so impudent anymore!

Nie Li put his face near Long Yuyin’s ear and coldly laughed, “You’re just a piece of trash that knows how to use your family’s influence. Your family aside, you’re nothing! What Blood Dragon lineage? They’re all just jokes that only you would think are important!”

Long Yuyin’s eyes flickered with tears as Nie Li humiliated her in front of so many people. She look at him. Since when had she felt such humiliation before?

“Nie Li, you’re too much!” Long Yuyin instantly burst forth with powerful energy as her other leg shot up and clamped onto Nie Li’s neck. With a 360° turn, she flipped Nie Li onto the ground.

Nie Li never imagined that Long Yuyin would actually be able to call forth such powerful energy. He was intended to break away from her calf, but it was already too late. The only option was to counterattack.

Bang!

Nie Li landed heavily on the ground. Although his neck was in her grip, he managed to flip over, pinning Long Yuyin under himself and grabbing her neck.

The two of them were deadlocked in that strange position. Both of Long Yuyin’s tight thighs were clamped around Nie Li’s neck. However, she was pinned down by Nie Li with her body arched and her neck in Nie Li’s hands.

Everyone else stupidly exchanged looks.

Lu Piao and Gu Bei were dumbfounded as well. Just what were the two of them doing? It couldn’t be. Were they going to...

The other girls in the class cried out as their faces blushed red. Nie Li and Long Yuyin’s actions were indeed a little too...

Nie Li coldly barked as his right hand slowly exerted force on Long Yuyin’s neck. “Let go of me, otherwise, I’ll kill you!”

Long Yuyin’s face was a little pale, but she didn’t give up. She furiously glared at Nie Li as tears flickered within her eyes. “Then I’ll take you with me!”

Nie Li scowled and coldly cursed, “You crazy woman! Release me this instant!” He hated how Long Yuyin kept bothering him like this. He already couldn’t be bothered to pursue the grudges from his previous life. But now, this woman was coming after him again and again, insisting on making trouble for him. Nie Li was rather furious.

Nie Li realised that Long Yuyin was about to suffocate him with her

thighs, so he pressed down harder on her.

“Let go!” Nie Li deeply snarled. He didn’t wanted to die with this crazy woman. Furthermore, if he couldn’t kill Long Yuyin now, that meant that the current him was still too weak to confront the Dragonseal Family.

Long Yuyin’s face was pale as she coughed. She’d finally calmed down her rage and began to slowly lessen the force between her legs. “You let go of your hands first!”

Nie Li rebuked as his left palm smacked her butt with a crisp sound. “If you won’t let go, then don’t blame me for getting rude!”

Long Yuyin paused as she sensed the burning pain on her rear end. Her face turned red as her voice trembled, “Nie Li, how dare you humiliate me!”

“So what if I humiliate you? Let go now. If you won’t let go, then will you believe me when I say that I’ll tear your clothes off and let everyone have a good look?!” Nie Li coldly growled.

“You...” Long Yuyin’s voice trembled at Nie Li’s cold voice. She was afraid. If Nie Li really stripped her, then there’d be no way she could ever face anyone else in her entire life, ever again. She would rather commit suicide and be done with it. She had finally loosened her legs around Nie Li’s neck and released him.

Nie Li had also pulled his hand back, releasing his choke-hold. He also didn’t want to waste any more effort being tangled with her.

The moment Nie Li released his hand, Long Yuyin suddenly pounced and kicked him in the chest. Nie Li was caught off guard, took the kick head-on, and was sent flying before he heavily smashed into the barrier. Nie Li tasted something sweet in his throat and nearly vomited blood.

Nie Li never thought that Long Yuyin would actually use a sneak attack on him!

“You deserved it!” Long Yuyin’s eyes still flickered with tears. She’d been humiliated by Nie Li in front of so many people. She thoroughly hated him.

Energy and blood raged through Nie Li's body. When he raised his head to look at Long Yuyin, his expression frosted over, entirely devoid of emotion. Indeed, he should never go easy on people like Long Yuyin! Once goes easy, that woman will strike back severely!

Long Yuyin's heart trembled when she saw that Nie Li's expression was like unmelting ice, looking at her like a corpse. She vaguely realised that she'd been wrong to kick Nie Li when he had released her. However, Nie Li had bullied her so badly, so why shouldn't she strike back?

Long Yuyin clenched both of her fists. Both the incident within the Saint Soul Grounds and this incident today were the greatest shames of her life!

However, it looked like she'd been asking for all of it!

Nie Li held his chest as he stood up. A chill flashed within his eyes. The barrier had already been removed. Nie Li brushed past Long Yuyin without even affording her a single glance as he walked towards Lu Piao and Gu Bei's direction. No matter what, Nie Li would never go easy on Long Yuyin ever again!

Long Yuyin opened her mouth. She wanted to say something, but in the end, she only swallowed her words. She didn't know why, but she sensed a terrifying cold in Nie Li's expression.

# Chapter 290: The farther the better!

In Nie Li's heart, there was no difference between the current Long Yuyin and the vicious woman from his previous life!

If they weren't in the Skysoul Institute, Nie Li might've already engaged Long Yuyin in a life-and-death battle.

Everyone was dumbfounded as they looked between Nie Li and Long Yuyin.

This situation was too explosive. No one thought that Long Yuyin, who possessed the Blood Dragon lineage, would actually end up getting so miserably bullied by Nie Li. It seemed that Long Yuyin really had met her match this time!

It's just that the scene earlier was a little...

Lu Piao couldn't help winking at Nie Li when he saw their strange posture. The things that just happened were indeed...a little...too fiery!

However, he had also noticed that Nie Li's face was ashen and contained killing intent, so much that it even caused Lu Piao to tremble unconsciously. What was going on with Nie Li? It'd been a long time since Lu Piao had met Nie Li, but Nie Li rarely ever acted so angrily. Lu Piao felt that there was some sort of unresolvable bad blood between the two of them.

The girls in the class all exchanged glances. They never thought that Long Yuyin would actually throw away her own safety to try and take down Nie Li. It was even more unexpected that Nie Li would be strong enough to beat Long Yuyin.

He Yinyin pursed her lips and said, "Long Yuyin, that woman asked for it. She thought that her Blood Dragon lineage was very powerful, but in the end she still lost to Senior Brother Nie Li! That woman can't be trying to attract Senior Brother Nie Li's attention, right?!"

The more He Yinyin thought about it, the more convinced she became that there was something wrong with Long Yuyin's head. Why would she

purposely seek out Nie Li?

One of the girls couldn't help asking in a mesmerised voice, "Yinyin, what do you think Senior Brother Nie Li is like?" Nie Li's dazzling talent had moved her heart a little.

He Yinyin said in disdain, "Don't think about it. With so many people eyeing Senior Brother Nie Li, it'll never be your turn!"

Hearing He Yinyin's words, that girl said in annoyance, "Who knows? I don't see Senior Brother Nie Li being interested in you either!"

Jin Yan looked at Nie Li and tightly clenched his fist as annoyance filled his heart. In terms of physical strength, which Long Yuyin supposedly excel at, Nie Li had actually defeated her. That talent was simply too heaven-defying! No wonder Nie Li had entirely disregarded Jin Yan earlier. So it turned out that he had no place in Nie Li's eyes!

Long Yuyin's presence alone already made Jin Yan unhappy. Now that Nie Li had been added on top, he was even more unhappy.

Han Jing and his group stood some distance away, utterly shocked. Previously, they were thinking of how to make trouble for Nie Li; but now, such thoughts were totally banished from their minds. No one would want to provoke someone like Nie Li, who had so much natural talent. Not to mention the fact that if a fight did break out, they were definitely not in Nie Li's league.

Wang Yang looked at Nie Li as his eyes filled with maliciousness and jealousy.

Venerable Redsoul lowly coughed and said, "Since you've found your partners, you should often train together to enhance your physical strength. Today's lesson will end here, but you may continue with your training. The third lesson will be in three days."

Venerable Redsoul then left the grounds.

Nie Li glanced at Lu Piao and Gu Bei and said, "Let's go!"

Just when Nie Li was about to leave, Long Yuyin suddenly popped out

from the side and stopped him. “You’re not allowed to leave!”

Nie Li coldly looked at her. What more did this woman want?

“I want you to stay behind and continue training with me!” Long Yuyin bit her teeth and looked at Nie Li stubbornly. She wanted to become even stronger and she knew that Nie Li’s strength could ignite the fighting spirit within her heart.

Nie Li glanced at her with loathing. “Get lost! I don’t have the time for it!” This woman was endless!

At the sight of this, everyone became dumbfounded.

Long Yuyin had just suffered such a huge loss and was humiliated to such an extent. Why did she want Nie Li to train with her? Did she have some loose screws in her brain? Was this woman a masochist, so that the more that she was humiliated, the more she wanted to present herself at his front doorstep? Or could it be that this girl had fallen for Nie Li?

He Yinyin furrowed her brows and said, “Long Yuyin, aren’t you a little too thick-skinned? Senior Brother Nie Li doesn’t want to deal with you anymore, and yet you still want to bother him!”

Long Yuyin glanced at He Yinyin and coldly rebuked, “This is none of your business. Get lost! If you dare say another word, I’ll throw you out!”

“You...” In her heart, He Yinyin was extremely infuriated. ‘This crazy woman!’ However, she didn’t respond to Long Yuyin and could only leave in frustration.

Nie Li coldly stared at her. “Long Yuyin, are you looking for humiliation?”

Long Yuyin’s gaze met Nie Li’s as she said, “I did not lose earlier, nor do I admit defeat. Unless you can win against me, we’ll continue to fight! If you managed to win, then regardless of what you ask of me, if I ever frown for a second, then my name is not Long Yuyin! If I win, I’ll return those three lashes back to you!”

Nie Li snorted. “Get lost! I don’t have any more time to waste with you!”

He was prepared to move around Long Yuyin.

“You’re not allowed to leave!” Long Yuyin stretched her hand out to block Nie Li and kicked him with her left leg.

Nie Li immediately dodged. He was utterly enraged by this woman.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Another intense battle broke out as energy shot from their fists. Both Nie Lie and Long Yuyin’s speed were raised to the limits and only afterimages were left behind.

The two of them were like a buckets of gunpowder, exploding upon ignition. In just that short moment, they ended up fighting again.

Everyone was dumbfoundedly staring at the intense battle going on between the two of them.

Long Yuyin was maxing the potential of her Blood Dragon lineage. Regardless of attack speed or strength, everything was several folds stronger than before. Every attack was extremely sharp and precise.

Bang!

Long Yuyin aimed an attack at Nie Li’s chest, which he blocked with both arms. However, the powerful energy still forced him back several dozens of steps. Without the slightest pause, Long Yuyin jumped in again and rained another barrage of attacks at Nie Li.

Her attacks were like a raging storm.

Gu Bei furrowed his brows for a brief moment as he couldn’t help worrying about Nie Li. “Long Yuyin, that woman is really fighting with her life on the line!” He prepared to jump in at any time. If Long Yuyin really intended to kill Nie Li, then Gu Bei would definitely help him. Right now, he couldn’t care less about revealing his power.

Nie Li could only keep warding off Long Yuyin’s storm-like attacks as his heart became filled with endless rage.

He’d endured it again and again, but this Long Yuyin was simply endless.

“Since that’s the case, then don’t blame me for getting impolite!” Nie Li’s eyes flashed with a chilling light. “Since you’re asking for it, I’ll give you a thorough lesson!”

Nie Li absolutely won’t fear anyone of the same level!

Long Yuyin sent a burst of energy to her leg. Just when it was about to land on Nie Li, he suddenly sidestepped, leaving an afterimage.

“What?” Long Yuyin was sure that her attack was about to land on Nie Li, but then, her vision suddenly blurred and he went missing.

The next moment, Nie Li appeared at Long Yuyin’s right. He grabbed her lower leg with one hand, her thighs with the other. He lifted her into the air, then mercilessly thrashed her onto the ground.

Boom!

A huge crater instantly appeared in the training room.

Long Yuyin was disoriented from being smashed onto the floor. However, before she could react, Nie Li lifted her again and smashed her on another part of the ground.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Nie Li threw her again and again like a sandbag. After several rounds of smashing her around, he sent a round of concentrated attacks on her.

Unlike Long Yuyin’s attacks which were storm-like and fast, her attacks are filled with flaws. Nie Li’s attacks, however, were continuous and aimed from extremely crafty angles, calculated so Long Yuyin couldn’t block them.

Long Yuyin was smashed onto the ground, then tossed into the sky before she was back down on the ground, yet again. However, to the credit of the Blood Dragon lineage, her body was indeed powerful. Regardless of how Nie Li attacked, Long Yuyin only sustained superficial injuries.

However, since Nie Li began his attacks, Long Yuyin had found it extremely difficult to strike back.

Everyone was completely dazed.

After Long Yuyin ignited her Blood Dragon lineage, she began to stand with the advantage, attacking Nie Li so that he had no way to counterattack. However, after Nie Li managed to find a flaw, he was then the one on the winning side. Furthermore, his attacks prevented Long Yuyin from countering.

Everyone watched as the powerful and fierce Long Yuyin was beaten to the point that she couldn't strike back!

This...

No one could find the words to describe their current state of mind.

Bang!

Long Yuyin landed on the ground. Although Nie Li's attacks couldn't penetrate her Blood Dragon's physique, they still caused heavy damage. The bones in her entire body felt as though they'd shatter to dust. She bewilderedly stared at the ceiling, trying to figure out why she was so inferior to Nie Li.

Regardless of what they'd competed in, she'd utterly lost to Nie Li.

A deep sense of defeat welled up in her heart and two rows of tears flowed down.

She'd spent so many years being the strongest of her age, training like mad, and idolising strength. Today, her most prideful physique had been thoroughly defeated. She suddenly felt like crying.

So it turned out that her hard work and pride were nothing more than empty air!

"Heaven and earth are vast; countless experts roam between them. The likes of you wants to be proud and arrogant? Long Yuyin, today, I gave you a small lesson. Keep that prideful character of yours in check. Otherwise, even if I don't take action, eventually there'll be someone who comes along and teaches you a lesson!" Finishing his words, Nie Li couldn't be bothered say more as he turned and exited the training grounds.

Long Yuyin sat up, wiped the tears from face, and bit her lips. "One must

admit defeat when one's lost. As I said earlier, regardless of what request you have of me, I definitely won't frown for a second!"

Nie Li paused his steps and said, "Stay away from me! The farther the better!"

Finishing his words, Nie Li walked out.

As Nie Li moved further away, tears blurred Long Yuyin's vision. Nie Li couldn't even be bothered to give her a glance. In Nie Li's eyes, was she worth less than dust? It was all just so funny. She'd always been a very proud girl, but in the eyes of Nie Li, she was nothing.

# Chapter 291: Senior and Junior Apprentices

Gu Bei and Lu Piao were dumbfounded. Nie Li was just too cool that moment when he turned around.

Gu Bei felt pity in his heart. What a waste! Nie Li that fellow was a wood-brain! Long Yuyin already said that she'd agree to whatever request he had, and he actually asked for her to stay further away from him. That was just too great of an opportunity. If he were him, he'd certainly make an interesting request for a beauty like Long Yuyin. Who knew? Maybe she'd yield after some resistance.

What a waste of such good opportunity!

Gu Bei kept shaking his head.

However, despite not knowing why, he still admired Nie Li a lot.

After Nie Li and his group left, the news quickly spread that Nie Li had beaten Long Yuyin in physical strength. Without a doubt, he'd become the most dazzling talent of his class and garnered many people's attentions: especially the other geniuses, who all saw him as a formidable rival.

Long Yuyin's courtyard

Hu Yong had been waiting here for a while now, but Long Yuyin still hadn't returned as he felt extremely infuriated.

Long Yuyin had once wasted him and made him lose his masculine dignity. However, even after he was healed, he continued to dream of Long Yuyin day and night. He liked to see Long Yuyin wearing that tight outfit of hers, and seeing her voluptuous outline.

Even if Long Yuyin was crazy angry at him, he'd still slowly approach her. He felt that Long Yuyin was beautiful, even when she was angry.

However, the goddess in his heart, his fiancée had actually been humiliated by a nameless kid!

That was simply unbearable!

He wanted to mercilessly tear that kid apart to ease the hatred in his heart!

When Long Yuyin finally returned to her courtyard, she was still covered in dust, making a sorry sight with that dazed look on her face.

Nie Li's words echoed in her ears. "Stay away from me! The farther, the better!" Ever since she was young, this was the first time anyone had said anything like that to her. The first time anyone had loathed her so much. The first time anyone had humiliated her to such an extent!

Though she didn't know why, the emotions within her heart became very complicated.

That youth was the same age as herself and he'd won using only his own strength. Not to mention that it was a total defeat on her part. However, this made her curious as to exactly what kind of person he was. She wanted to become stronger, much stronger, to the point where Nie Li would be forced to see her as a worthy opponent!

However, he'd already told her to stay away from him. The farther, the better. Wouldn't she be a little too cheap if she went back and earned another humiliation?

Her heart was filled with contradictions.

Hu Yong saw that Long Yuyin had returned. Although she was covered in dust, she was still as beautiful and charming as ever. His heart was heated as he immediately approached her and said, "Yin'er, you've returned? How are your injuries? This is the best medicine that I've brought from my family!"

Long Yuyin's expression instantly changed to one of loathing when she saw Hu Yong's face. "Hu Yong, don't come looking for me anymore. If you ever come again, then don't blame me for kicking you out!"

"Yin'er, don't be like this." Hu Yong saw that she was rather upset, so he continued, "Yin'er, seeing you like this pains my heart so much. Quick, apply the medicine first! Leave that Nie Li to me, I'll definitely finish him for you! Back when he came out of the Saint Soul Grounds, I wanted to

teach him a lesson, but was stopped by Nanmen Tianhai and Huang Yu, those old farts. However, you can rest assured. This time, Nie Li can only dream of escaping my grasp!”

Upon hearing Hu Yong’s words, Long Yuyin became stunned for a moment. Hu Yong had brought people to cause trouble for Nie Li? She furiously glared at him. “Who asked you to go and look for trouble? You said that it was me that sent you?”

Hu Yong immediately shook his head. “I didn’t say that you’re the one who sent me.”

Long Yuyin coldly glared at him. “Hu Yong, you’re only good at using your family’s strength. Without it, you’re a piece of trash. The contest between Nie Li and I was a head-on, a one-on-one duel, which I, Long Yuyin, lost. But so what? I can afford to lose. If you want to stick your neck out for me, then go ahead. Find Nie Li and fight him. If you can win against him, then I, Long Yuyin, will idolise you. But in reality, you’re just a weakling! Get lost and stay away from me. Don’t let me see you again. Otherwise, I’ll waste you a second time!”

“Yin’er, I...” Hu Yong still wanted to say something.

“Hu Yong, get lost now!” Long Yuyin yelled.

“You...” Hu Yong finally couldn’t bear it anymore and rebuked, “Long Yuyin, you think that you’re really that great? You’re just the seventh successor of the Dragonseal Family. You can only gain the qualifications for first successor by marrying me! Don’t be shameless when I’m giving you face!”

“Leave!” Long Yuyin gave him a kick that sent him flying out.

Hu Yong wailed miserably as Long Yuyin’s kick nearly snapped his waist. He climbed to his feet and fled in a sorry state.

Long Yuyin pulled her gaze away from him. So when Nie Li came out of the Saint Soul Grounds, Hu Yong had led his group and sought him out. Nie Li probably misunderstood and thought that it was her who sent Hu Yong and his group. Hu Yong’s actions made Long Yuyin the scapegoat.

Her mind was tangled in distress; however, she wasn't going to explain things to Nie Li.

Only a weakling would explain with words!

Today, she'd lost to Nie Li again. However, this time, her heart was at a loss. She was unwilling to accept defeat on the Saint Soul Board; but this time it was a physical confrontation that she had lost. A complete and thorough loss.

She'd always been proud of her physical strength; however, she still lost.

Long Yuyin wanted to cry. She'd always been eager to get stronger, never allowing anyone her own age to surpass her. However, this time, she'd suffered a total defeat in Nie Li's hands. Her pride had been trampled by him.

Tears filled her eyes. She felt like a wounded stray dog, licking her wounds in her courtyard, all alone.

She thought about her fight with Nie Li and bit her teeth. She still didn't want to accept the defeat.

When she was about to enter her room, a figure suddenly appeared in her courtyard. This person was as beautiful as herself, but also had the trace of an ethereal aura that made her seem like a fairy. It was Ying Yueru. She showed a meaningful smile from the corner of her mouth.

Upon seeing her, Long Yuyin immediately wiped the tears from her face and put on a cold expression. "Why have you come?"

Ying Yueru smiled with a gentle expression. "Junior Sister, it's been a long time since we've met."

Long Yuyin stared at Ying Yueru with a frosty expression. A murderous aura emanated from her, even though she understood that she wasn't Ying Yueru's match. "Demoness! You were the death of our Master! And you still have the face to come see me? If it wasn't for Master's dying wish, I would've killed you already!"

"I've said this before. It wasn't me who killed our Master; her fate had

arrived. Destiny only borrowed my hand to put it to an end.” Ying Yueru’s voice was ethereal as she continued, “Master had received the teachings of Ancestral Master Phaseless. Although her cultivation was only at the Heavenly Axis Realm, she held a powerful position of in the Divine Feathers Sect. She was tasked with performing divinations and selecting the Divine Feather Sect’s Master. Because of that identity of hers, she was fated to die!”

Long Yuyin furiously glared at Ying Yueru. “Demoness! I don’t care what explanation you try with that glib tongue of yours! I’ll never believe you!”

At Long Yuyin’s reaction, Ying Yueru shook her head and sighed. “Yin’er, in this world, you’re the only person who’s close to me. You have a hard-headed personality and you will face heavy trials in the future. By the time you realise it, some things will have already become lost to you. And when you yearn for them again, they will be forever out of your reach. So why bother?”

Long Yuyin coldly stared at her Senior Sister. “Ying Yueru, are you trying to put a curse on me?”

“This isn’t a curse, but a divination.” Ying Yueru shook her head and continued, “There are too few who can truly alter destiny...” Suddenly, she thought of a specific person, and the corner of her mouth twitch upwards. Maybe, could that person succeed?

“You learned the [Heaven’s Divination] technique from Master?” Long Yuyin’s face changed as her voice trembled, “You’ll die!”

“Everyone will die in the end!” Ying Yueru smiled as she continued, “Only after learning the [Heaven’s Divination] technique did I understand Master’s thoughts! Ancestral Master Phaseless once said, ‘virtuous like water, for water does not compete’. In the past, I couldn’t understand those words; only after I learned the [Heaven’s Divination] technique did I figure it out. Everything we know is but a fabrication, an illusionary blink of the ancient past. Only by shattering the illusion can we turn everything into reality.”

Long Yuying frowned. “What are you saying?” Did everyone who learned

the [Heaven's Divination] technique speak so strangely?

“Someone else will come along and explain on my behalf. I must go now. Good luck to you! Often, no matter how strong a person appears on the outside, they are still frail and weak in their hearts. So what if you've fought before?” Ying Yueru lightly smiled and strolled away.

Long Yuyin once held extreme hatred for Ying Yueru. But now that she knew that Ying Yueru had learned the [Heaven's Divination] technique, the hatred within her heart lessened. Ying Yueru's life and death were in her hands; if she told anyone that Ying Yueru had learned the [Heaven's Divination] technique, Ying Yueru would die!

However, Ying Yueru had still told her. At the very least, it proved that her heart are still opened.

Perhaps the death of their Master was just like Ying Yueru had said. Was there really a story behind it?

Long Yuyin watched Ying Yueru leave before looking away. Although she wouldn't tell anyone that Ying Yueru had learned the [Heaven's Divination] technique, she still couldn't forgive her for the time being.

She returned to her own room and smeared medicine salve onto her wounds. Her jaw slightly trembled with a low groan. She had wounds all over her body. Try as she might, she couldn't prevent them from reminding her of Nie Li's loathful expression. Nie Li had treated her like dust!

However, the more someone treated her like dust, the more she wanted to prove herself to them.

Long Yuyin's right hand tightly gripped her quilt as her heart became filled with a sense of unyielding. There will definitely come a day when I become stronger than you, when I no longer have to be looked down upon by you!

# Chapter 292: Soul Scales

Nie Li was in his room.

He'd been cultivating all day, and all of his spiritual stones were depleted. Even then, his cultivation had only risen by a little bit, still revolving around the pinnacle of Earth Fate Realm. Stepping into Heavenly Fate Realm was still too difficult a task for him.

There was still a month to go before he could collect the reward from the Saint Soul Board. But without enough spiritual stones, it would become even harder to get stronger.

He had to think of other ways to obtain spiritual stones!

In the Draconic Ruins Realm, without spiritual stones, one's cultivation speed would be a lot slower. Even if you had natural talent, it'd be useless without resources. The Heavenly Energy contained in one spiritual stone was equivalent to cultivating for about half a month, or even longer!

Jindan sat beside him, staring at him.

As the Soul Seal bound them closer together, Jindan would eventually become Nie Li's spiritual beast. That meant that he needed more spiritual stones! As for Yu Yan, she'd been cultivating in his room for the past few days and her cultivation was also rising at a rapid rate. However, she'd eventually encountered the same problem; the lack of spiritual stones.

Knock Knock Knock sounded from outside.

"Come on in," said Nie Li.

Xiao Yu entered.

He looked at Nie Li, casually smiled, and said, "It's only been a few days since I last saw you, and yet you've caused another ruckus?"

Nie Li shrugged and helplessly said, "I wasn't the one who sought trouble. Trouble found me. That Long Yuyin woman is really annoying!"

Xiao Yu's expression was smiling, yet not smiling, as he looked at Nie Li and said, "Are you sure that she's not interested in you? Otherwise, why is

she only causing trouble for you?”

Nie Li calmly replied, “You’re thinking too much. That woman is a snob who can’t tolerate anyone stronger than herself. That’s why she’s been pestering me all over the place. The only thing I can do is fight back; otherwise she’ll start thinking that no one can stop her!” He didn’t have the slightest positive opinion concerning Long Yuyin.

Xiao Yu reminded him, “But you still have to be careful these days. You’ve already provoked a lot of people, not just Long Yuyin alone. I heard that the geniuses of the East District have noticed you! Previously, they’d focused their attention on Long Yuyin, but since she’s from the Dragonseal Family, there was nothing they could do about her. But now, you’re the one in their line of sight. Not to mention that you have no prominent background...”

Nie Li nodded. “I understand.” He’d already made preparations. Inside the Skysoul Institute grounds, he was perfectly safe. Even if he was being targeted by others, he’d be fine as long as they didn’t pull anything life-threatening to him at the risk of expulsion. After all, in his previous life, what kind of trials hadn’t he encountered? He’d escaped the clutches of death countless times. How could such small conflicts inside the Skysoul Institute compare?

Xiao Yu looked at Nie Li and asked, “Then, do you still want to visit the testing grounds?”

Nie Li firmly replied, “You seem to have already decided, so how can I back down? I’ll go!” There were also rewards for completing the trials of other testing grounds. Spiritual stones and other rewards, Nie Li wanted to obtain them all.

Right now, each and every spiritual stone was an extremely precious resource, especially spiritual stone essence, which could allow him to make a breakthrough!

Nie Li left Yu Yan in the room to continue cultivating, and left Jindan in her care. He then called Lu Piao out, and the two of them proceeded to the testing grounds with Xiao Yu.

The three of them headed for the second testing site, known as the Ghastly Ruins. Founded by one of the Divine Feather Sect's ancestors, the ruins were filled with large numbers of ghouls, which dropped soul scales when killed. Each student was allowed to remain here for two days maximum. The more soul scales you collected, the more treasures you could redeem later on.

However, items like the soul scales would disappear if they were removed from the testing grounds, nor could they be placed in an interspatial ring. They could only be carried around in cloth bags and they had to be exchanged at the end of every test.

Each student can only enter the Grounds of Ghastly Ruins once a month.

There was also a ranking bulletin on the Grounds of Ghastly Ruins, which detailed the record quantities of soul scales collected during the student's allotted two days. Long Yuyin was ranked tenth, having killed thirty thousand ghouls. Murong Yu held the first position, having hunted over ninety thousand in a span of two days.

However, Murong Yu was a genius from the previous year, while Long Yuyin belonged to the current one.

Nie Li checked the exchange rate. You could earn thirty spiritual stones for one thousand Ghouls. That meant that within the span of two days, Long Yuyin had obtained nine hundred spiritual stones. However, the soul scales could also be used to redeem other things, like Demon Spirits, spiritual stone essences, artifacts, and various other items.

Lu Piao was excited. "Nie Li, that woman, Long Yuyin, got thirty thousand, and you aren't any worse than her, right? We're going to strike it rich!"

Xiao Yu felt like they needed another reminder. "You guys still have to be careful. The Ghastly Ruins are filled with danger, especially compared to the Saint Soul Grounds. Depending on the situation, someone might also try to get in our way. Furthermore, we'll be teleported to different parts of the Ghastly Ruins; that means we might not be able to cooperate.

So you guys really need to be careful!”

“Understood.” Nie Li and Lu Piao replied, as their curiosities were piqued towards the Ghastly Ruins.

The entrance of the Ghastly Ruins was a weird vortex guarded by two experts.

Woosh! Woosh! Woosh!

Nie Li and his group entered the vortex, disappearing through the entrance of the Ghastly Ruins.

Shortly after Nie Li and his party entered, three people appeared at the entrance.

Hu Yong eyed his group and solemnly said, “Do you guys remember everything I told you? Do you remember what they look like?”

“Don’t worry, Young Master Hu. Even if they’re reduced to ashes, we’ll still remember them. We’ve already reached the Heavenly Fate Realm! Taking care of one kid is no difficulty!”

“That’s good! Let’s go!”

The group also entered the the Ghastly Ruins.

Hua Ling looked into the distance as coldly sneered three times. “That’s hilarious. Xiao Yu already has a hard time protecting himself, and now his friends have attracted so many enemies. Isn’t this just making it easier for me?” However, Hua Ling still wasn’t assured. After considering it briefly, he also sent a dozen or so of his own men into the Ghastly Ruins.

Other than the few mentioned, there were also others who entered the Ghastly Ruins. However, it’s unknown whether they entered because of Nie Li and his friends, or for their own purposes.

At that moment, Nanmen Tianhai and Huang Yu were watching over Nie Li and his group with bitter smiles.

“Those three are simply too good at attracting trouble! To think that there’re actually so many people following them into the Ghastly Ruins.”

“Should we go and resolve it?” asked Huang Yu.

Nanmen Tianhai considered it briefly, then said, “There’s no need. Let them make a din by themselves. As long as this matter doesn’t get too out of hand, of course.” If they themselves took action every time a student encountered a problem, how busy would they be?

### The Ghastly Ruins

Nie Li materialised in a stretch of ruins that ran a thousand miles out. Everywhere, there were crumbled and ruined walls, forming an apocalyptic scenery. A majestic structure must have stood here at some point, but for some reason, it had now become a ruin. The sky was ashen-grey and an ill wind blew by. Occasionally, a herd of ghosts drifted through the air, wailing as they flickered in and out of perceptibility.

Those must be the Ghouls!

These ghouls grouped in the thousands. Even though, individually, they were of Earth Fate Realm, they’d be difficult to handle in such large numbers.

As if sensing the aura of a human, they screamed as they rained down upon him.

You could collect soul scales from hunting those ghouls!

The corner of Nie Li’s mouth rose into a smile as his body transformed. He merged with his Fanged Panda and widened his mouth, shooting a Yin-Yang Blast into the sky.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Yin-Yang Blasts exploded in the sky, one after another, each instantly devouring hundreds of ghouls. soul scales fell like rain. These soul scales were the hardest parts of the ghouls’ bodies, and were also the foundation of their existence. Even when the Yin-Yang Blast hit these scales, they did not shatter.

The remaining ghouls fled in all directions, frightened by the explosions.

Nie Li leaped up to collect the falling soul scales before he resumed

another round of skimming over the ruins, releasing more Yin-Yang Blasts, and frantically collecting the scales.

It seemed these ghouls were actually rather easy to deal with. If he continued at this pace, just how many soul scales would he be able to collect in two days? Why had those on the ranking board only managed to collect so few in their two days?

What Nie Li didn't know was that these Ghouls had all reached the pinnacle of the Earth Fate Realm, standing only a step away from the Heavenly Fate Realm. Under normal circumstances, it was really hard to kill even one. Furthermore, the fact that they moved in packs made them even harder to hunt. However, since Nie Li had come to the Draconic Ruins Realm, his strength had undergone huge surges; he too would soon step into the Heavenly Fate Realm. Furthermore, the Fanged Panda itself was even stronger than Nie Li was, since it had completely reached the Heavenly Fate realm. As for his Yin-Yang Blast, its power had also increased several fold.

Therefore, Nie Li's Yin-Yang Blast easily swept the ghouls away!

Nie Li had no idea how Xiao Yu and Lu Piao were faring. However, Xiao's strength neared that of a 4-fate Heavenly Fate Realm expert; therefore, hunting ghouls shouldn't be too much of a problem for him. As for Lu Piao, Nie Li was sure that he'd probably encounter some problems. But even if Lu Piao's strength wasn't enough, that boy had a rather sharp head on his shoulders. Therefore, Nie Li didn't worry too much about him.

Nie Li continued to hunt ghouls like crazy. One thousand soul scales for thirty spiritual stones; that was a rather generous exchange rate.

Roughly five hours later, Nie Li had collected over twenty thousand soul scales. Such speed was simply shocking. It'd be easy for him to surpass Long Yuyin; he might even make it into the top five of the ranking board. These soul scales were the materialised forms of a ghouls' essence; although a Yin-Yang Blast couldn't destroy it, it would melt like ice when placed inside an interspatial ring.

Luckily, once a thousand soul scales have been gathered, they'd combine

to form a single, larger soul scale. Therefore, Nie Li could easily carry these larger soul scales in a cloth bag.

Soul scales like these would make decent materials for forging soul weapons. It's a pity that these couldn't be removed from the training grounds; they could only be exchanged for items.

As Nie Li continued hunting ghouls, a powerful aura suddenly permeated the air. A single man stood in the sky, watching Nie Li. This youth was roughly twenty years old, wearing a black outfit, and stared at him with sharp eyes. There was a prideful expression on his face and a massive sword strapped to his back. His aura was like an unsheathed blade.

Secretly, Nie Li was shocked by this aura. This person definitely had a much stronger aura than Xiao Yu. He'd probably reached at least the 5-fate mark, or perhaps even higher.

# Chapter 293: The Sin of Greed

This youth was named Murong Yu. As of now, he was practising his swordplay as he killed ghouls.

In the Ghastly Ruins, Murong Yu was firmly ranked first. It'd been a long time since anyone had posed a challenge to his position.

However, as he was training, he was suddenly alarmed by the sound of explosions, so he came to find the source.

Upon reaching his destination, Murong Yu realised that the sound was from Nie Li, who was hunting ghouls. Nie Li kept opening his mouth and spitting out black and white orbs, which exploded upon collision with the ghouls. Each orb instantly swept over several hundreds or even thousands of ghouls. It was a frighteningly fast hunting speed.

Nie Li was far inferior to Murong Yu in terms of strength, but Nie Li's hunting speed was still much faster.

Murong Yu couldn't help frowning. To think there'd actually be someone who'd integrated with a demon spirit as lowly graded as the Fanged Panda. Even in the smaller realms, the Fanged Panda was considered a low grade demon spirit that no one wanted. However, who would've thought that this particular Fanged Panda would be so powerful and knows such a weird and powerful energy bomb?

At this pace, Nie Li's ranking would definitely surpass his own before long!

Nie Li looked at Murong Yu, as he'd sensed a powerful aura just as Murong Yu appeared. What was he planning?

The two of them eyed each other. One was the strongest geniuses of the previous year, Murong Yu; the other was the strongest from the new year, Nie Li. What was going to happen between the two of them? Their confrontation incited the attention of several others nearby. Aside from Hu Yong's underlings, Hua Ling's men were also among them.

However, none of them had fully comprehended the situation yet;

therefore, they didn't dare make unnecessary moves, such as approaching the two. After all, Murong Yu's strength wasn't something they could match against.

"You're Nie Li?" Murong Yu looked over his opponent with scrutiny. Nie Li still hadn't made a breakthrough to the Heavenly Fate Realm yet, but for a newcomer of this year, his strength was pretty decent.

Nie Li looked at Murong Yu. "That's right. Who are you?" Although Nie Li could sense the tremendous pressure bearing down on him, he didn't lower his head.

"I'm Murong Yu!" he proudly announced. A good majority of the younger experts were well aware of his name.

Murong Yu? Nie Li suddenly realised who he was. Before they'd entered the Ghastly Ruins, his name was the first one ranked on the hunting board!

But now that Murong Yu had appeared, what was he planning to do?

At that moment, someone from among Hua Ling's underlings suddenly shouted from afar, "Senior Brother Murong, we've all been looking forward to meeting you! Every one of us absolutely respects you! However, there were some newcomers who were disrespectful to Senior Brother Murong. Nie Li here said that you were a pile of dogshit who he'd soon crush beneath him! We couldn't accept such words, so a dispute occurred between us. However, our strength isn't on par with his!"

Murong Yu's narrowed his eyes as his expression turned cold. A vast wave of aura bore down on Nie Li. Murong Yu coldly snorted and asked, "Is that true?"

His cultivation was at least of the 5-fate Heavenly Fate Realm, or perhaps even stronger. His aura pressed down like a mountain, as if it was trying to tear Nie Li's body apart. After all, Nie Li hadn't reached the Heavenly Fate Realm yet; the distance between him and Murong Yu was too vast.

Nie Li instantly understood Murong Yu's intentions. With Murong Yu's

intellect, there was no way he'd actually believe the words of Hua Ling's men. What Murong Yu needed was an excuse to suppress Nie Li, and Hua Ling's underling had just provided him with the perfect one!

The geniuses of each class year always feared challenges from the next year's geniuses. If they won, then it'd be a given; however, if they lost, they'd be reduced to stepping stones. That was also why Murong Yu kept challenging the genius of the year before him, Li Xingyun.

Nie Li was the most outstanding genius of the new class year, whereas Murong Yu was the most outstanding from the previous one. Before long, Nie Li would certainly challenge Murong Yu; therefore, Murong Yu had to make the first move and beat Nie Li down before that happened!

"If you're intent on condemning someone, why bother with a pretext? With your intellect, you wouldn't believe those guys anyways, right?" As Nie Li spoke, he gathered his Heavenly Energy to resist Murong Yu's aura. Now that Nie Li understood the vital points, he began to come up with countermeasures for it.

However, it's a pity that he was stopped at the top of the Earth Fate Realm, only a step away from Heavenly Fate Realm.

Even though Nie Li's cultivation speed was extremely fast and he'd reached the top of the Earth Fate Realm in just a single year, there was still too much of a difference between himself and Murong Yu.

Murong Yu's powerful aura forcing Nie Li's down, it was obvious that he was trying to bully the weak with his strength. However, at that moment, there was nothing that Nie Li could do about it.

In the Draconic Ruins Realm, there was no dignity for the weak! Nie Li had displayed powerful talent; therefore, he'd received the attentions of many higher-ups. At the same time, he'd also made many enemies from his own generation. They all fervently wished for someone to come along and beat Nie Li to the ground!

A general is made from the bones of thousands of soldiers. To walk the Dao of cultivation, you must step over others! Murong Yu was well aware of this; by stepping on Nie Li, he'd be able to receive more attention and

more cultivation resources!

Dignity only comes with strength. No matter how loud the weak scream, no one will hear it!

Murong Yu heavily snorted. “Are you telling me that those brothers were framing you?”

Bang!

A surge of powerful aura swept over Nie Li and he felt like someone was hammering on his chest. He almost suffocated under the pressure.

Wrath!

An endless sea of wrath surged forth. Nie Li tightly clenched his fists and merged with the Fanged Panda. His fur turned scarlet red.

“Looks like you’re quite unconvinced!” Murong Yu coldly looked down on Nie Li. “In that case, I’ll make sure to teach you a good lesson today. If you want to stay in the Skysoul Institute, then you’ll have to learn to respect your elders first!” When Murong Yu barked, his voice had turned into sonic blades and flew towards Nie Li.

Murong Yu hadn’t even drawn his sword yet, but there was already sword intent contained in his voice.

Nie Li felt death lunging at him through the impending sonic blades.

Nie Li furiously roared and spat a Yin-Yang Blast toward these sonic blades.

Boom!

The Yin-Yang Blast exploded in the sky, shattering many of the sonic blades. However, one made it through the explosion and shot towards Nie Li, moving as fast as lightning.

Nie Li saw the incoming sonic blade and immediately dodged sideways. “Dammit! The difference between our cultivations is too great. Unless I use a secret technique, it’ll be impossible for me to deal with him!”

Fwoosh!

The sonic blade grazed past him, leaving a three to four inch wound that spattered fresh blood.

The shockwave sent Nie Li rolling several times before he finally managed to steady himself. He held his wound and furiously glared at Murong Yu. The difference between them was too great; it'd be impossible for Nie Li to win. If he remained here any longer, he'd only suffer more humiliation!

This had always been a world where the strong preyed on the weak. Since Murong Yu had obtained his chance, he definitely wouldn't let Nie Li go so easily!

Murong Yu looked down at Nie Li from his position in the sky and continued to suppress Nie Li, as if he was trying to crush his body. Murong Yu made a slight beckoning motion with his right hand and Nie Li's bag of soul scales flew towards him.

Murong Yu caught the bag in his hand and coldly laughed. "Your strength is just mediocre. You haven't even reached the Heavenly Fate Realm, but you're using such cheat-like methods to collect so many soul scales. These don't rightfully belong to you. I'll be confiscating them!"

Nie Li had spent five hours gathering those twenty thousand soul scales. What cheat-like methods? The Ghastly Ruins didn't even have rules on what methods could or couldn't be used to collect soul scales. Obtaining soul scales in the first place was the proof of real ability! Murong Yu wasn't a law enforcer of the Skysoul Institute; what right did he have to confiscate Nie Li's soul scales?

However, this was a world where only strength mattered!

In his current state, Nie Li didn't have enough strength. It was impossible for him to face Murong Yu!

Strength! Strength!

Without strength, you can't protect your dignity. That was the rule of the Draconic Ruins Realm! In his previous life, Nie Li had faced far more and worse humiliations.

Nie Li slightly narrowed his eyes. Someday, he would definitely take back everything that Murong Yu has taken from him today. He would make sure that Murong Yu paid the price for this humiliation!

Murong Yu wore a mocking smile as he swept his palm in a slapping motion towards Nie Li. “Junior Brother, you don’t seem terribly satisfied. But so what if you’re dissatisfied? Now, I’m sure you’ve learned how to respect your elders! Otherwise, this lesson would’ve been a waste of your Senior Brother’s good intentions!”

Murong Yu wasn’t going to let the matter end here; he’d already decided to ruthlessly humiliate Nie Li, until Nie Li could never raise his head towards others again. He wanted to leave his shadow in Nie Li’s heart, impeding his cultivation, so it would never rise!

Nie Li sensed the slap whistling towards him. The moment Murong Yu let his guard down, a chilling light flashed through Nie Li’s eyes. He suddenly dropped the Fanged Panda transformation, while simultaneously merging with the Shadow Devil and activated its void-form.

Nie Li’s figure disappeared into thin air. Murong Yu’s palm of energy swept through the spot where Nie Li had been standing, but only impacted the ground and caused a deep crater.

Murong Yu frowned briefly when he saw his palm energy land a miss. He scanned his surroundings, searching for traces of Nie Li; however, he couldn’t find Nie Li’s location. Just what was going on? How could that fellow suddenly disappear?

In the split second before Nie Li disappeared, it looked like he’d merged with another demon spirit. Just what exactly was going on? Had there ever been a person capable of merging with a second demon spirit?

Who would’ve thought that Nie Li actually had such methods up his sleeve? Murong Yu never imaged that he’d lose his target in such a way. He was furious as he continued to search for traces of Nie Li.

Ever since Nie Li’s cultivation had risen, the time limit on his void-form had increased, allowing him to maintain the transformation for longer periods of time. Nie Li gradually moved to an area where there were more

buildings. Despite the extension, there was still a finite time limit to the void-form; therefore, he had to think of other ways to hide from Murong Yu.

# Chapter 294: Settling for Second

Nie Li's cultivation was already considered extremely fast.

In his previous life, Nie Li had cultivated for several hundreds of years before he reached the Heavenly Fate Realm. However, this time, he only needed a little over one year – almost two – to reach the the doorway to the Heavenly Fate Realm.

The higher he climbed, the slower his cultivation speed would become.

However, right now, he was still too weak; he couldn't even take control of his own fate.

Nie Li was pressured by the urgency of his own situation. Hard work and talent by themselves were useless upon reaching the Draconic Ruins Realm. He still needed to get his hands on large quantities of cultivating resources: in particular, spiritual stone essence!

Geniuses of lower realms were usually recruited by different families, and thus became their underlings. Those who were able to grow by themselves, without the support of such families, were extremely few. Nie Li didn't want to join a family, since that would make his road much harder, later down the line.

Everyone around him, including Murong Yu, would stop at nothing to prevent him from obtaining more cultivating resources.

Hua Ling's men had only provided him with an excuse. The most crucial thing was that Nie Li still lacked strength and had no one to back him up. That's why Murong Yu dared to bully him!

Murong Yu scanned his surroundings, but still couldn't find Nie Li. He briefly frowned. Did Nie Li use some sort of special technique that let him escape to another location?

By now, one of Hua Ling's underlings – the one who'd spoken earlier – had also flown over and began searching the surroundings. However, they couldn't find traces of Nie Li either.

This underling looked at Murong Yu and smiled. "That Nie Li kid must

have run away. Senior Brother Murong, he couldn't have gotten far. We can still chase him down!"

Murong Yu looked at him with a smile that wasn't a smile. He walked up to that underling, then punched him in the stomach with a cold smile. "I'm not really fond of that kid called Nie Li, but the same goes for you. I hate being used by others!"

After being hit by Murong Yu's punch, the poor underling's back arched like a shrimp as his face twisted in pain.

"You..." He furiously glared at Murong Yu. Although he was at 2-fate Heavenly Fate Realm, he was still far from Murong Yu's level.

"You dare to glare at me?" Murong Yu raised a leg and dropped it on the man's head, smashing his head to the ground with a cold smile. "You need to show respect when you meet someone who's stronger than you. Get it?"

"Senior Brother Murong...I apologise!" The underling finally spat those words from his mouth as he felt like his brains were about to burst.

"There we go!" Murong Yu snorted and took his victim's soul scale bag, then said in an a disdainful voice, "You only managed to hunt a little over two thousand ghouls? Trash!" Upon finishing his words, Murong Yu tucked the soul scales away.

The nameless expert was filled with rage, but he could only remain on the ground, with his head under Murong Yu's foot. He laughed in an attempt to placate his tormentor, "Ah, Senior Brother has seen an embarrassing sight of me. I only have these soul scales with me, but Senior Brother should take them!"

Murong Yu kicked him as he laughed along. "That's right. Pretend to be a dog and give me three good barks. Then I'll let you go!"

The man hesitated for a bit, but eventually gave in as he sensed Murong Yu's foot pressing down harder and harder. In the end, he opened his mouth and barked three times, "Woof, woof, woof."

Murong Yu laughed, "Not bad, not bad! Almost like the real thing!"

Although Nie Li was in his void-form, he still got a clear view of this scene. Murong Yu was an even more despicable person than the Long Yuyin from his previous life. Luckily, Nie Li had used the void-form to dodge Murong Yu's attack; otherwise, he would've ended up worse than the guy over there!

Without strength, you will only be humiliated by others!

Nie Li tightly clenched his fists as he slowly moved towards the ruins. Under the cover provided by the ruins, he first deactivated his void-form, then immediately activated his Divine Stream combat ability. This turned him into a streak of light that flew off into the distance.

For a single moment, Murong Yu sensed a trace of Nie Li's aura. He furrowed his brows briefly, then coldly snorted, "Who would've thought that you'd be so fast at running away? But if you want to escape from my clutches, it won't be so easy!"

Just as Murong Yu prepared to give chase, a thought suddenly crossed his mind and he halted his steps as an evil smile revealed itself at the corner of his mouth. "Since you're so good at hunting ghouls, I'll let you continue hunting for a while. I'll deal with you afterwards!"

If Murong Yu caught Nie Li now, the only thing he'd be able to do was give Nie Li a beating. If he acted too harshly, who knew if someone might step out to protect Nie Li? It'd be better for him to be patient now and reap the profits later.

Nie Li flew on for a few hundred miles. When he saw that Murong Yu wasn't chasing after him, he knitted his brows. Murong Yu was strong. If he wanted to give chase, it'd definitely be tough for Nie Li to escape. However, Nie Li figured it out after pondering briefly.

"Trying to take advantage of me? Fat chance!"

He'd rather choose death over dishonor! Since Murong Yu was plotting against him, then he'll just leave this place! If he continued hunting ghouls, there was a likely chance that all of his hard work would just end up benefitting Murong Yu!

It never crossed Nie Li's mind that he'd suffer such a huge setback right after entering the Ghastly Ruins. It seemed like collecting spiritual stones by hunting ghouls wasn't possible for him anymore. Aside from Murong Yu, there were still many others watching him. Even if he managed to collect some soul scales, the others might easily snatch them away. When Murong Yu was busy with Nie Li, Nanmen Tianhai and Huang Yu didn't appear. Those two were probably not going to take action, as long as things stayed within somewhat reasonable bounds of the rules.

Furthermore, Hua Ling and Hu Yong's underlings were also gathered in the Ghastly Ruins. Peaceful times in here were but a dream to Nie Li now.

Then how were Lu Piao and Xiao Yu faring? However, finding them would be difficult due to the size of the Ghastly Ruins. At least Lu Piao and Xiao Yu's lives wouldn't be in danger; at most, they'd suffer some setbacks. Remaining here would just be a waste of time for Nie Li, so he moved towards the exit of the Ghastly Ruins.

Nie Li emerged from the entrance of the Ghastly Ruins and into the outside world.

There was a crowd outside the Ghastly Ruins. They blankly stared at Nie Li when he came out. None of them had expected him to return so quickly.

“Did you guys hear? That Nie Li kid was hunting ghouls inside the Ghastly Ruins, but got beat up by Murong Yu. He even got his soul scales stolen from him.”

“At least he's somewhat smart. He knows he'd only get humiliated again, if he stayed inside the Ghastly Ruins”

“It's his fault he offended so many people.”

“Murong Yu is the genius of the previous batch. Nie Li's got a deathwish in provoking him!”

Who knew how many people were rejoicing at the fact that Nie Li had suffered in the the Ghastly Ruins? Due to his shocking displays of talent, many students viewed him as a dangerous opponent. Only by preventing

Nie Li from obtaining more spiritual stones, they'd be able to slow down his cultivation speed.

They couldn't get in his way on the Saint Soul Board. However, Nie Li was left dreaming about benefitting from the Ghastly Ruins and the Yin Flame Wasteland!

If he wanted to obtain more spiritual stones, then he'd have to head to the outside world. However, the outside world was even more dangerous than the two testing grounds!

Nie Li sensed their enmity and understood that these people would stop at nothing to prevent him from getting more spiritual stones!

Without spiritual stones, he wouldn't be able to cultivate. Furthermore, his level of cultivation required a large quantity of spiritual stones. Nie Li thought as he walked: how could he obtain more spiritual stones?

His current strength was still too weak, and there were many methods that couldn't be used for various reasons. Even if he obtained spiritual stones by curing others' illnesses, one problem was that it'd be very time-consuming. Another problem was that there'd still be people getting in his way.

He couldn't afford it!

He thought back to the arrogant and overbearing Murong Yu, and the Demon Lord who was still growing stronger. He thought about the fearsome Sage Emperor and all the events that he might encounter in the future.

If he didn't become stronger, he'd be at the end of his rope when the future came. And if something unexpected happened...

Nie Li thought over things carefully. He thought of the Nightmare Demon Pot. He'd always been unwilling to let someone else know of its existence; however, all the other ways of obtaining spiritual stones was now blocked. Even if he managed to reach the Heavenly Fate Realm and headed to the outside world, there would still be many people waiting to teach him a lesson.

Nie Li was out of options!

If he wanted to use the Nightmare Demon Pot, Xiao Yu and Lu Piao wouldn't be of much help. The only one was Gu Bei!

From what Nie Li had seen of Gu Bei's character, and the fact that Nie Li had cured his sister, it could be said that Gu Bei was someone who'd keep his promises!

By now, Nie Li noticed that he'd been wandering around the Skysoul Institute for quite some time. He decided to merge with the Shadow Devil and activate its void-form to dodge the prying eyes of passerby as he entered Gu Bei and Gu Lan's courtyard.

Upon entering, Nie Li noticed Gu Lan sitting on the chair, quietly cultivating.

She wore a white silk dress with a blanket draped over her legs. She'd reached a crucial point in her cultivation as white mist rolled off her body. Her clothes were drenched in sweat, that her pearly white skin and light pink chest wrap could be vaguely seen.

Today, Gu Lan still had a pale face; however, her slender hands had gained more of a fleshy pink colour to them.

Nie Li awkwardly retracted his gaze as he attentively stood to the side and waited. Since Gu Bei wasn't around, he could only wait for Gu Lan to finish her cultivation.

Roughly an hour later, Gu Lan finally opened her eyes. Upon seeing Nie Li, she lightly smiled and said, "Sir, have you been waiting for very long?"

Nie Li cupped his hands in a greeting and said, "It wasn't that long. This mansion doesn't seem very secure, since it was so easy for me to sneak in. But please forgive me for my lack of manners."

Gu Lan smiled, "I've been crippled for so long that my enemies don't see any worth in me. However, it'd still cause a huge ruckus if I did end up dead, so, no one would risk it!"

Nie Li understood Gu Lan's meaning. He involuntarily swept his eyes

over Gu Lan's body, then immediately pulled them away. His voice slightly trembled as he asked, "I wonder if Sister Gu Lan's health has improved any?"

Gu Lan lowered her head to take a look at herself. Only then did she realise that her body was covered in sweat. A flush smeared over her pale face as she mobilised her energy to evaporate all the sweat. "Thank you for your concern. After taking the medicine, I already feel much better!"

Nie Li nodded. "En." With just the two of them, he couldn't help feeling a sense of awkwardness. He wondered when Gu Bei would return.

# Chapter 295: Demon Spirits For Sale

Nie Li and Gu Lan awkwardly looked at each other, neither knowing how to start a conversation. Just then, Gu Bei walked in from outside.

Gu Bei blankly stared at him. “Nie Li? Why are you here? News outside is circulating. They say that you and Murong Yu had some...conflicts in the Ghastly Ruins?” he said with a slight pause.

Nie Li had a straight face as he said, “You don’t need to be too considerate of my feelings. You said ‘conflict’? What conflict? I haven’t even reached the Heavenly Fate Realm. How could I possibly be his match? Naturally, he crushed me. He even took all the soul scales I gathered!”

Gu Bei never expected Nie Li to make such a straightforward admission. Gu Bei patted his friend on the head and smiled, “Then what are you going to do? Murong Yu is still really strong. I’m afraid that even the two of us won’t be his match.”

Nie Li calmly replied, “I have no choice but to endure it for now. I have something else that I might need your help with.”

Gu Lan couldn’t help raising her head towards Nie Li. If any other youth had encountered Nie Li’s situation, they’d probably be beyond infuriated. She never expected Nie Li to deal with it so calmly.

Gu Bei hit his own chest and announced, “Say the word. No matter what it is, I’ll do my best!”

“I want you to help me acquire demon spirits with Ordinary, Good, or Excellent growth rates. As for numbers, please acquire as many as possible!” said Nie Li.

At Nie Li’s words, Gu Bei scratched his head. “I don’t know why you’d want so many demon spirits. Most of the demon spirits in the Draconic Ruins Realm are pretty high grade creatures with Dragon Bloodlines. They’re all much better than the ordinary demon spirits you want!”

“I don’t need any demon spirits with Dragon Bloodlines.”

“If we’re just talking about ordinary demon spirits, only those with Extraordinary or God Level growth rates are good for battle. Ordinary ones with low growth rates are basically useless!” Gu Bei was rather confused. “If you want to integrate with a demon spirit, I can totally get you a better one!”

“I have my own uses for them. However much you spend in collecting the demon spirits, I’ll pay back in the future!” Nie li continued, “I need a lot of them. The more the better!”

Gu Bei thought about it for a bit, then said, “It shouldn’t cost too much to get those ordinary demon spirits. There aren’t many in the Draconic Ruins Realm, but not for the smaller realms. I can send someone to hunt for them, so I’ll be able to get you a lot in a short time!”

Nie Li gave him a light smile. “Then I’ll be troubling you!”

Gu Bei chuckled. “Why be so polite? We’re brothers! On top of that, you’ve even saved my sister!”

In just a short while, Gu Bei finished his arrangements and sent a few Heavenly Fate Realm experts to the smaller realms to hunt for ordinary demon spirits. It was a small task for them, of course. However, since Nie Li had personally entrusted this task to Gu Bei, everything would have to be very secretive. Therefore, Gu Bei only sent his most trusted aides.

In the span of a single day, Gu Bei’s men managed to gather more than twenty thousand demon spirits from one of the nearest small realms.

Nie Li received the first batch of demon spirits and returned to his room to begin refining them. There were quite a few among these twenty thousand that had Good or even Excellent growth rates.

Nie Li began the refining process by placing ten demon spirits of the same growth rate into the Nightmare Demon Pot. It’d been awhile since he last refined demon spirits, but he still managed to operate it easily.

Refinery failure!

Refinery failure!

Refinery success!

Nie Li refined batch after batch and the Nightmare Demon Pot continued to produce demon spirits with higher growth rates. The more he refined, the more energy the Nightmare Demon Pot absorbed from the disintegrated demon spirits.

Nie Li stayed in his room and continued to refine demon spirits. In the batch of twenty thousand demon spirits, there were a little over thirty with God Level growth rates. Under normal circumstances, a demon spirit with a God Level growth rate, but without the Dragon Bloodline, would only sell for somewhere between thirty to fifty spiritual stones.

That would already be considered a huge sum. After all, ordinary students, aside from those like Gu Bei who had backgrounds, would find it difficult to come up with thirty to fifty spiritual stones for free spending. Anyone from a family like Gu Bei's would definitely choose to integrate with a demon spirit that possessed the Dragon Bloodline, or perhaps even the Ancient Bloodline. People like them wouldn't want an ordinary demon spirit, even if it had a God Level growth rate.

Although people like Murong Yu and Hu Rong were trying ways to prevent him from obtaining more spiritual stones, Nie Li definitely wasn't going to helplessly wait for death!

If he couldn't collect spiritual stones from the Ghastly Ruins, then he could collect them in other ways. After all, could you die from holding your urine [1]? Once he obtained enough spiritual stones, his cultivation would undergo a huge surge and he'd soon surpass Murong Yu.

[tl: [1] = Not a formal Chinese idiom, but a somewhat common saying. it means "having an extra method is always welcome" ]

By now, Lu Piao and Xiao Yu had returned to the courtyard.

Nie Li was curious about Lu Piao's bruised face. "Lu Piao, what happened to you?"

Lu Piao was extremely irritated and only became more furious as he thought about it. "Don't remind me. I collected over three thousand soul

scales from the Ghastly Ruins, but all of them were stolen by that scumbag Hua Ling's underlings. I even got beaten up by them!"

Xiao Yu bitterly smiled. "I also encountered the same issue, but I got out slightly better, since they couldn't defeat me with their level of strength. However, I've only managed to collect a little over five thousand soul scales during those two days! After I came out, I heard news that you'd exited a day earlier than me?"

Nie Li nodded. "Yeah, I encountered Murong Yu and he snatched the twenty thousand soul scales that I'd gathered." It looked like this problem wasn't his alone; even Lu Piao and Xiao Yu were being picked on. Xiao Yu was still quite strong, so he could resist them. However, Lu Piao couldn't do the same.

Originally, the three of them should've reaped rather decent profits from the Ghastly Ruins, based on their strengths. However, everything was disrupted by those scumbags.

Lu Piao angrily said, "No wonder Murong Yu managed to set a new record for himself by the time we came out! So that's how he got more than one hundred twenty thousand soul scales!"

Xiao Yu pulled out all one hundred sixty spiritual stones that he'd managed to collect and said, "I managed to collect a few, so we can split these first!" This was the first time he'd gotten so many; after all, his past strength was incomparable to his current strength. It's a pity that he only managed to collect so few during the once-a-month opportunity.

Although Xiao Yu's one hundred sixty spiritual stones were a huge quantity, it was still insufficient for them. The Heavenly Energy contained in one or two hundred spiritual stones wouldn't even cause the slightest ripple in Nie Li's soul realm!

Nie Li shook his head and said, "There's no need. I have other ways of obtaining spiritual stones! Some people are trying to get in our way of gathering spiritual stones, so how can we let their wishes come true? Let's take a trip to the institute's market!"

"What are we going to the market for?"

A light flashed through Nie Li's eyes. "To sell demon spirits!" He'd thought about letting Gu Bei sell those God Level growth rate demon spirits for him; however, after thinking over it again, he decided that it'd be better if he went personally. After all, it wouldn't be polite to rely on Gu Bei for everything.

Furthermore, if Nie Li sold those God Level demon spirits by himself, he could claim that he'd gotten them from the Tiny World. If they didn't believe him, they were welcome to go investigate the Tiny World themselves. Not that they'd be able to get in anyways.

Nie Li was certain that he'd suffer some obstructions in selling the God Level growth rate demon spirits; however, he'd already made mental preparations. Within the Skysoul Institute, his enemies wouldn't dare make a move against him. Therefore, he planned to sell as many as possible.

Shouts echoed throughout the Skysoul Institute's market as students filled the place, making transactions on various items.

Nie Li and his group made their entrance into the market.

Lu Piao became a little dejected when he realised just how poor they were. "Nie Li, during the last battle, I realised the importance of artifacts. The opponent I encountered wasn't much stronger than me, but he had a Grade 2 artifact with him. No matter how hard I fought, I couldn't be his match! Now that I'm at the market, I've learned that a single Grade 2 artifact costs sixty to seventy spiritual stones!

He thought back to his glory days in Glory City. Back then, a million or even ten million demon spirit coins were just loose change to him. But no one recognised demon spirit coins here!

Lu Piao could only windowshop the artifacts in envy.

When Nie Li released news that he had God Level growth rate demon spirits, it immediately attracted the attentions of many students.

"Did you guys hear? That newcomer called Nie Li is going to sell some God Level growth rate demon spirits!"

“Do they have Dragon Bloodlines?”

“No way! A demon spirit with the Dragon Bloodline and a God Level growth rate would be priceless. They’re just ordinary demon spirits with God Level growth rates!”

“Then, what’s the point?”

The students discussed amongst themselves. “A God Level isn’t bad. After all, in the smaller realms, a God Level growth rate is one in a million!”

God Level growth rate demon spirits were much too attractive for these ordinary students.

These people correctly guessed that Nie Li couldn’t collect spiritual stones the usual way, because someone was getting in his way. News that Murong Yu had served Nie Li a beating and stolen his soul scales was widespread. Although Nie Li came in with a lot of momentum, it ultimately came back to bite him in the butt. Therefore, it was reasonable that he’d be the target of bullying.

That was the rule of the Skysoul Institute. It was Nie Li’s fault he didn’t have any background worth speaking of while possessing a talent that others envied.

Lu Piao projected his voice as he began advertising. “God Level growth rate demon spirits for sale! Fresh God Level demon spirits! Fifty spiritual stones for one, but I’ll give you four for the price of three!”

Nie Li was trying to sell as many demon spirits as possible before Hua Ling and Hu Yong’s underlings arrived.

Fifty spiritual stones for one was an extremely cheap price. On top of that, they were making it four for the price of three. This offer immediately attracted many people’s attention. At the same time, it raised their curiosity. Just how many God Level growth rate demon spirits did Nie Li have?

God Level demon spirits were rather attractive goods and the potential buyers quickly increased in numbers. Soon, two transactions were made

and two God Level growth rate demon spirits were sold; however, a little bargaining happened and the prices were adjusted for a total of ninety-three spiritual stones.

At first, there were plenty of people just standing by, watching. But once they confirmed that Nie Li was indeed selling genuine God Level demon spirits, their excitement rose. A few people couldn't pull out so many spiritual stones at the moment, so they left to scrape up the funds.

God Level demon spirits were rather rare in the market, only occasionally seen around. The sudden appearance of so many God Level growth rate demon spirits had an effect like a stone thrown into the calm surface of a lake.

# Chapter 296: Li Xingyun

Nie Li continued to sell God Level growth rate demon spirits in large quantities, raising everyone's curiosity. Just where could he have gotten so many God Level demon spirits from?

Was the Tiny World really that mysterious? Aside from geniuses, they could even mass produce God Level growth rate demon spirits?

As Nie Li and his group busied themselves with selling demon spirits, a group of people walked up to them.

Their leader was a heroic looking youth who was roughly in his twenties. His cheeks were outlined with a dignified expression as he strode forward in wide and prideful steps. A powerful wave of aura surged as he approached.

The incoming wave hinted at a frightening power.

Nie Li sensed his presence and shifted his eyes to this youth. One look told him that this youth was even stronger than Murong Yu. Furthermore, this man cultivated the [Nine-Transformation Draconic Flames], which was the cultivation technique of the Ashen Flames Family. This technique allowed him to contain the powerful Draconic Flames aura within his body.

If he didn't suppress his Draconic Flames, he would be roughly an 8 or 9-fate expert.

This youth was from the Ashen Flames Family. That meant that the dozen or so people following him should also be experts from the Ashen Flames Family!

The Ashen Flames Family was one of the three major powers of the Divine Feathers Sect. They were also more neutral in standing and rarely ever participated in the contest for the Sect Master's position. However, their strength was not to be underestimated, as even previous Sect Masters had often tried to curry favor with them. This was an extremely mysterious family. Even during Nie Li's previous life, after the Divine

Feathers Sect had fallen apart, the Ashen Flames Family still managed to stand strongly as an independent.

The youth gave Nie Li a once-over and lightly smiled. “I heard that you’re selling God Level growth rate demon spirits?”

“That’s right.” Nie Li nodded as he attentively observed this youth’s attitude, trying to guess his intentions.

The youth firmly said, “How many God Level growth rate demon spirits do you have left? We’ll just go with your price and take them all!”

Lu Piao’s eyebrows twitched as excitement revealed itself on his face. He must be a moneybag, if he could afford to buy all their demon spirits.

Nie Li asked in a calm voice as he guessed the identity of the opposite party, “I wonder how I should address this Young Master?”

The youth looked at Nie Li as the trace of a faint smile appeared at the corner of his mouth. “You must be Nie Li, I’ve heard of you before. You and Long Yuyin are the only decent ones among the newcomers. My name is Li Xingyun of the Ashen Flames Family!”

Nie Li recalled the past. In his previous life, there had indeed been such a person within the Divine Feathers Sect. That person seemed to have competed for the Patriarch’s seat of the Ashen Flames Family. However, he failed to acquire it and left. After he left the Divine Feathers Sect, he became a domineering figure. That fellow was a powerful genius. Outside of the Divine Feathers Sect, his reputation was far greater than Master Bei’s or even Long Yuyin’s. However, his character was also somewhat debatable, as he he could not differentiate between good and evil. Despite that, he’d made friendly contacts in every corner of every world and had a bunch of loyal and devoted brothers following him.

Such a prominent figure should still have a positive outlook.

Nie Li said, “We still have twenty-four God Level growth rate demon spirits left.”

At Nie Li’s words, Li Xingyun’s brows twitched in surprise. He never expected Nie Li to have so many God Level growth rate demon spirits. Li

Xingyun thought that after selling so many, Nie Li would have at most five or six remaining.

Li Xingyun gave a satisfied smile as he said, “It doesn’t matter how many God Level demon spirits you have, I’ll take all of them. But it’s a pity that among your God Level growth rate demon spirits, there aren’t any with Dragon Bloodlines. It’d be better if you had demon spirits with a Dragon Bloodline and a growth rate of Excellent or above.” Although Li Xingyun was only third in the line of succession to the Ashen Flames Family, he’d already recruited thousands of geniuses under his wing. Furthermore, his wealth was also very frighteningly vast; therefore, he had no problems with taking all the God Level demon spirits.

“In the future, if I ever come across anything of the sort, I’ll make sure to contact Young Master Li!” Nie Li lightly smiled.

“Oh?” Li Xingyun obviously wasn’t expecting Nie Li to say such words. Did Nie Li have some secret method for obtaining God Level demon spirits?

Since Li Xingyun had a large amount of geniuses under his wing, he wasn’t going to be stingy about purchasing items that could enhance his men’s strengths.

Li Xingyun proudly said, “As long as you have God Level growth rate demon spirits, you should contact me. No matter how many you have, I’ll take them all!”

Nie Li didn’t know how deep Li Xingyun’s pockets were; however, since Li Xingyun was a successor to a powerful family, he should possess a lot of capital. If Li Xingyun wanted to buy so many God Level demon spirits so quickly, he was obviously preparing for a power struggle. After Nie Li connected this knowledge with the rumors from his previous life, he instantly understood the whole picture.

There would only be benefits in having a good relationship with such people!

Lu Piao quickly calculated, “Twenty-four God Level growth rate demon spirits. That’s nine hundred spiritual stones, total!”

“Fine by me!” Li Xingyun brought out nine hundred spiritual stones and tossed them over to Lu Piao.

In return, Nie Li passed the remaining twenty-four God Level demon spirits to Li Xingyun.

Li Xingyun received the demon spirits, then patted Nie Li on the shoulder and said, “I like you. If you’re interested in joining me, please look for me anytime. I’ll definitely treat you well! But it’s also fine if you’re unwilling. Either way, if you ever get your hands on some more God Level demon spirits, you can sell them to me anytime!”

Nie Li casually smiled and said, “Many thanks for Young Master Li’s appreciation. If I come across any God Level demon spirits, I’ll definitely look for you.” Nie Li had no interest towards the internal struggle within the Ashen Flames Family. Who knows what would happen this time? Maybe Li Xingyun would win this time. Or perhaps he might lose, same as the previous life.

The Divine Feathers Sect’s internal operations were a complete mess. Those who were loyal to the sect itself could only observe the internal struggles, as they were helpless against it. The fights between the major families could also get extremely intense.

The splitting of the Divine Feathers Sect in one hundred years wasn’t completely unpredictable.

Nie Li didn’t intend to rely on Li Xingyun, and these intentions were reflected in his words. Li Xingyun also didn’t mind it as he said, “Alright then! I’ll be waiting for your good news!”

Li Xingyun turned to an underling behind him and said, “Pass a message to Hua Ling. From now on, I’ll be looking after Nie Li. Get him to keep his hands to himself; otherwise, I’ll take care of both him and his men!”

At Li Xingyun’s words, Nie Li cupped his hands. “Many thanks to Young Master Li!”

In his heart, Nie Li understood what was going on, as clear as day. Li Xingyun had probably conducted a thorough investigation on him;

therefore, he was well aware that Hua Ling and Hu Yong were making trouble for Nie Li. However, Li Xingyun had only mentioned Hua Ling and not Hu Yong. He wanted to show Nie Li his goodwill; at the same time, he was hinting at something else. For now, Li Xingyun would help Nie Li with only half his problem. He was implying that as long as Nie Li joined him or at least cooperated with him, then he'd take care of everything else.

Indeed, he lived up to the rumors of a domineering figure. Although he was still in his twenties, he was already experienced in these stuff.

“Then we'll go ahead and take our leave!” Li Xingyun lightly smiled, then led his entourage away.

The bystanders watched Li Xingyun leave before breaking into soft discussions.

“I wonder what Young Master Li plans to do with so many God Level demon spirits?”

“Are you not aware? Young Master Li has always been very generous to his loyal and devoted underlings. I've heard that all of his underlings are paired with a Grade 3 Artifact. He probably bought so many God Level demon spirits for his underlings!”

At those words, the bystanders couldn't help being moved. Indeed, joining the various large factions could greatly benefit them, especially if they ended up with a generous master.

“This Nie Li sold so many God Level demon spirits and earned one thousand two hundred spiritual stones in such a short while. That supply will probably last him awhile.”

“Yeah, who knows where that kid got so many God Level demon spirits from!”

The students were envying him as they talked. One thousand two hundred spiritual stones was a vast fortune! To the likes of them, it was a sum that could only be admired from afar. They might not even be able to gather so many spiritual stones even if they spent several years gathering them.

Aside from ordinary students, Nie Li also attracted the attentions of a few others. Shortly after Nie Li began selling God Level demon spirits, Hu Yong, Hua Ling, and their men arrived. However, they knew that Li Xingyu had talked to Nie Li, so they didn't dare approach him.

Soon, news spread that Nie Li had formed a deal with Li Xingyun and that all the God Level demon spirits had been sold for over a thousand spiritual stones.

Hu Yong was extremely infuriated, since Li Xingyun obviously wasn't placing him with any importance. He was rather upset when the thought about Nie Li's one thousand plus spiritual stones; Nie Li's cultivation was due to soar by leaps and bounds. However, he didn't dare entice Li Xingyun's trouble. Nanmen Tian and Huang Yu had also warned him before; therefore, he didn't dare cause any trouble within the Skysoul Institute.

On the other hand, after Hua Ling received the news from his underling, he became angered to the point that he wanted to smash something.

Hua Ling wasn't alone in bullying Nie Li and co. However, he was the easiest to deal with and was warned directly!

The more he thought about it, the more furious he became. His hatred for Li Xingyun peaked. However, he didn't dare provoke Li Xingyun with his current strength. Li Xingyun was third in line to succeed the Ashen Flames Family. Among the younger generations of the Ashen Flames Family, he still had a lot of authority!

Not only was he afraid to entice Li Xingyun's trouble, he needed to prepare a huge apology gift [1], in case Li Xingyun suddenly remembered him!

[tl: [1] = In China, there is a tradition to give gifts for visits, apologize, curry favours etc... ]

As for the future, as long as Nie Li and Li Xingyun didn't have a falling out, he wouldn't dare provoke Nie Li anymore. After all, Li Xingyun had already warned him. How could he dare to be impudent?

By now, Nie Li and his party had been gone for awhile.

Xiao Yu asked, “Nie Li, did you bring those God Level demon spirits from the Tiny World?” Even within the Tiny World, there couldn’t be so many God Level growth rate demon spirit.

Nie Li replied, “I can’t really tell you right now. I’ll tell you in the future.” After all, the Nightmare Demon Pot was a secret that Nie Li wouldn’t tell even to those closest to him. It was better if fewer people knew about things like that. If news leaked out, it’d stir up huge trouble.

Li Xingyun’s side was capable of purchasing so many God Level growth rate demon spirit, and was still asking for more. However, Nie Li had bigger plans.

Ordinary God Level demon spirits weren’t worth much money. The ones that were worth the most were demon spirits with Dragon Bloodlines!

# Chapter 297: Reality

The third day was, once again, Venerable Redsoul's lesson.

Gu Bei, Nie Li, and Lu Piao sat together.

Gu Bei secretly passed an interspatial ring of demon spirits to Nie Li and whispered in his ear, "Nie Li, my underlings have caught another sixty thousand-something demon spirits!"

"Nice! Thanks a lot. Here are six hundred spiritual stones!" Nie Li passed a bag to Gu Bei.

Gu Bei furrowed his brows briefly, then asked in an unhappy tone, "What are you doing?" He wasn't helping Nie Li for a reward. Furthermore, those ordinary demon spirits weren't worth much. This was just a small favor between friends. By giving him money, Nie Li wasn't treating him like a friend!

Nie Li patted Gu Bei on the shoulder and smiled. "I wanted you to help me acquire some demon spirits with Dragon Bloodlines. Ordinary growth rates are fine."

At Nie Li's words, Gu Bei's brows relaxed as he straightforwardly agreed. "Easy, no problem!"

Nie Li had exhausted another two hundred spiritual stones the night before. That speed was simply too frightening! In order to continue cultivating smoothly, he had to think of other ways to obtain more spiritual stones!

Simply selling God Level growth rate demon spirits was still far from enough, so Nie Li decided to aim for demon spirits with Dragon Bloodlines. However, he needed Gu Bei to secretly acquire the demon spirits first. He could only begin refining after he'd received enough materials.

In this lesson, the Venerable Redsoul was lecturing on cultivating combat abilities. He explained in simple terms as almost all of the students listened attentively.

Nie Li, on the contrary, was thinking about other things.

Everyone in the class had heard of the recent incidents through the grapevine gossip. Nie Li had undoubtedly become the most extraordinary person within the class. However, since Nie Li had defeated Long Yuyin, no one else dared to provoke him. Furthermore, Nie Li had also become the focus for all the girls.

Long Yuyin quietly sat in a corner, watching Nie Li. She knew that she wasn't Nie Li's match, since she'd been defeated so thoroughly last time. However, she couldn't call up the slightest bit of hatred for him. Instead, it was strong curiosity and the desire to challenge him.

She wanted to know how Nie Li cultivated. That man was filled with all kinds of mysteries.

She understood that if she bothered Nie Li any more, she'd only succeed in making him hate her even more. The only way she could gain the qualifications to talk to him was by becoming stronger. Since she was young, Nie Li had been the only person of her age who'd beaten her. He was the only one among their generation who'd gained her recognition in terms of strength! In addition, Nie Li's actions had also made her to re-examine her past actions, and allowed her to change and grow as a person.

As Venerable Redsoul continued to explain the lesson, the class remained abnormally quiet.

Nie Li's thoughts drifted off into the distance. He hadn't seen his Master since that unexpected meeting in the Saint Soul Grounds. He couldn't help wondering if his Master was still living in that valley. Nie Li recalled the memories from his previous life and was filled with longing towards his Master. He briefly entertained the thought of visiting her in that valley, then made the decision to do so.

The Venerable Redsoul smiled. "Demon spirits are the most important factor in cultivating combat abilities. As of now, the demon spirits that you guys are integrated with aren't that strong. Only after you've reached the Heavenly Fate Realm will you be able to integrate with better demon

spirits, especially ones with Dragon Bloodlines.”

“As geniuses with Heaven Spiritual Roots, I hope that you’ll integrate with a Dragon Bloodline demon spirit with at least an Extraordinary Level growth rate. That will also greatly benefit your future development!”

At Venerable Redsoul’s words, many of the disciples from smaller realms sighed. Dragon Bloodline demon spirits were already extremely expensive. One with an Ordinary growth rate would cost one to two spiritual stones, but one with a Good growth rate would cost seventy to eighty spiritual stones. Those with Excellent growth rates might even price in the thousands. Generally, Extraordinary Level demon spirits were only obtainable for disciples with good family backgrounds! Ordinary families wouldn’t do either; only those with deep backgrounds would be capable.

Where would students like them get an Extraordinary Level Dragon Bloodline from?

Compared to that, it’d be much smarter to get an ordinary God Level demon spirit.

The price of an ordinary God Level demon spirit was more or less the same as a Good Level Dragon Bloodline demon spirit, or maybe even slightly higher. However, the price itself wasn’t that bad, and the quality-price ratio was still pretty high. Therefore, ordinary God Levels were best-sellers among ordinary disciples.

As for God Level growth rate Dragon Bloodline demon spirits, those were simply priceless. Even the three major families only had a few hundred experts integrated with God Level Dragon Bloodline demon spirits.

That was strategic power!

The central pillar of the Divine Feathers Sect!

In the recent years, there’d been many deaths among pinnacle experts with God Level Dragon Bloodline demon spirits. That was part of the reason why the Divine Feathers Sect had declined. However, since the Divine Feathers Sect was once a powerful sect, it still had a solid

foundation. As long as the sect could produce more powerful experts with God Level Dragon Bloodline demon spirits, it'd only be a matter of time until the sect returns to its glory days.

That was why Nie Li's Nightmare Demon Pot was an absolutely priceless treasure! It was also why he was so cautious every time he refined demon spirits.

Venerable Redsoul swept an eye over the murmuring students and smiled. "Naturally, you'll only come across an Extraordinary Level Dragon Bloodline by extremely sheer luck. So if you can't find an Extraordinary Level demon spirits with a Dragon Bloodline, an Excellent Level one will do. You should wait until you've reached the Heavenly Fate Realm. When that time comes, you'll be allowed into the outside world to hunt for Dragon Bloodlines yourselves. You'll be able to take your time and search carefully!"

For those without family backgrounds, trying to obtain an Extraordinary or God Level demon spirit would be nearly impossible!

Jin Yan glanced at Nie Li and a smile of disdain leaked from the corner of his mouth. Right now, Nie Li's talent was stronger and surpassed his own, but so what? Jin Yan's family had already prepared an Extraordinary Level Dragon Bloodline demon spirit for him. Just wait until he reached the Heavenly Fate Realm, then he'd start integrating with it!

As for Nie Li, he'd be lucky if he could find even an Excellent Level Dragon Bloodline. Or he might not even be able to accomplish that much!

That was the gap between their social statuses. Even if Nie Li joined a family, that family might not be willing to provide Nie Li with an Extraordinary demon spirit. If he joined a family, he'd only end up being a lapdog. There'd always be a distinct difference between him and the family's blood members!

This was the case in all the sects, not just the Divine Feathers Sect. Geniuses from the smaller realms were usually tamed by the larger families and turned into underlings, forever at the mercy of their respective families. Although, of course, there were some astonishing

geniuses who could shape their own fates. However, throughout history, there were only a few such people and all had become distant legends.

The blood members of the families enjoyed eternal riches and the family's protection. Even if they committed a wrong, as long the punishment wasn't something akin to a death sentence, they'd still walk out fine. This was far different from the geniuses of smaller realms whose fates were already decided by the heavens. If a smaller realm genius wound up dead, there wouldn't even be anyone to mourn them.

This was the Draconic Ruins Realm, a sect-family that had progressed to the peak.

At first, geniuses of the smaller realms all believed that the world was a fair place; but sooner or later, they'd all get smoothed out. The majority of them would join families and exchange their loyalty for other benefits.

Since Nie Li had displayed such shocking talent, he'd attracted the attentions of many higher-ups. These higher-ups would definitely do their best to protect Nie Li's life; however, as far as they were concerned, students with such shocking talent really should suffer some bullying, so that they won't let their strength get to their heads. That would also make them easier to control in the future!

The corner of Jin Yan's mouth curled into a cold smile. Those who'd come from smaller realms all wanted to climb to the top; however, they didn't realise that sometimes, there was an unbridgeable gap! And Nie Li was the same as them!

He wanted to see what heights Nie Li would reach without joining a family!

During the lesson, Venerable Redsoul explained many things about demon spirits, as well as his own understandings towards integrating with them. The students greatly benefitted from the lecture. Soon, the lesson was over.

"Go back and revise on what you've learned. If there are any questions or something that you're unsure about, please ask about it in the next lesson." Venerable Redsoul casually smiled. "Class ends here!"

Nie Li walked out with Lu Piao and Gu Bei in tow.

Gu Bei looked at Nie Li and said, “Nie Li, I heard that you sold a ton of God Level demon spirits?”

“That’s right.” Nie Li knew that Gu Bei would definitely enquire about it; furthermore, Gu Bei was certain to link it to Nie Li’s requests for ordinary demon spirits. Gu Bei might look like a stupid playboy, but he was actually a really smart guy.

Gu Bei laughed, “If you have so many ordinary God Level demon spirits, ‘don’t let the good water flow into someone else’s field’ [1]. A few of my cousins have some men who’ve got more men under them. Those guys have been looking for some good stuff to win people’s hearts over, in terms of recruiting. Other possibilities aside, several hundred God Level demon spirits would work perfectly fine. Of course, if there’re any Dragon Bloodlines with an Excellent Level growth rate or above, that’d be even better! As for pricing, we definitely won’t pay anything lower than Li Xingyun!”

[tl: [1] = Chinese idiom meaning “keep the good stuff for yourself and your family”. ]

The Gu Clan was extremely large and their power reached into all parts of the Divine Feathers Sect. So it was natural that they’d need lots of God Level demon spirits.

Nie Li said, “Please forgive me for not being so thoughtful!” It never crossed his mind that Gu Bei might also need some God Level demon spirits. He looked at Gu Bei and continued, “You’re not going to ask how I got those God Level demon spirits?”

Gu Bei gave Nie Li a meaningful look and winked. “That’s your secret. What right do I have to pry?”

Only Lu Piao couldn’t understand what they were talking about. “Even if you can pay for so many God Level demon spirits, where are we supposed to find them?”

Lu Piao had always been frank and outspoken; he wasn’t someone who

hid his thoughts. Nie Li wasn't going to let Lu Piao know about the Nightmare Demon Pot, in case Lu Piao leaked it out by accident.

On the other hand, Gu Bei had probably guessed it. However, he was a pretty loyal guy, and Nie Li was rather grateful for that. "Thanks! Once I get more God Level demon spirits, I'll make sure to find you in your courtyard!" Doing business with Gu Bei would be much safer than doing business with others. However, Nie Li planned to sell a massive amount that not even Gu Bei would be able to take. Therefore, he also had to maintain a relationship with Li Xingyun.

# Chapter 298: Master and Disciple

Nie Li returned to his courtyard and continued refining God Level growth rate demon spirits like mad.

After absorbing the leftover energy from the demon spirits, the Nightmare Demon Pot's success rate seemed to have slightly increased. From the sixty thousand demon spirits, Nie Li produced almost a hundred God Level demon spirits.

Nie Li arrived in Gu Bei's courtyard alone and handed the God Level demon spirits to him. Gu Bei was going to help Nie Li sell them to his cousins before he went out to acquire Dragon Bloodline demon spirits for him.

Nie Li exited Gu Bei's courtyard, activated the void-form several times to dodge prying eyes, and moved according to his memories.

He followed a crooked path that stretched into the distance, walked past a patch of dense forest, and reached a quiet valley.

Peach blossoms bloomed richly, making the scene appear like a utopia.

It was exactly the same as the scene from his memories.

It was a quiet valley with a small stream that trickled through. Scenes belonging to his previous life appeared in his mind.

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“Master, you told me to reach the ‘virtuous like water, for water does not compete’ state. But how do I accomplish this? I was born in a place called Glory City and all of my families, friends, and even my lover were killed. Should I go up to my enemies and tell them to be virtuous like water? I only believe in ‘an eye for an eye’. Given the slightest chance, I would kill every last one of them!”

His Master had only looked at him and smiled, “Stubborn disciple that couldn't be enlightened.”

“It's not that I couldn't be enlightened. Everyone in the Divine Feathers

Sect looks at you with disdain. If I was strong enough, I'd make all of them kneel before you as vengeance. What's wrong with that?"

His Master stared into the endless sky. "In this world, bitter struggles are constant. In an instant, everything will become history. However, water can flow endlessly, nurturing all living things."

—

Even now, Nie Li still couldn't understand his Master's words. Even in this life, he'd only been following one rule: vengeance for vengeance, an eye for an eye. Even after the danger to Glory City had been dealt with, there was still more vengeance that he'd yet to seek. The Demon Lord and the Sage Emperor still weren't dead.

As long as his enemies weren't eliminated, Nie Li would never be able to find peace. Not for even a moment, not even in his sleep.

Was he supposed to correct the Demon Lord and Sage Emperor with a heart of mercy? What an absurd thought.

However, his Master had been genuinely kind to him.

Nie Li continued to walk as he recalled everything from his previous life. His eyes couldn't help filling up with tears. His Master was a gentle person, someone who Nie Li had respected the most. But as they say, 'nice guys finish last'; his Master hadn't lived for very long. Back then, when his Master died, the only thing Nie Li wanted to do was kill everyone in the Divine Feathers Sect.

But, he didn't go against his Master's wishes. He didn't massacre the Divine Feathers Sect; instead, he only caused a huge ruckus and beat all the experts of the Divine Feathers Sect to the ground.

Even so, his Master would never come back to life.

But now, he was back in this new life. Everything in front of him was so familiar.

He quickened his steps towards the straw hut and knocked on the door.

A familiar and pleasant voice sounded, "Come in."

Nie Li strode in as he saw his Master sitting on the ground. Her expression was so calm, without the slightest ripple. She gave off an ethereal feeling, as if she didn't really exist. Nie Li looked at his Master and felt an illusory and unreal sensation, as if she would disappear the next second.

Ying Yueru opened her eyes and a faint smile crossed her face. She said, "So it's you? Have a seat."

Nie Li vaguely sensed that this Ying Yueru before him was the exact same one from his previous life. His heart was filled with confusion as he sat before her.

The two of them exchanged looks as Nie Li tried to figure out where to start. He quietly remained seated as he looked at his Master. He was satisfied with just this.

Ying Yueru's clear eyes looked at Nie Li and she lightly smiled. "Now, I will tell you some things. Do not ask me why or how. There are some things that you simply shouldn't know. Even if you asked, I wouldn't tell you. If you need to know, then I'll tell you, even if you don't ask!"

Nie Li smiled at Ying Yueru's words. "Then what does Big Sister Ying want to tell me?" Nie Li remembered the past again. Back then, there were several occasions when he'd called his Master 'Big Sister'. He'd ended up with a huge lump on his head each time.

Ying Yueru smiled and smacked him on the head. "Unfilial disciple! How dare you call me 'Big Sister Ying'. You're not showing the proper respect towards your Master." However, she couldn't help the smile on her face.

Nie Li was stunned for a moment and stared at Ying Yueru in shock. The words 'unfilial disciple' sent his memory drifting back into his previous life. Nie Li felt a strong urge to cry from the familiarity and closeness.

In his previous life, he'd experienced so much sadness. In the end, he was left all alone. The heart that had been tormented had now been slightly healed under his Master's gaze.

Ying Yueru smiled. "You find it strange that I know these things. It is the

result of the [Heaven's Divination] technique that allows me to see through all illusions and calculate destiny. However, in calculating all this, I've exhausted fifty years of my lifespan."

Nie Li's heart was pained as he looked at Ying Yueru. "Why would you spend fifty years just to calculate this? You could've just asked me and I would've told you everything!"

Ying Yueru revealed a beautiful smile. "It wouldn't have been as clear unless I calculated it for myself. You're inside the situation. Through my calculations, I am viewing it as a third party." Her voice was ethereal and peaceful as she continued, "There's no need to say anything else. According to my calculations, you're going to compete for the Sect Master's position of the Divine Feathers Sect."

His master was indeed like an immortal god, to have seen through the ambitions within his heart. Ever since he'd reached the Divine Feathers Sect, Nie Li had been aiming for the Sect Master's position. That was the only way to ensure that no one would ever harm his Master again.

Aside from obtaining cultivating resources, Nie Li had other motives for displaying his shocking talent. He didn't have time to wait. He needed to start planning now.

As far as others were concerned, becoming the Sect Master of the Divine Feathers Sect was already a lifetime's greatest accomplishment. However, to Nie Li, it was only the first step to his plan.

Ying Yueru smiled towards Nie Li. "If you want to become the Sect Master, I have a recommendation for you. She can become your greatest aide." In truth, Ying Yueru's heart had also been changed. Ever since she'd performed that calculation, she suddenly found herself with a disciple who was deeply connected to her own previous life. However, she still belonged to this life, and couldn't get used to the idea of having a disciple. She found the experience extremely profound.

"Who?"

Ying Yueru looked at him deeply. "My Junior Sister, Long Yuyin."

Nie Li immediately refused. “Anyone but her. Every time I see her, murderous intent leaks from my heart.”

“There is a reason why she and the Dragonseal Family forced my death in the previous life. In her eyes, I am the one who killed her Master. And it is the truth; I was the one who killed our Master.” Ying Yueru gazed into the distance as she sighed. “The cause and effect of this world are profound, I cannot explain it to you in such a short time. You hate her, she hates me, and this hatred became a tight knot. Only you can help her resolve the hatred she holds for me.”

At Ying Yueru’s words, Nie Li recalled various things from the past and finally began to understand why Long Yuyin wanted his Master’s death. However, telling him to put down his hatred on such short short notice was still impossible for him. After all, he’d personally witnessed Ying Yueru’s death and had personally seen how overbearing Long Yuyin was. With that kind of mentality, Nie Li’s heart filled with wrath every time he thought of her. Now that he knew, he wanted to put it down, but there were some things that he just couldn’t help.

“If you want her to put down her hatred for me, you’ll have to put down your hatred for her first.” Ying Yueru said as she looked at Nie Li, “This is the ‘virtuous as water’ that I spoke of. Even after experiencing two lives, you’re still not willing to put it down?”

Nie Li still wanted to say something. “But...”

Ying Yueru’s voice was as soothing as spring water as it calmed Nie Li’s heart. “I’m not expecting you to achieve the ‘virtuous as water’ state. However, Long Yuyin can no longer threaten me, so why not put down your hatred?”

“I...” Nie Li thought about it a little and finally nodded. “Alright.”

So it turned out that Long Yuyin and his Master were fellow disciples. Nie Li thought things over again. His Master was vastly knowledgeable and could calculate destinies; therefore, she must have a reason for asking him to do this. Both in his previous and current life, Nie Li had absolute faith in his Master’s words.

Ying Yueru wryly smiled. “The [Heaven’s Divination] technique exhausts a portion of my lifespan for every divination. If you want me to live longer, don’t ask so many questions.”

“Yes.” Nie Li’s mind went blank as he stared at her smile. In their previous life, Ying Yueru didn’t smile very much. But he remembered that the current Ying Yueru was still just a sixteen or seventeen year old girl. No matter how heaven-defying she was, she was still just a young girl.

Ying Yueru looked at Nie Li and said, “Once you leave here, you shouldn’t return for a while. You’ve attracted too much attention by coming here.” Since she performed her divination, she no longer knew how to act around Nie Li. After all, she was still just a sixteen or seventeen year old girl. It felt strange to suddenly have a disciple like Nie Li.

Nie Li vaguely suspected that his Master knew more than she was letting on; however, since she’d already said so much, he didn’t want to enquire further.

He felt at ease, now that he’d seen his Master living peacefully. In his heart, he understood that it would be for the best if he came here as less as possible. After all, he was caught in a whirlpool; it would be best not to disrupt his Master’s life.

A determined expression flashed through Nie Li’s eyes. “In that case, please wait until I become Sect Master of the Divine Feathers Sect!” Only by becoming the Sect Master, could he protect his Master.

Nie Li slightly curled his back, then stood up and left.

Ying Yueru watched Nie Li’s silhouette as her heart sighed softly. She probably won’t be able to wait until Nie Li became Sect Master. She watched him disappear through the entrance before she looked away.

# Chapter 299: Face to Face on a Narrow Path

The Divine Feathers Sect has many factions, all embroiled in an intense battle with each other. In one hundred years, the sect would thoroughly collapse. What Nie Li intended to do was become the Sect Master of the Divine Feathers Sect within those one hundred years and obtain absolute authority. It was the only way to reorganize the Divine Feathers Sect.

Gaining control of the entire Divine Feathers Sect was Nie Li's first step in confronting the Sage Emperor!

Once he returned from this trip, he had to work on reaching the Heavenly Fate Realm as fast as possible. It was one of the crucial points to cultivation!

As Nie Li walked along the zigzagged path, he met a girl who was walking from the opposite direction. She halted her steps when she saw Nie Li.

This road was the only way to get to that valley!

Nie Li raised his head with a stunned expression. He never imagined that he'd run into Long Yuyin right here. Was she looking for his Master? Then again, his Master and Long Yuyin were fellow disciples.

Long Yuyin also never expected to encounter Nie Li here. Upon seeing Nie Li, she felt like someone had seized her heart. She didn't know what to do with her hands, nor did she dare approach and greet him. Originally, with her character, she'd never look at someone with much regard. However, her heart had changed a little ever since Nie Li had utterly defeated her.

Even she couldn't figure out why she felt so nervous upon seeing him. This wasn't like her at all!

No one else was here except for the two of them!

A surge of uncertainty left her at a loss as to what to do.

Nie Li stayed in place as he looked at her and asked, “Why are you here?”

Although he couldn't help being reminded of the overbearing Long Yuyin from his previous life, he still remembered his Master's words. For all the past and present vengeance, the solution starts with himself.

Although the current Long Yuyin was a little arrogant and tyrannical, she hadn't reached the wicked-beyond-redemption point yet.

Since he'd come back to life, he had the power to resolve this vengeance before it became deeper.

Long Yuyin's voice trembled. “I'm here to...I'm looking for someone.”

Nie Li was puzzled. Who was this girl standing in front of him who showed this blushing red face? Was she really that overbearing Long Yuyin from his previous life? Was she really that unreasonably tyrannical woman?

The two were standing some distance apart. Nie Li found it was an uncomfortable distance for a conversation, so he took a step forward.

Long Yuyin's body immediately stiffened and she took a step back. Her voice trembled. “What are you trying to do?”

Her face boiled as she thought back to the incidents when Nie Li humiliated her. He wasn't going to be unforgiving again, was he? Right here, right now? There were only the two of them here and she was clearly not his match. Even her physical strength, which she had been the most prideful of, had been defeated by him. Faced with him, she no longer had the slightest fighting spirit.

Nie Li was a little dazed. Since when had Long Yuyin become so timid?

Nie Li stayed in place, but couldn't help finding the situation rather funny. “Don't worry. I can't do anything to you since we're inside the Skysoul Institute!” Nie Li really was trying to follow his Master's instructions to resolve his hatred for her. But now that they were face-to-face, he had no idea where to start.

In his heart, Nie Li still held a grudge towards Long Yuyin. However, this was no longer his previous life; the situation was entirely different. After listening to his Master's teachings, he'd already decided to let it go.

Nie Li never thought that their clash would make the tyrannical Long Yuyin cower so timidly. She was totally different from the Long Yuyin who he'd known. Nie Li pieced it together. In his previous life, Long Yuyin had been extraordinarily talented since she was young and everyone had flattered her. Little by little, it got to her head and shaped her overbearing character. As time passed, and she became stronger, she became more and more despotic and arrogant. She viewed nothing as worthwhile. In the end, she forced the death of his Master.

However, the Long Yuyin of this life was still young! She could still be reformed!

She'd changed ever since Nie Li had thoroughly defeated her. She was still as strong as she'd been before, but now, she've restrained that overbearing character of hers at the very least!

However, the current Long Yuying would only yield to Nie Li. She definitely wouldn't be so timid towards others, like she currently was towards him.

It seemed that the Long Yuyin of his previous life had lacked such teachings. That was why she grew up to become such a terrible person.

An immoral smile leaked from Nie Li's mouth as he looked at the nervous Long Yuyin. 'Now that I've found the source of the problem, I'll make sure to thoroughly reform you! I'll turn you into a better person for the future!'

Nie Li moved towards Long Yuyin until he was only a step away from her. His thoughts drifted off into the distance. Before, his wrath and hatred for Long Yuyin had clouded his eyes. His Master's words had allowed him to re-examine his actions in this life. In reality, the solution was not necessarily 'a tooth for a tooth'. He could take advantage of the situation. While his opponent was still young; he could make her thoroughly lose her fighting strength or even convert her onto his side.

Wouldn't that be clever?

Some people have lusted for blood since they were young, growing up to become ungrateful wretches. Such people aren't worthy of being reformed. However, people like Long Yuyin were different. Even if she was arrogant and overbearing, her character itself wasn't so bad. All she needed was a little smacking and lecturing. There was still space for reforming.

Every hair on Long Yuyin's body stood on end as Nie Li stepped closer and closer. She felt like a sheared sheep, naked under his gaze, suffocating under the pressure.

If it were anyone else, Long Yuyin would never feel such fear. Even if the opponent was an expert several times stronger than herself, she knew that they'd still fear the power of her Dragonseal Family. Therefore, they wouldn't dare do anything to her. However, that didn't apply to Nie Li. He'd been the first person to ever scold her, then he'd used a whip to lash her. After that, he used his own physical strength to give her a good beating. But even after all that, even after she'd been provoked by Nie Li's words, she still wanted to fight him properly. She didn't want to take advantage of her family's power.

She realised that without her family, she was nothing to Nie Li.

Even though Nie Li only was a little taller than her, he was like a mountain, pressuring her so that she couldn't breathe.

Long Yuyin's heart thumped around wildly. She took heavy breaths as her chest heaved up and down. Under Nie Li's invasive gaze, she couldn't help covering her chest with both of her hands. Her voice trembled, "You... what are you trying to do?"

It should be mentioned that Long Yuyin was actually really pretty. Compared to Nie Li's Master, each had her own merits. Both were of goddess-level beauties. Right now, Long Yuyin was wearing a tight-fitting outfit that outlined the curves of her figure.

Nie Li couldn't help finding Long Yuyin's edgy behaviour rather funny. This girl was too much of a narcissist. Did she think that he'd outrage her

modesty? He'd heard somewhere before that overbearing women are often only strong on the outside. Under that outward appearance is actually a weak heart. He'd heard that Long Yuyin had been raised by a single-mother, who'd later remarried. Was that why she'd acted so rude and unreasonable, so that no one could get close to her?

Perhaps, Long Yuyin was just lonely. Her overbearing character was just a mask.

As these thoughts crossed his mind, the hatred he'd held for Long Yuyin from his previous life finally dissolved. The corner of his mouth curled as he looked at Long Yuyin, who was acting like a frightened rabbit. Being the 'bad guy' in this life felt pretty good.

Nie Li patted her on the shoulders. "Long Yuyin, Ying Yueru is my Master. I don't know what kind of grudges you have between the two of you, but I want you to know that she's a kind-hearted person. She definitely wouldn't hurt others. I hope you can put down your feelings and think things over again. Maybe there was a misunderstanding somewhere?"

When Nie Li's hand touched her shoulder, all the muscles in her body immediately tensed up. She was so nervous that she couldn't even think anymore. This was a wilderness where no one else was around. Would Nie Li let her go?

Long Yuyin wasn't thinking about Ying Yueru anymore. She could only reply with a trembling voice, "Oh."

Nie Li blankly stared at her for a moment. Why was Long Yuyin being so easy to handle today? Her fingers were almost white from how hard she was clenching them. Her face was also blushed. He couldn't help finding the scene rather amusing. If he had improper thoughts and tried to take liberties right now, she probably wouldn't even be able to retaliate, right?

Perhaps this girl before him was the real Long Yuyin!

The difference between the previous and current Long Yuyin was so large that Nie Li couldn't help finding it a little funny. However, he stopped teasing her when he saw that she was about to bury her head into

her chest.

Nie Li looked at Long Yuyin again. “Go back and think about what I said. If you have any problems, please do come to me!”

He couldn't stop internally laughing. What a gentle sheep she was! However, he didn't push her any further, as he wanted Long Yuyin to carefully consider his words first. He then brushed past her and walked away.

Nie Li had only taken a few steps before Long Yuyin's voice suddenly called, “Wait!” She felt as though she'd used all the strength in her body just to say that word.

Nie Li turned around to face her. “What's the matter?”

“Didn't you tell me to stay as far away as possible...?” Long Yuyin's voice died towards the end of her sentence, until it was as soft a mosquito's buzz.

However, Nie Li still heard it clearly. He smiled, “Even if I explained those matters earlier on, you probably wouldn't understand. However, after listening to my Master's teachings, I've decided to put down my hatred for you. Long Yuyin, I also hope that you'll let go of your hatred for my Master. After that, maybe we could still become friends...”

“We have class in three days. I'll be waiting for your answer.” Nie Li finished his words, smiled, then turned around and left.

Long Yuyin was at a loss as she watched Nie Li's silhouette shrink away. Why did Nie Li hate her? Was it because of Ying Yueru? How did Ying Yueru become Nie Li's Master? Long Yuyin's thoughts were in a tangled mess. Her stiffened body finally began to ease up as Nie Li moved further and further away. Her entire body felt weak, like she'd been drained of all her energy.

It was only a simple encounter with Nie Li, but she felt as though she'd experienced a huge battle.

# Chapter 300: Respect

Long Yuyin just stood there for a while, before she finally began to walk quietly towards Ying Yueru's home. Nie Li's words had set her mind thinking. Ying Yueru's fate was in Long Yuyin's hands; but did she really want her dead?

She thought over this question for an indeterminant amount of time. After all, Ying Yueru was her Senior Sister. As for the matter concerning the their Master, Long Yuyin also felt that there was a story behind it.

It was just like Nie Li said; Ying Yueru was someone who'd rather hurt herself than hurt others.

Nie Li returned to Xiao Yu's courtyard.

Xiao Yu saw him and enquired, "Nie Li, where did you go?"

Nie Li smiled. "I went to meet an old friend."

"Old friend?" Xiao Yu was rather puzzled. Nie Li had only come to the Skysoul Institute not too long ago. How did manage to get an old friend?

Nie Li didn't bother to give Xiao Yu much of an explanation. Instead, he looked past Xiao Yu, saw Huang Ying, and immediately greeted her. "So you're here?"

"Nie Li, hello!" Huang Ying immediately exposed a lovable smile as she grabbed Xiao Yu's arm with both hands, like a cute and helpless baby bird.

Nie Li gave a meaningful smile as he said, "I'll get back to cultivating. You guys can get busy!"

Xiao Yu's face flushed red. "Nie Li, don't misunderstand!"

Nie Li laughed as he waved goodbye. "Misunderstand? You're just having an honest conversation, right?" He gave Huang Ying a wink, then returned to his own room.

Huang Ying blushed slightly red, but she still held onto Xiao Yu's hand, refusing to let go. Xiao Yu, however, looked helpless and depressed.

When Nie Li entered his room, he saw Goddess Yu Yan hovering in the

air as she cultivated. However, what really surprised him was the fact that her entire body was enveloped in golden flames. These flames continued to burn, raising the room temperature to a frightening degree.

A powerful energy churned throughout the room.

It never crossed Nie Li's mind that Yu Yan might reach the Heavenly Fate Realm before he did. Furthermore, her Heavenly Fate Realm seemed to be slightly different from ordinary ones. Therefore, Nie Li had no idea just how strong she was, as he had no basis for comparison.

The golden flames seemed to be melting the air.

When he saw that Yu Yan was in the middle of cultivating, he didn't disrupt her. He looked down and saw that Jindan was curled up in a corner, asleep. That guy's daily routine was just eat and sleep, eat and sleep. However, what surprised Nie Li was the fact that Jindan took really long naps after every meal. Each time he woke up, his aura would be several times stronger.

This little guy was getting stronger at a frightening speed!

Through his soul realm, Nie Li sensed that Lu Piao was about to reach the Heavenly Fate Realm after he'd absorbed so many spiritual stones. However, Nie Li himself still wasn't able to step through that doorway.

Usually, after absorbing so much Heavenly Energy, his cultivation should've also increased at a quick pace. However, all that Heavenly Energy from the spiritual stones have been absorbed by the vine in his soul realm; not much was left for him.

The only thing he could do was concentrate on his cultivation.

Time slowly flowed by.

Although the new batch of students had caused waves within the Skysoul Institute, the excitement died down pretty quickly. After all, cultivation was still most important.

After being warned by Li Xingyun, Hua Ling also showed more restraint and immersed himself in cultivating.

Murong Yu was sulking, despite the fact that he'd made a new record in the Ghastly Ruins. It never crossed his mind that after escaping his clutches, Nie Li might exit the Ghastly Ruins instead of continuing to hunt. Even if he wanted to make more trouble for Nie Li, he no longer had a chance to do so.

The others also calmed down for the time being to focus on their cultivation.

One day passed after another.

Nie Li had been depleting anywhere between one to two hundred spiritual stones a day. However, the supply of stones within his interspatial ring was actually constantly increasing. This was because Nie Li was still refining God Level growth rate demon spirits every day. He either let Gu Bei help him sell them, or he sold them directly to Li Xingyun. There was also a portion that had been dissolved into the market.

The quantity of spiritual stones inside his interspatial ring continued to increase at a frightening rate. Nie Li continued to purchase large numbers of demon spirits with Dragon Bloodlines; however, all had ordinary growth rates.

The more God Level demon spirits Nie Li sold, the higher Li Xingyun regarded him. Li Xingyun didn't know where Nie Li was getting the God Level demon spirits from, nor did he ask for an answer. After all, such things involved secrets. So there isn't any point in asking; on the contrary, it would hurt their business relationship.

Hu Yong was a little intimidated by Nie Li's close connections to Gu Bei and Li Xingyun.

—

Today, Venerable Redsoul's lesson was, once again, on the topic of physical training.

Everyone had immediately turned to look at Nie Li and Long Yuyin. In their previous lesson, Nie Li and Long Yuyin had gotten into a fight that

had even left the grounds destroyed. The two of them weren't going to do it again, were they?

Long Yuyin hesitated for a moment and her steps paused. However, she finally approached Nie Li with her face flushed red and asked in a soft voice, "Can I practise with you?"

Her outfit made her look formidable and valiant. In addition to her beauty, her image could definitely topple any boy in the class. In the past, Long Yuyin's fiery character had distanced herself from everyone else. But now, the fact that Long Yuyin was actually speaking in such a soft voice made all the observer's jaws almost fall off.

Was Long Yuyin still that tigress that they'd known? Was this girl the wrong person?

It wasn't just the other students: even Lu Piao and Gu Bei were dumbfounded.

Lu Piao rubbed his eyes. "I don't think I've woken up yet! I must be dreaming!"

Nie Li couldn't help smiling when he saw how nervous Long Yuyin was. "Sure!"

Everyone was dumbfounded at this reaction. Their brains couldn't process the situation. Just what was going on?

Was this still the same Nie Li who'd told Long Yuyin to stay as far away as possible?

This transformation was too fast. Just what had happened in such a short amount of time? There must be a hidden story to it!

"I smell adultery. Nie Li, you couldn't have done something behind Goddess Ziyun and Ning'er's backs, right?" Lu Piao scrutinised Nie Li, but was heavily rewarded by Nie Li.

Even Venerable Redsoul was rather puzzled. These two had been so vehemently against each other, so why had they suddenly calmed down? Anyways, it was all good news for him. After all, he didn't want to have

constant conflicts between his students, even if it was absolutely normal for such prideful geniuses to butt heads. Even he couldn't stop them completely if they wanted to do so.

The drills began and everyone fought each other.

Long Yuyin's expression slowly turned serious. She leapt and threw a chain of roundhouse kicks towards Nie Li.

"You might have a long attack range, but there're still a lot of flaws. You're too slow!" Nie Li said as he dodged and returned three punches. One to her calf, one to her inner thigh, and one to her abdomen. "All three of these are flaws!"

Long Yuyin's face turned slightly pale as she suffered the three attacks and took several steps back. She felt numb from the three hits and her heart shivered. So it turned out that Nie Li was so much stronger than her! Previously, he was already going easy on her!

Actually, Nie Li was much weaker than Long Yuyin. After all, Long Yuyin possessed the Blood Dragon lineage. However, Nie Li's insight towards the Martial Dao was at a level that Long Yuyin couldn't compare with.

Long Yuyin's expression gradually became respectful as she carefully thought over Nie Li's advice. With a little more comprehension than the last time, she resumed her attacks on Nie Li.

Nie Li's voice turned solemnly strict. "Here, here, and there. Your reactions are too slow and your attack angles aren't right! That's wrong!"

Again and again, Long Yuyin was smacked onto the ground. However, she became more and more excited and ready each time she got up. Although Nie Li was being strict, she could sense that her combat techniques were steadily improving under his guidance. He taught way far better than any other teachers.

The rest of the students exchanged looks when they saw Long Yuyin's excited and somewhat frenzied expression. That woman must have gone crazy!

Venerable Redsoul watched their battle in utter shock and an expression

that could only be described as 'ashamed' was on his face. He felt like he could no longer look anyone in the eye again.

Even he didn't have that much understanding towards physical strength. Not compared to Nie Li.

As a mentor, he felt that he had nothing to teach Nie Li in terms of confrontations between physiques.

He could only pretend that he didn't know, since the other students couldn't see through it.

Long Yuyin's heart was filled with respect for Nie Li. Every attack that seemed perfect to her was filled with flaws to Nie Li. His guidance had given her great insights, especially since she was a quick-learner. Through their fight, she sensed that his attainment on cultivation highly surpassed her own by several realms!

In her heart, she was also secretly dejected. Nie Li was Ying Yueru's disciple? Didn't that mean that Ying Yueru was actually much more powerful than she thought?

She continued to absorb Nie Li's teachings like a sponge. She sensed that Nie Li was the only one who could guide her strength towards an endless height.

Nie Li also realised that this woman could be taught. Since she was young, no one had really been able to lecture her properly; that had resulted in her domineering character. However, she respected those who were stronger than herself. Although there were others, like Murong Yu, who fit that description, as far as Long Yuyin was concerned, it was only because of age. However, Nie Li was the same age as her and could also defeat her in terms of physical strength. That was why she accepted him.

No matter how Nie Li reprimanded her, she continued to quietly endure. As they continued on, she actually became more respectful towards Nie Li, just like a diligent and respectful disciple to her Master's teachings.

The other students were speechless. None of them could figure out how Nie Li managed to tame such a tigress. When Long Yuyin dealt with other

people, her bloodlust would terrify them. However, she was as docile as a sheep when facing Nie Li.

Soon, the lesson was over.

# Credits

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